



Traditional Wellness Framework

NLAKA'PAMUX HEALTH SERVICES SOCIETY





TRADITIONAL WELLNESS FRAMEWORK
DEVELOPED WITH THE SUPPORT OF SƏNALA PLANNING

IMAGE CREDITS

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FIG. 1

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FIG. 2

Introduction

Nlaka'pamux Health Services Society

The Nlaka'pamux Health Services Society was established in 2019 and includes 12 of the 15 Nlaka'pamux communities as Society Members. The communities are:

- *Ashcroft Indian Band*
- *Coldwater Indian Band*
- *Cooks Ferry Indian Band*
- *Kanaka Bar Indian Band*
- *Lower Nicola Indian Band*
- *Lytton First Nation*
- *Nicomen Indian Band*
- *Nooaitch Indian Band*
- *Oregon Jack Creek Indian Band*
- *Shackan Indian Band*
- *Siska Indian Band*
- *Skuppah Indian Band*

NHSS is a team of technical administrative staff, wellness coordinators, health care service providers, and emergency management staff that supports health and wellness programs, services, and Nation-based initiatives for the Member communities. There is also one Health Governance Representative who supports health governance matters alongside community leadership.

The administrative team oversees the following health and wellness services:

- *Nursing Services*
- *Mental Health and Addictions*
- *Resource Sharing*
- *Emergency Management*
- *Wellness*

Our *Mission*

To be the sustainable and trusted source of health services for the Nlaka'pamux Nation.

Our *Vision*

Provide the Nlaka'pamux Nation with dependable and reliable health and wellness through

- Collaboration with partners
- Advocation for the nation
- Community engagement
- Capacity Building
- Primary health and wellness services
- Preventative health and wellness programs

Our *Values*

Respect: We have respect for our Nation, our Language, and our individual differences.

Trust: We maintain trust with those using our services through honesty and privacy.

Transparency: We believe in open and honest communication.

Integrity: We believe in doing the right thing, even when others are not looking.

Holistic: We put care into our work and use both traditional and Western approaches to health and wellness.

Diversity: The principles of equity, diversity and inclusion are integrated into our approach.

Geographical Context

The Nlaka’pamux Nation is located in what is now known as the Interior Region of British Columbia. There are a total of 15 First Nation Bands throughout the Fraser Canyon and South Interior that are all unique communities based on their geographical location. The Nation’s territory goes beyond health region authority borders and other imposed borders. The Nation shares a common language with various dialects, culture and beliefs that come from the land of the Nlaka’pamux Peoples. Understanding the geographical context of the Nation is critical in upholding Nlaka’pamux Traditional Wellness to ensure the distinctions of the communities are honoured and the varying protocols surrounding ceremonies and practices are followed within the proper locations throughout the territory.

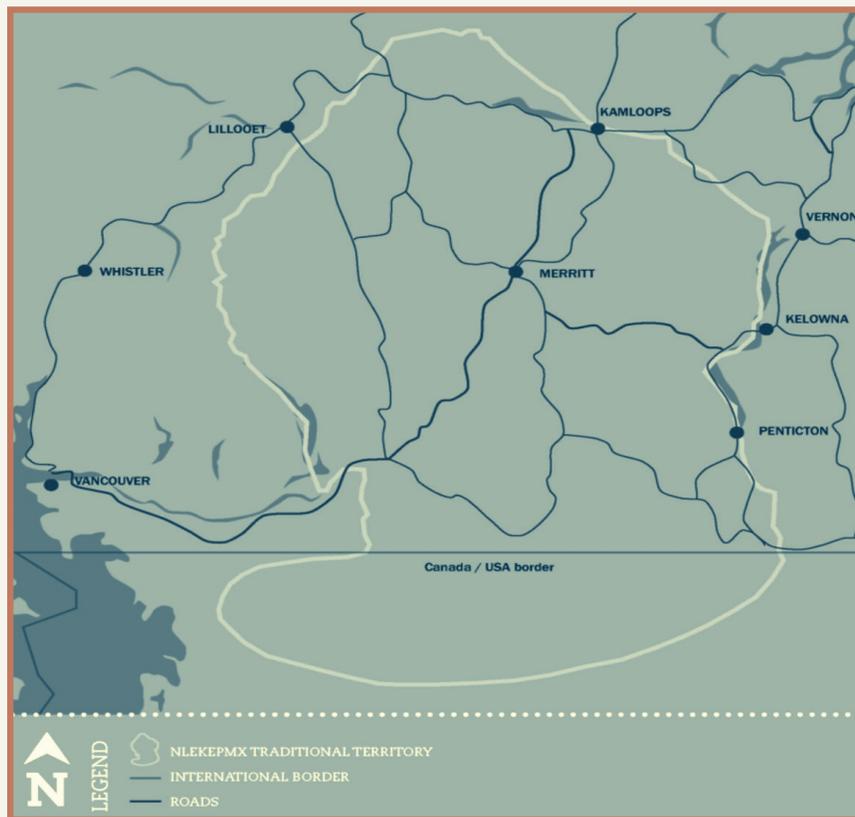


FIG. 3

Purpose

Traditional Wellness is a term that may mean something different to everyone. It is important to listen to our inner voices when we practice, and do what is best for ourselves. From a shared perspective, Traditional Wellness encompasses traditional medicines, practices, approaches, and knowledge (FNHA, 2014). These customs have been practiced and passed on from generation to generation since time immemorial throughout Indigenous Nations. It is fundamental to the health and wellness of Indigenous Peoples to have access to Traditional Wellness including traditional healers,

traditional medicines, traditional foods, ceremonies, and other practices that are unique and distinct to each Nation.

