



**BCAAFC** | BC Association of  
Aboriginal Friendship Centres

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Providing a ‘Safespace’ for Indigenous Patients to Report Health System Concerns

**B.C. – November 30, 2020** – Indigenous patients can now report health system concerns anonymously using Safespace Networks on the B.C. Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres’ (BCAAFC) website. Safespace Networks is a community-led, nationwide initiative to create change in the health care system by holding individuals, organizations and institutions accountable to addressing racism.

The app’s design follows the advice of Te’ta-in (Sound of Thunder) Shane Pointe, Knowledge Keeper within Mary Ellen Turpel Lafond’s “In Plain Sight” report to focus on change, rather than a “shame and name” approach.

“As described in Mary Ellen Turpel Lafond’s ‘In Plain Sight’ report, the existing internal processes for monitoring and addressing racism within health care systems functions primarily to defend health care institutions. Racism complaints have been risk managed within the system, and this is now going to change,” said Leslie Varley, Executive Director of the BCAAFC, “Safespace Networks will help our people define their own quality of care by providing a culturally safe and accessible way for their concerns to be heard.”

B.C. Friendship Centres are leading the Safespace Networks initiative in British Columbia. The app is available through the BCAAFC website under “Report Racism with Safespace”, alongside support resources for individuals who have experienced racism and discrimination in healthcare. The app will be available on every B.C. Friendship Centre website, and Friendship Centre staff will be available to support community members in making a report using the Safespace Networks web app.

As the network is adopted by patients in B.C., new features will be released that support racialized patients to self-navigate the health system and for health stakeholders to become aware of issues earlier than in the current system.

### **For media inquiries, please contact:**

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**About the B.C. Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres (BCAAFC)**

The BCAAFC is the umbrella organization for the 25 Friendship Centres located throughout the province. Friendship Centres provide culturally relevant programs and services to support urban Indigenous people as they realize their vision of health, wellness and prosperity. To learn more, please visit <http://bcaafc.com/>.

**About Safespace Networks**

Dr. Alika Lafontaine founded Safespace Networks in 2019 with the vision of a social enterprise and learning platform for patient advocacy. To learn more, please visit <http://safespace.healthcare/>.

