



Hoti ts'eeda
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
SPOR SUPPORT UNIT



EŁETS'EHDÉE



SUMMARY REPORT

28-29 MAY 2025
AURORA VILLAGE





We want your feedback.

Please be sure to fill out a feedback form ([linked here](#)), or find a paper copy in the Main Lodge before the end of day 2.

On the afternoon of May 29, there will be a tipi dedicated to sharing feedback with Hotì ts'eeda and helping guide our priorities for the coming year.

Mahsi cho!



MAHSI CHO



On behalf of Hotì ts'eeda's Governing Council, I thank you all for participating in the annual Elèts'ehdèe gathering.

Gathering with members of our community at Aurora Village was, once again, the highlight of Hotì ts'eeda's year. As always, Aurora Village provided a beautiful venue and excellent food to gather around with old friends and new connections. Sharing experiences, stories, and ideas around the theme of health and wellness would not be the same if it weren't for this beautiful place and the open and enthusiastic energy of our participants. We thank you for acting as our supporters and sounding board at this event and over the years. Your wisdom makes Hotì ts'eeda what it is, and we have gratefully received your feedback. This feedback is an important part of how Hotì ts'eeda sets plans and priorities for the next year, as you will see later in this document.



Once again, mahsi for contributing to the Elèts'ehdèe. Please review this report, and do not hesitate to reach out to us if you wish to offer further comments or need Hotì ts'eeda's support in the future. Together in good health, Mahsi,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be "JBZ".

John B. Zoe, Chairperson Hotì ts'eeda: NWT SPOR SUPPORT Unit

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hotii ts'eeda's annual Elèts'ehdèe gathering was held May 28-29, 2025, at Aurora Village just outside of Yellowknife, Northwest Territories. Guests from across the North and Canada gathered over the two days to share ideas, discussion and experiences in health and wellness in the territories. We were fortunate to host guests from Hotii ts'eeda's Governing Council and its funder, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR). CIHR consistently supports Hotii ts'eeda in adapting to the unique needs of NWT communities in fulfilling its mandate.

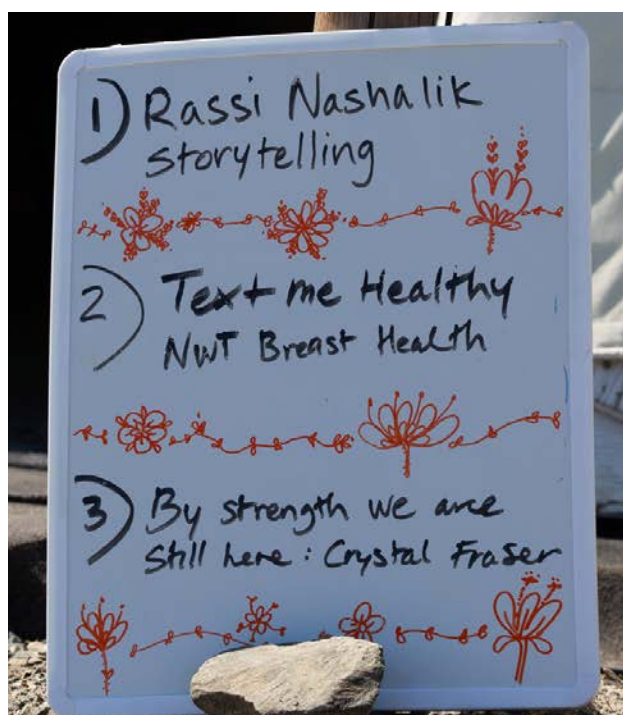
Over the two day gathering, participants heard stories from projects and programs that address health and wellness from many angles. Thanks to our community members who share their stories and lessons learned, the gathering was a success. This year's gathering featured several newly published pieces of media: three published books, one government report, and a podcast were all featured in different sessions.



Day 1 opened with a prayer and fire feeding ceremony from Billy Archie and the Yellowknives Dene Drummers. That morning, we were presented with the report: Honouring Indigenous Voices - Actions for Change in the NT Health Care System. The team behind the report shared their experiences in developing it and where they hoped it would go next. Next, several contributors to the Book of Hope, a recently published collection of stories from cancer survivors and caregivers, shared their stories in a moving session. Lunch was had down at the cultural area, followed by tipi sessions that featured cultural knowledge presentations and opportunities to share work and research in health and wellness from across the territory.



The morning of Day 2 opened with the lighting of the quliq from Rassi Nashalik, followed by Hotì ts'eeda's year in review presentation, which highlighted successes from Hotì ts'eeda's funded projects and described the activities of the past year. Then, Dr. John B. Zoe and Dr. Stephanie Irlbacher-Fox presented their recently published book on modern treaty implementation, *Kwedoo: Best Practices in Implementing Modern Treaties*. Afterwards, The Tłıchq Government Department of Culture and Lands Protection presenting on their activities, including some fascinating videos. After lunch, Elders Billy Archie, Rassi Nashalik, Richard Mercredi, and Rosa Mantla shared their reflections on the Elders panel. Closing the day were another round of cultural and tipi presentations. The gathering was closed with a closing prayer from Violet Doolittle, followed by the Tłıchq Drummers and Johnny Landry.



PRIORITIES

Hotìì ts'eeda aims to provide multiple opportunities for guests to provide feedback to us, both regarding the Elèts'ehdèe itself and on Hotìì ts'eeda's work and what we should be prioritizing in the upcoming year.

During the morning of Day 2, participants heard from Executive Director Amanda Bradbury about highlights from Hotìì ts'eeda's past year, and were invited to comment either on written evaluation forms, an online feedback form, or in a tent set aside for discussion and feedback hosted by Research and Policy Advisor Brandon Pryce.

Feedback on the gathering itself was overwhelmingly positive, with the following areas flagged for Hotìì ts'eeda's attention in coming years:

- Consider adding a day
- More breaks/slower pace
- Improve communication outside the gathering
- Consider assigned seating to encourage networking and connections
- Create more networking opportunities





Key takeaways from the feedback relating to Hotii ts'eeda's work in general were:

- Consider creating or supporting programming created for young men. This group is underrepresented in the health and wellness field and could benefit from focus from Hotii ts'eeda.
- Support and improve clarification around research licensing. This is a confusing process for researchers both within and from outside the north, and Hotii ts'eeda could provide helpful support in this area.
- Less focus on environmental science-based research. Social sciences tend to take a backseat to environmental sciences in the north. Some feedback reflected a desire to see Hotii ts'eeda focus more on the social sciences.
- Provide funding specifically for conferences and travel.
- Create more opportunities for NWT students.



Once again, we thank you all for your thoughts and reflections. This feedback and ideas will be taken into account as Hotii ts'eeda plans its activities in the coming year.



Hoti' ts'eeda

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
SPOR SUPPORT UNIT

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Gwich'in Tribal Council
Gwich'in land, culture & economy for a better future