In 2023, the Nlaka’pamux Health Services Society (NHSS) initiated a process to develop an Nlaka’pamux Traditional Wellness Framework. The purpose of this framework is to guide the NHSS in:

- Developing and delivering programs and services that encompass Nlaka’pamux Traditional Wellness practices and knowledge
- Providing on the land funding to communities, and supporting communities in spending that funding
- Increasing access to practice Traditional Wellness for all Nlaka’pamux Peoples
- Providing a basis for guidelines on cultural supports and honorariums
- Sharing the Traditional Wellness Framework with external organizations and Nlaka’pamux organizations to develop parity among honorarium guidelines and processes in the Nlaka’pamux territory
- Ensuring safety for Nlaka’pamux people accessing programs and services

The Nlaka’pamux Traditional Wellness Framework is a living document that will be hosted by the Nlaka’pamux Health Services Society. It is important to note that this framework was developed for the use of the NHSS and does not speak on behalf of the Nlaka’pamux Nation and Peoples as a whole. The intention of this framework is for guidance purposes only and may be updated as needed to reflect Nation circumstances.

Methodology

To gain an understanding of the existing information on Nlaka’pamux Traditional Wellness, the project began with a review of various documents provided by NHSS to Sanala Planning. This included the 2018–19 Traditional Wellness Framework, past research on protocols and cultural guidelines, and other relevant documentation.

The engagement process engaged 330 participants and spanned approximately one year, beginning in late Spring 2023 with the Scw’exmx Elders Group and sessions in Nicola Valley, Canyon Area, as well as on Zoom. After a pause due to local wildfire activity, work

FIG. 4





FIG. 5

resumed in January 2024 with a community engagement event hosted at each of the 12 Nlaka'pamux communities served by NHSS. These engagements were facilitated by Sanala Planning and included an overview of the project and a high level shareback on what has been heard to date, followed by a discussion on Traditional Wellness and Land Based Healing. Some common questions asked of community members included:

- What does traditional wellness mean to you?
- What are some traditional wellness practices that you are aware of?
- What land-based activities did you do growing up that you would like to see more of?
- What would you like to see available to Nation members in terms of traditional wellness and land-based healing?

In addition to community-specific engagements, the project team hosted engagements with the Men's Group, as well as Service Providers & NHSS Health Staff in both Lytton and Merritt. All engagements included a meal, often provided by a local cook, as well as a number of draw prizes as an offer of reciprocity for participants and their time.

Following the community engagement process, a draft Traditional Wellness Framework and draft Land Based Healing Plan was presented to leadership and health directors for feedback in May 2024.

Timeline of Engagements

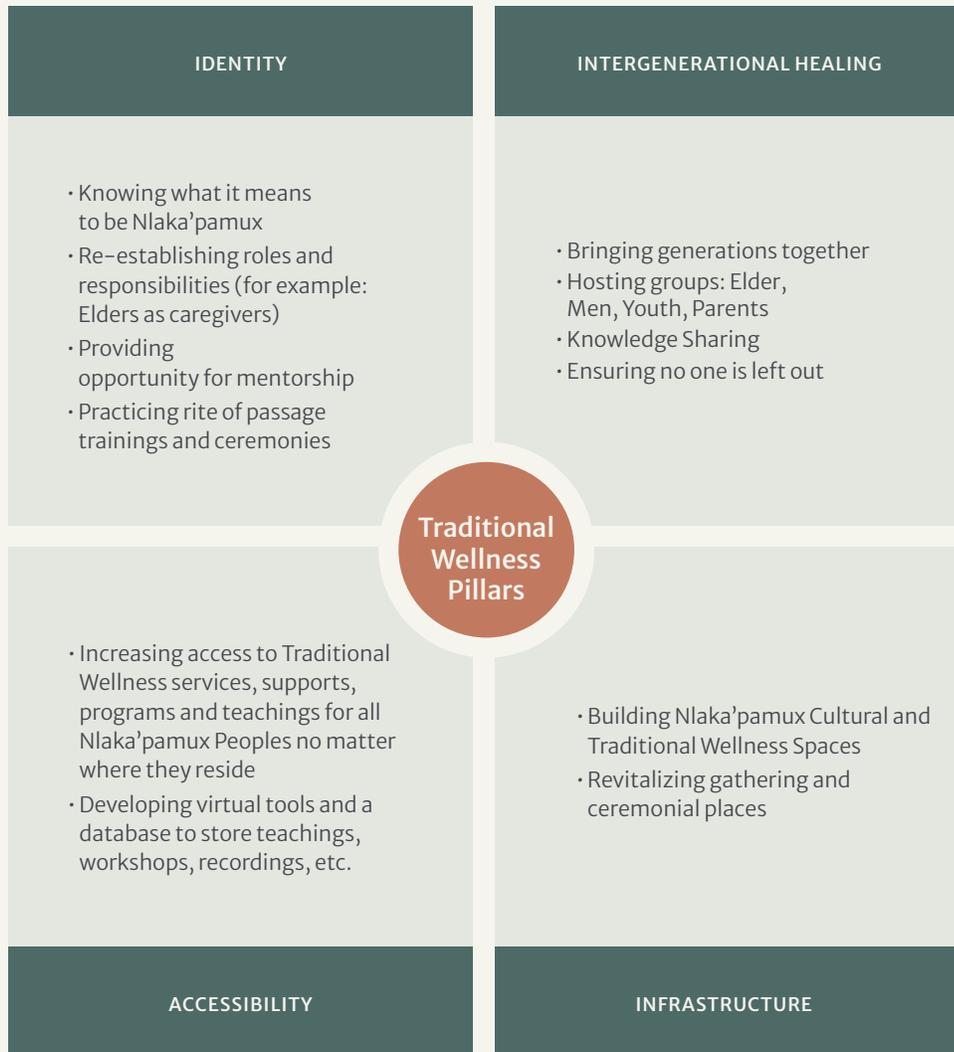


SECTION I:

