



Cowichan Tribes and Van Island Health Mental Health Teams Linked by Mustimuhw cEMR and Strata Health

Duncan, British Columbia – May 27th, 2012: Effective March 31st, 2012, Cowichan Tribes, British Columbia's single largest First Nation extended their Mustimuhw Community Electronic Medical Record (cEMR) to integrate with Vancouver Island Health Authorities (VIHA) implementation of Strata PathWays™. This extension has electronically linked Cowichan Tribes adults requiring Mental Health and Addiction Services (MHAS) to appropriate VIHA and Cowichan Tribes' programs and services.

This initiative further utilizes existing mental health & addictions referral innovations arising from an eReferral partnership between VIHA, Canada Health InfoWay, Cerner Corporation and Strata Health Solutions. This strategic eReferral initiative has improved access to services for populations of high needs/high risk clients that are a priority target for mental health and addiction services across Vancouver Island. The integration of Cowichan Tribes into this service is an important step forward in bridging the jurisdictional divide between First Nations community based services and health authority services, and represents a significant success in improving the continuity of care for First Nations and Aboriginal people.

When a community member is identified as a potential candidate for Adult MHAS services, a staff member completes a live referral within Mustimuhw cEMR. Using a real time interface, the referral information is instantly linked with Strata PathWays™. Cowichan clinical staff are presented a menu of appropriate services pulling from both Vancouver Island Health and Cowichan Tribes' community programs and then electronically distribute the referral to selected local services including crisis, drug and alcohol, and the aboriginal liaison nurse at Cowichan District Hospital.

"The success of this project represents a very important milestone" expressed Judith Gohn, Executive Health Director of Ts'ewulhtun Health, Cowichan Tribes. "It is really a 'first' in many ways, and helps clear the path forward in terms of policy, practice, and the integration of information management between First Nations health centres and regional health authorities. The strong commitment of all the partners at all levels was instrumental in this achievement. At a very practical level, our mental health team and the local VIHA mental health providers are now working together and collaborating in ways that would not have been possible prior to this project. I hold my hands up in honour and respect to our partners."

"BC First Nations have clearly communicated the importance of improved access to provincial mental wellness services," stated Joseph Mendez, Chief Information Officer for the Interim First Nations Health Authority. "This initiative is a great example of how health information technology can help bridge the gap between community based health organizations and their local health authorities, supporting service providers in their efforts toward integrated and collaborative service for First Nations communities. The lessons we have learned in this initiative will benefit our continued collective efforts towards improved continuity of care for First Nations clients across the province. The iFNHA, working with Cowichan, FNIB, VIHA and Strata Health has been supportive of this initiative since its inception; we will continue to be supportive of this important enterprise going forward."

"This initiative is a profound example of leveraging intelligent eReferral and system integration in a manner that directly supports patient-centric care in the challenging Mental Health portfolio."

commented Don Schick, CEO, Strata Health Solutions. The cooperative leadership shown by all agencies involved allowed this project to bridge challenges and focus entirely to delivering on the patient need. All of us at Strata Health are proud to be involved in this transformative and scalable project.”

About Cowichan Tribes:

The Cowichan Tribes is the largest First Nation (FN) in British Columbia. Located in the Cowichan Valley in mid-Vancouver Island, the Cowichan Tribes are comprised of 7 traditional villages: Kw’amutsun, Qwum’yiqun’, Kwulqwselu, S’amuna’, L’uml’umuluts, Hinupsum, and Tl’ulpalus. Cowichan Tribes is governed by a Chief and 12 Councillors, and has delegated responsibilities for a variety of services including Children and Families, Education, Health, Housing, Membership and Social Development. The Ts’ewulhtun Health Centre manages public health and communicable disease control for Cowichan Tribes and provides a variety of health promotion programs. Cowichan Tribes originated the Mustimuhw Community Electronic Medical Record system broadly in use in First Nations Health Centres across multiple provinces. Mustimuhw.com

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About the Interim First Nations Health Authority (iFNHA):

At the Gathering Wisdom for a Shared Journey IV forum, First Nations endorsed Resolution 2011-01, the Consensus Paper: BC First Nations Perspectives on a New Health Governance Arrangement, and the British Columbia Tripartite Framework Agreement on First Nation Health Governance.

Specifically, the Consensus Paper states: Following approval of this consensus paper and the signing of the Framework Agreement, the FNHC will direct the First Nations Health Society to take steps to amend its bylaws to become the interim FNHA and begin the early steps in implementing the new health governance arrangement”

The FNHC has followed this direction and on December 20th, (in their role as members of the First Nations Health Society) passed by consensus a resolution to amend the bylaws of the FNHS and transform it into the *interim* First Nations Health Authority.

Download for more information. [iFNHA Communique to BC First Nations | pdf download |](#)

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About Strata Health

Strata Health leverages technology to achieve dramatic patient flow improvement within health systems. Our clients say they’ve entrusted us with the job of creating patient flow solutions that achieve real and dramatic benefits for patients, their families and the world’s devoted front line caregivers. Operational in Canada and the UK, Strata Health is a privately –held Canadian corporation. It is comprised of professionals with empathy for those who need care and intense respect for those who devote themselves to caring for others.

Strata PathWays™ is a Cloud-based, real-time Resource Matching and eReferral system improving patient experience and system access across the care continuum. Connected to care providers in the community, it provides front line clinicians and Primary Care physicians with real-time tools to flow appropriate referring patients from hospital or community to available bed and program openings. The eReferral system radically reduces the time patients occupy acute care beds after they have been assessed for discharge into alternative care programs – now including Surgical Specialists, Mental Health & Addictions, Rehabilitation/Sub-Acute, Home Care, Continuing Care Centers, Assisted Living, Palliative, Physiotherapy, Community Support and Adult Day Programs.

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