Nlaka’pamux Traditional Wellness Framework

Traditional Wellness Pillars

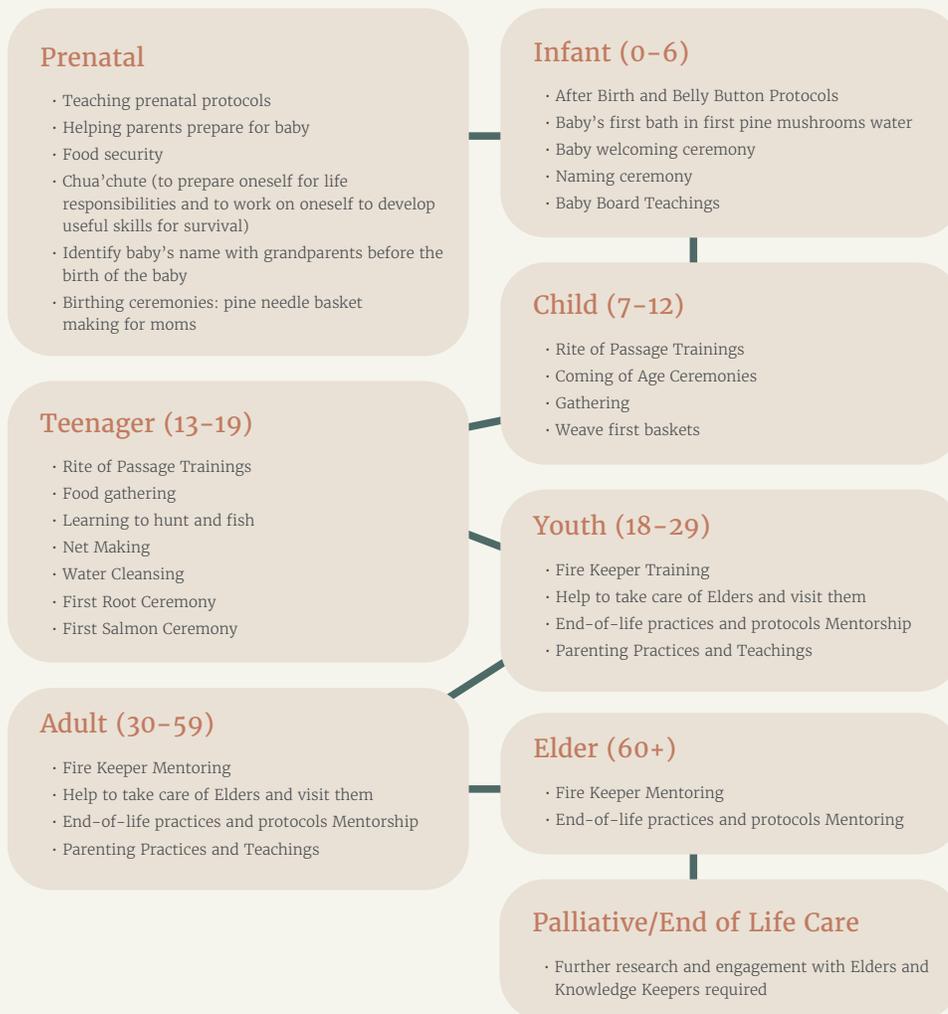
The Traditional Wellness Pillars were identified through the community engagements and the perspectives of Nlaka’pamux individuals who shared what they would like to see for Traditional Wellness in the Nation. Throughout the engagements there were four pillars that shone through the stories and perspectives shared for the Nation and each community. Nlaka’pamux Health Services Society will be guided by these four pillars that are the foundation of ensuring Traditional Wellness is woven throughout services, programs and gatherings delivered by NHSS.



Traditional Wellness through the Lifecycle

Service Providers from Nlaka’pamux organizations and communities provided their expertise and guidance and from their recommendations a Lifecycle has established the structure of the Traditional Wellness Framework. Traditional Wellness through the Lifecycle will provide insight into Traditional Wellness practices and approaches that may occur at each stage of one’s life that can be supported by Nlaka’pamux Health Services Society. It is acknowledged that each community and/or family may have different teachings, and as such the timeline and practices will not be the same for everyone. The Lifecycle structure is intended to ensure that no one is left out from accessing and increasing Traditional Wellness for individuals, families, communities and the Nation.

Further details on ceremonies and protocols listed below can be found in “Nlaka’pamux Nation Traditional Wellness Framework on Cultural Teachings” by Ko’waintco Michel.



SECTION II:

Traditional Wellness Guidelines

Drumming Guidelines

NLAKA'PAMUX VALUES

- Respect
- Pride
- Communication
- Humility

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- We are the role models of children
- We must acknowledge where songs are from, the meaning and why they are sung
- Ask permission to carry songs
- Be gentle with one another, especially the youth
- Holding a drum is like holding a sweat lodge, it has to be respected and honoured
- Look after yourself when drumming so your family is always protected
- Be gentle with your drum, hold it like you would a baby
- Do not exclude anyone, give them a chance to heal
- Drum and sing with a good heart

KNOWLEDGE SHARING

- Share knowledge of songs with people in a good way
- Learn new songs and where they come from
- Students are fast learners and learning gives them a sense of self esteem and connection
- Correct mistakes in a respectful way so that learners are not discouraged
- Talk to each other in a good way
- Share happy songs and dance to children
- Provide support for language teachers

SONGS

- Always sing in a good way and respect everyone
- The songs are prayers and need to be respected
- There is a song for each event: funerals, lahal, welcome, happy, ceremonies, sweat, honour songs, winter dance songs, etc.
- Give hope through songs

Funeral Guidelines

“Different families have different practices and protocols – funeral protocols should be a convo on their own, it’s an emotional topic, but we actually need to DO it and not just keep it on the paper – should be seen as guidelines as places will differ, should not be prescriptive but foundational”

–COLDWATER KNOWLEDGE KEEPER

There are Funeral Protocols that have been developed by the Nlaka’pamux Health Services Society in past years. The Funeral Protocols outline customs that Nlaka’pamux Peoples have practiced at end of life since time immemorial. It is important to honour the Funeral Protocols that have been developed and keep them as static documents rather than combine them here. Individuals may refer to the Funeral Protocols previously developed for guidance.

Considerations for Service Providers

Organizations wanting to provide communities with support for end of life and funerals should refer to the Chief and Health Director as first points of contact, with the Administrator and Social Development Manager as back ups. This point person may vary from community to community depending on what people are comfortable with. The potential cancellation or continuation of previously scheduled events should be discussed with this community contact before action is taken, as some activities may support healing at this time.

Examples of support organizations can provide for end of life and funerals:

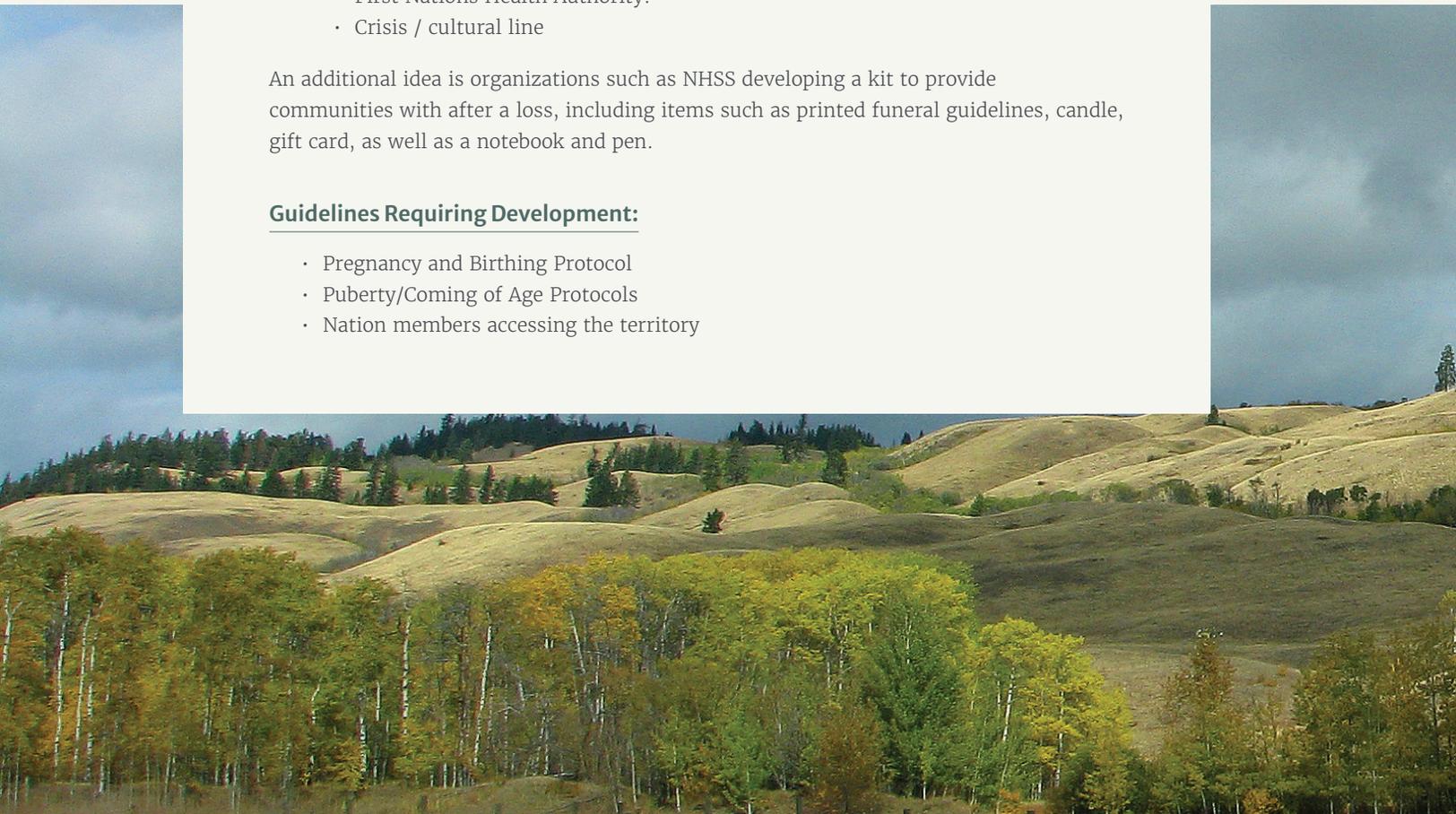
- **Nlaka’pamux Health Services Society:**
 - Wellness and outreach supports
 - Liaison to mental health clinicians
- **Resource and information sharing**
 - First Nations Health Authority:
 - Crisis / cultural line

An additional idea is organizations such as NHSS developing a kit to provide communities with after a loss, including items such as printed funeral guidelines, candle, gift card, as well as a notebook and pen.

Guidelines Requiring Development:

- Pregnancy and Birthing Protocol
- Puberty/Coming of Age Protocols
- Nation members accessing the territory

FIG. 6



SECTION III:

Honorarium and Cultural Supports Guidelines

Engaging an Elder or Knowledge Keeper Guideline

Introduction

To date, the roles for Elders and Knowledge Keepers have not had formal recognition with respect to establishing specific responsibilities or terms of service.

This document is intended as a resource document for Scw'exmx organizations and Scw'exmx Elders regarding how the community can benefit from and appropriately respect the role of Elders.

Further it should focus the need to ensure adequate project and resource planning for the respectful inclusion of Elders and Knowledge Keepers. It should recognize the need for adequate preparation by all parties so that outcomes and outputs are unambiguous, satisfactory and valuable, as well as, valued. Note: This guideline was developed by the SCHSS Elders in 2019.

Purpose

The intended purpose of this guide is to assist the Scw'exmx community in understanding the cultural protocols involved when inviting an Elder or Traditional Knowledge Keeper to events.

Elders are, on occasion, invited to share in the opening/closing of events, speak to meeting participants, participate on committees and in workshops, take part in interviews and provide support, guidance and spiritual help. The purpose of this document is to consider establishing protocol and guidelines for working with Elders and Knowledge Keepers, to ensure consistency in:

- Extending invitations
- Respectful care
- Providing honoraria and compensation for additional costs

Elders and Knowledge Keepers

Elders or Traditional Knowledge Keepers are important within Indigenous communities and central to Indigenous cultures. When inviting an Elder to participate in an event, it is important to understand who is designated as an Elder, who to invite, and how to invite them.

Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers play a prominent, vital and respected role. They are leaders, teachers, role models and mentors in their respective communities. Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers can provide informal and formal teachings to raise awareness of Aboriginal histories and worldviews and to help both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staffs and others increase their own cultural competency.

Requesting Services of an Elder

In order to maintain a respectful approach when requesting the services of an Elder or Traditional Knowledge Keeper, the following protocols are encouraged:

- A request should be sent well in advance when extending invitations.
- When making a request, it is customary to present a gift by the person making the request, at the first opportunity.
- Keep in mind when contacting an Elder or Traditional Knowledge Keeper, they each have their own specialties so sometimes more than one Elder may be consulted. Because Elders have different knowledge it is also important to give Elders ample time to prepare and confer with others when necessary.
- The gift at this stage is most often the gift of traditional tobacco tied in a small bundle or some other practical item. Considering health effects, tobacco may no longer be practical.

Gifting an Elder

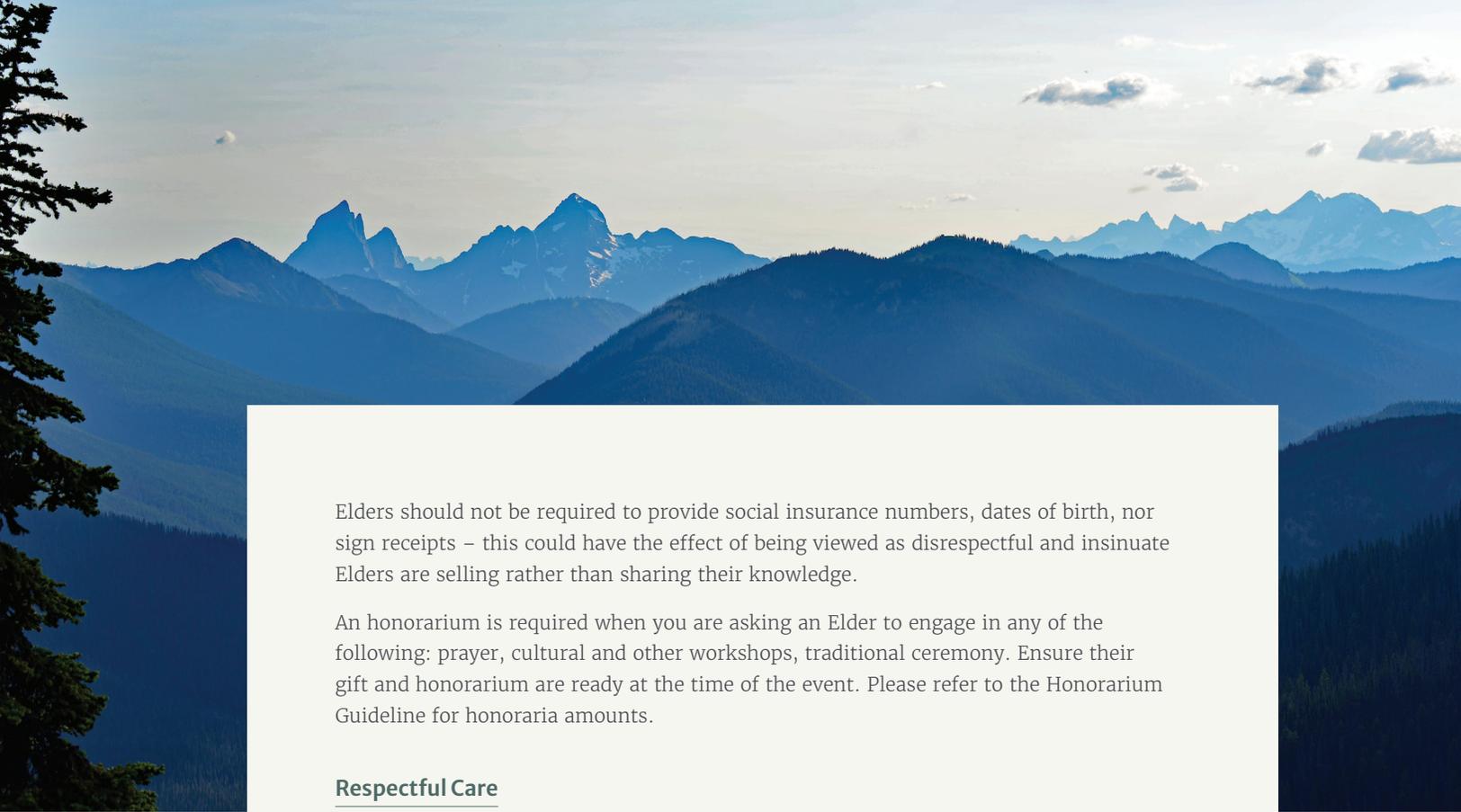
Gifts for Elders were traditionally a means of support with which Elders would feed, clothe, and shelter themselves. People gave genuinely what they could afford in essentials such as fabric, clothes, fur, meat, or firewood.

In contemporary times, the gifts may be traditional or exclusively ceremonial and/or the Elder is financially supported through a system of honoraria.

Honoraria as Gifts of Appreciation

It is common practice to provide an honorarium to Elders for sharing their traditional knowledge in a show of reciprocity. This honorarium is viewed as a gift to the Elder or Knowledge Keeper. It is important to keep this in mind because these honoraria are not payments for services rendered but rather are gestures of appreciation for what has been taught and shared. Gift giving promotes balance.

Elders are not paid for their work, which is why an honorarium is an appropriate exchange for their knowledge. Historically Elders were given food or other essentials for their help, today money is acceptable.



Elders should not be required to provide social insurance numbers, dates of birth, nor sign receipts – this could have the effect of being viewed as disrespectful and insinuate Elders are selling rather than sharing their knowledge.

An honorarium is required when you are asking an Elder to engage in any of the following: prayer, cultural and other workshops, traditional ceremony. Ensure their gift and honorarium are ready at the time of the event. Please refer to the Honorarium Guideline for honoraria amounts.

Respectful Care

Ensure to coordinate a host/escort for the Elder. The host/escort is responsible for:

- Ensuring transportation to and from the event
 - You must make travel arrangements with the Elder. Additional costs incurred by the Elder, such as parking, mileage, meals and accommodations, should be reimbursed, immediately following the event.
- Meeting and greeting the elder upon their arrival
- Taking care of the Elder until their departure (i.e. offer and assist with getting drinks, food, etc.).

In some cases, Elders may be accompanied by an “Elder’s helper.” This person will have an established relationship with the Elder and will be available to assist the Elder with whatever they need. Nevertheless, a host/escort should be arranged since the Elder and helper likely will not know their way around the event venue.

Explicit consent must be received from the Elder before any photographs, audio and/or video recordings are taken. Elders may carry sacred items, such as pipes, eagle feathers, medicine pouches etc. – do not touch these items unless you are given permission.

In respect of the Elder, always ask permission and seek clarification if there is something you do not understand.

Recognition

In the event any documentation (reports), video or other productions are part of a conclusion to a project in which an elder has participated, recognition of their contribution should be part of any formal acknowledgements in the final productions.

FIG. 7

Honorarium Guideline

Purpose

Following outreach to other Nation organizations, Nlaka'pamux Health Services Society found that organizations do not have Honorarium Guidelines or Policies to follow when providing honoraria to Nation members. This results in inconsistencies between organizations and how they determine adequate compensation for Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and other Nlaka'pamux citizens. The importance of this Honorarium Guideline is to provide a baseline for honorariums within Nlaka'pamux Health Services Society and encourage collaboration between Nation organizations to follow this guide that has been informed by Nlaka'pamux Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and citizens.

Developing the Guideline

Nlaka'pamux citizens were engaged through in-person and virtual sessions and provided with an example honoraria compensation table to determine what the Honorarium Guideline would look like for both process and honoraria amounts. Through these engagements we discovered varying perspectives surrounding honorariums. The Honorarium Guideline is foremost a guide but individuals will determine how they would like to receive an honorarium, if at all.

Important Note

The Honorarium Guideline is intended to be used solely by Nlaka'pamux organizations and is not relevant to personal relations such as families helping families, community to community support, or other activity that may occur outside of organizational events, programs, or services. As directed by Nlaka'pamux Elders, if a family is seeking support or engages an Elder or Knowledge Keeper for help, they will determine how they will compensate that person for their time and support. Thank you to the Nlaka'pamux Elders and Knowledge Keepers that provided stories of their upbringing and experiences that carry Nlaka'pamux teachings and values of helping one another without expecting anything in return and honouring each other in ways that suit the family's means.

Traditional Teachings and Values

Throughout the engagements, Elders and Knowledge Keepers shared values of reciprocity and helping one another that were an integral part of their upbringing. We would like to highlight these teachings and recognize that an honorarium may not be appropriate in some circumstances. It is important to share these teachings to emphasize that honorariums are a contemporary method to honour someone for their time, knowledge, and help – practices that have been in place since time immemorial for Nlaka'pamux Peoples, but in different ways prior to contact.

- If we do things in a good way, we walk in a good way and Creator will look after us.
- If family asks for help from someone, they will honour someone with what they can afford.
- We are taught to help without expecting anything in return.

- It is important to honour everyone’s knowledge and time.
- When families are grieving, there should not be an expectation to receive something for helping them.
- Traditionally, there were other methods of gifting that were not monetary.

Contemporary Considerations

In addition to the Traditional Teachings and Values that were shared, younger generations shared perspective of the importance of providing monetary honorariums in today’s society.

- We do not want to see any Nlaka’pamux People disrespected when sharing their time and knowledge.
- We can be shapeshifters and accommodate to the contemporary environment of honorariums.
- If individuals want to decline an honorarium, they can ask to have it donated.
- Money is our new form of honouring someone’s time and service.
- When people are called to do something, they often have to take time off of school or work.
- Our people don’t receive the credit or recognition for the knowledge they hold. We want to ensure current and younger generations are acknowledged for their work.
- Organizations should seek opportunities to gift traditional foods, art, and etc., as alternative honorarium.
- Travel supports should be provided in addition to honorarium.

Guideline for Organizations

“I would like to see our people treated equally amongst each other – we’ve been split, we need to get back together. If there is honorarium it should be done equally”

–LOWER NICOLE KNOWLEDGE KEEPER

<p>1</p> <p>Build a relationship with the Elders and Knowledge Keepers so that you can get to know them, their beliefs and practices, and preferences.</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Follow Nlaka’pamux Engaging and Elder Protocol or Community-Specific Protocol to Request Elder or Knowledge Keeper Support if you have not developed relationships first.</p>
<p>3</p> <p>At time of request share the honoraria amount that will be provided, if there are transportation or other supports available and full event details.</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Support coordination of travel time, expenses and supports.</p>
<p>5</p> <p>Refer to Nlaka’pamux Honorarium Guideline for adequate honoraria amounts.</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Provide honoraria and travel support the day of the event. No wait time.</p>

Honorarium Guideline Table

“Elders should be in another category, should be a flat rate whenever they are called upon. Food should also be offered. For me it would be \$1,000 for Elders, their time and availability is becoming more scarce.”

SUPPORTS	HONORARIA AMOUNT
NLAKA'PAMUX ELDERS	
Baseline Fees for Elders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · \$250 per hour preparation time · \$500 minimum (half day or less) · \$1,000 per day
Nlaka'pamux Member Knowledge Sharing with organizations or individuals outside of Nlaka'pamux Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · \$1,000 per person per day
INTERNAL RATES	
Opening or Closing Prayers and Remarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · \$250 per person* <i>*Amount will increase if longer than 60 minutes total</i>
Event Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · \$250 per person for half day · \$500 per person for full day
Speaker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · \$200 per hour for preparation time · \$300 per hour for speaker time
Nlaka'pamux Drummers and Singers or Dancers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · \$250 per person (half day)* · \$500 per person full day* <i>*Or at the discretion of the individual</i>
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · At the discretion of the individual
TRAVEL	
Travel Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · \$100 per hour
Mileage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · \$0.70 per kilometre or current standard rate
Travel Expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · All travel expenses will be covered including accommodation, transportation, parking, incidentals, and food per diems in alignment with current standard rates.

Traditional and Cultural Supports Guideline

Purpose

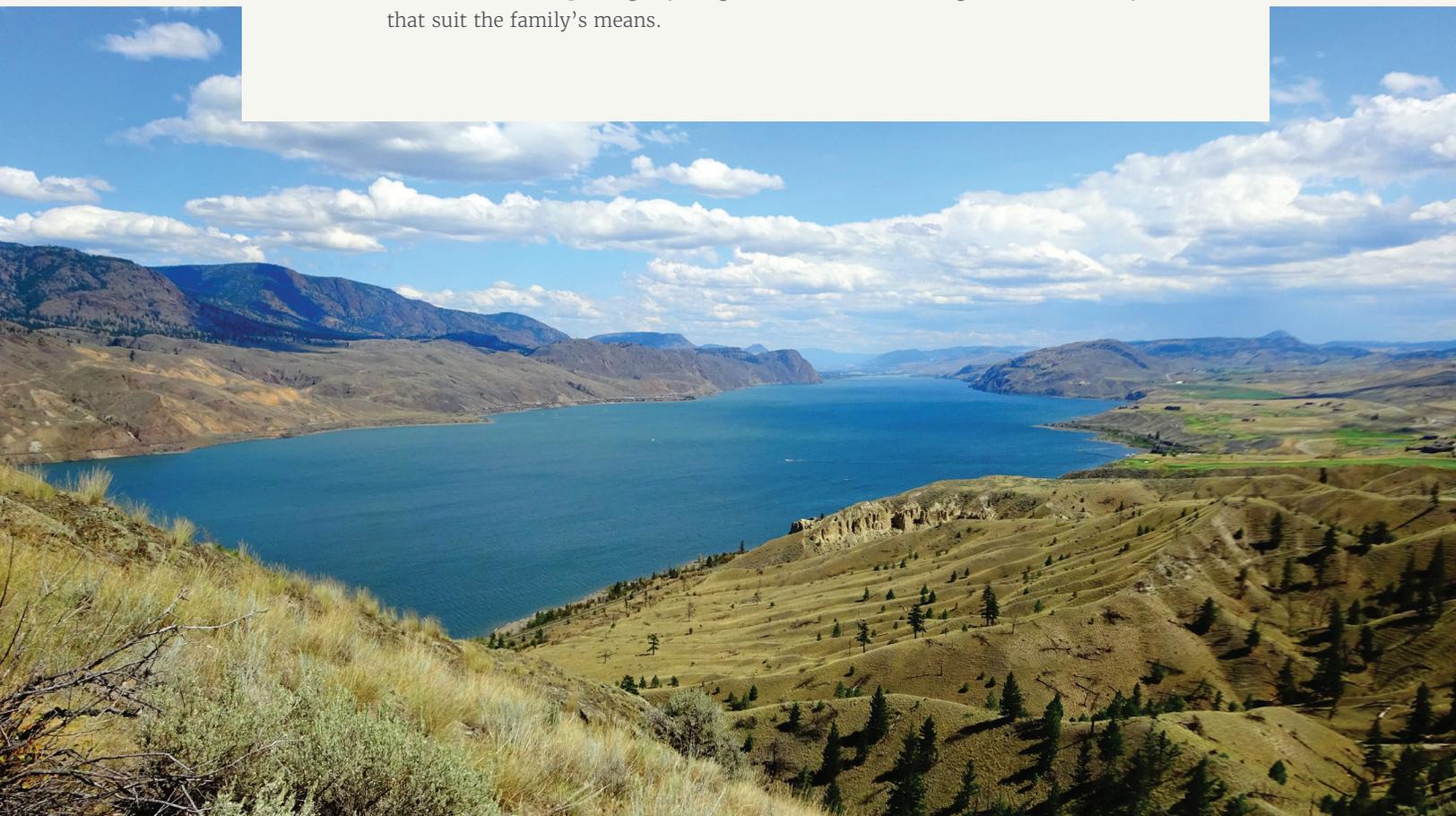
The Traditional and Cultural Supports Guideline is intended to guide Nlaka’pamux Health Services Society in establishing parameters for how they may provide support to individuals seeking Traditional or Cultural Supports. In the context of this document, Traditional and Cultural Supports may include:

- Smudging
- Ceremony
- Brushing Off
- Cleansing Practices
- Prayers
- Songs and Drumming
- Engaging members to help gather medicines or other traditional items
- Engaging members who may mentor others in these areas

For the purposes of this guideline, Nlaka’pamux Health Services Society may support the following in relation to Traditional and Cultural Supports:

- Sharing resource lists of Traditional and Cultural supports
- Supporting Nlaka’pamux members navigate how to access traditional, cultural or other wellness services and resources
- Advocating with Nlaka’pamux Leadership for funding and resources to increase Traditional and Cultural supports in communities and the Nation
- Co-developing a Mentorship Program for Traditional and Cultural Supports
- Working with Nlaka’pamux members to gather, harvest, and store medicines such as sage, cedar, juniper, tobacco, and etc., to ensure everyone has access to these medicines when needed that carry Nlaka’pamux teachings and values of helping one another without expecting anything in return and honouring each other in ways that suit the family’s means.

FIG. 8



Nlaka’pamux Health Services Society Scope

SERVICE	SCOPE OF SERVICE
<p>Sharing resource lists of Traditional and Cultural supports</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Nlaka’pamux Health Services Society will maintain a Resource List of Traditional and Cultural Supports in the Nation · The Resource List will be available to all Nlaka’pamux members upon request · NHSS may act as a liaison between the individual seeking supports and the service provider · NHSS will seek input from communities to ensure the Resource List is updated regularly and accurate
<p>Supporting Nlaka’pamux members navigate how to access traditional, cultural or other wellness services and resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Nlaka’pamux Health Services will develop informational resources that outline how members can access funding for Traditional and Cultural Supports · NHSS will assist members in completing required paperwork for non-insured health benefits or other processes to access funding · Nlaka’pamux members will receive funding directly to ensure they can access Traditional and Cultural supports that they feel safe with
<p>Advocating with Nlaka’pamux Leadership and Health Directors for funding and resources to increase Traditional and Cultural supports in communities and the Nation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Nlaka’pamux Health Services Society may provide technical support to Nlaka’pamux leadership by way of briefing notes, recommendations, or other to support advocacy to health partners for funding and resources · Nlaka’pamux Leadership and Health Directors will bring community concerns and questions to NHSS
<p>Co-developing a Mentorship Program for Traditional and Cultural Supports</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Nlaka’pamux Health Services Society will work with communities to develop a Mentorship Program to train young people for traditional and cultural support roles · NHSS will secure funding to operate a Mentorship Program · NHSS will seek further engagement to develop program structure and processes specific to Traditional and Cultural Supports
<p>Working with Nlaka’pamux members to gather, harvest, and store medicines to increase access</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Nlaka’pamux Health Services Society may use Traditional and Cultural supports funding and resources to host traditional medicines and items · NHSS will engage Elders and Knowledge Keepers to support the proper steps to collect and store · NHSS will gift and/or provide traditional medicines such as sage, cedar, or juniper to ensure Nlaka’pamux members have access year-round

Community-Driven Needs

The Traditional and Cultural Supports Guideline will require ongoing engagement with community to ensure it is a living process that is driven by each Nlaka’pamux community. Foremost, Nlaka’pamux Health Services Society will require the help of communities to determine a vetting process for safe Traditional and Cultural Supports. Questions for community consideration:

- Who are the individuals in your community that provide traditional or cultural supports?
- How do we determine that individuals are ‘safe’?
- Should the process for individuals to be on the Resource List require checklist items such as:
 - Criminal Record Checks
 - Other community-determined processes

This will require ongoing work with communities to ensure the work is being done in a good way. It is a priority of the Nlaka’pamux Health Services Society to ensure safety, wellness, and accessibility for all Nlaka’pamux Peoples.

SECTION IV:

Nlaka’pamux Elders and Knowledge Keepers Resource List

CONTENT NEEDED

