

The *Follow Your Dreams* report (attached as [Appendix B](#)) recommended that NOSM should be an “Indigenous-friendly medical school.” Two of the key recommendations were that NOSM MD graduates be able to practice in culturally safe ways to improve the health of Indigenous Peoples and communities, and that the School build and strengthen partnerships with Indigenous communities.

This led to establishment of the Indigenous Affairs Unit led by a Director of Indigenous Affairs and the Indigenous Reference Group, as well as development of formal partnerships involving written agreements with Indigenous communities and organizations which enable all NOSM medical students to undertake a mandatory four-week immersion experience in a remote or rural Indigenous community in their first year. In addition, Indigenous People are involved in all aspects of the School as staff and faculty members, as learners, on Academic Council and the NOSM Board of Directors.

Since that time, five subsequent Indigenous Community Partnership Gatherings, including two focused on research, have taken place. Each of these Gatherings both informed and provided an opportunity for NOSM leaders, faculty and staff to work together with the Indigenous communities to continually strengthen integration of interests and needs of Indigenous Peoples throughout NOSM’s education and research programs, organizational culture and daily interactions.

As an accredited medical school in the Province of Ontario, which operates in a unionized environment, other important considerations for the Panel are the recognition of NOSM’s obligations to comply with government policies/directives, accreditation standards, legal statutes/precedents and the existing Collective Agreements.

Background

Following the release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) report in 2015, NOSM began to reflect on and review its relationship with Indigenous Peoples, specifically responding to the TRC 94 Calls for Action. As part of its role in providing advice to NOSM’s Dean and CEO on all pertinent matters and initiatives relating to NOSM’s education, research and administration, the *Indigenous Reference Group* (IRG) has brought forward a number of concerns that, in their view, risk of adversely impacting NOSM’s ability to achieve its goals related to Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous health.

At a high level the concerns raised include but are not limited to:

- Partnership between NOSM and Indigenous Peoples and communities should be moving to self-determination for Indigenous Peoples including addressing systemic racism
- The need for Indigenous Peoples to have leadership, influence and authority in the School, whereas the experience to date of some Indigenous Peoples is of not having a voice at NOSM, or of not feeling able to speak up and/or not feeling heard or respected
- Cultural safety, and cultural and academic support in the learning and work environment at NOSM for students, residents, staff and faculty

- The need for evaluation of the effectiveness of the six Indigenous Community Partnership Gatherings, including two focused on research.
- Adequate support for the Indigenous Affairs Unit (IAU) and the IRG
- The importance of Indigenous Peoples developing and delivering specific curriculum related to Indigenous history, tradition, culture, world view and health for all learners, staff and faculty
- The need for organizational processes that respect Indigenous history, tradition and culture including through education/professional development for NOSM staff and faculty members
- Accountability to the Indigenous Peoples and communities of Northern Ontario including engagement with Indigenous youth and research driven by Indigenous Peoples and communities to address the priority concerns of Indigenous Peoples

These are detailed in [Appendix C](#).

As NOSM prepares to welcome a new Dean in July 2019, this work of the Panel is timely and well-positioned to inform a new way forward for NOSM, in partnership with Indigenous Peoples and communities as a key aspect of the next phase of NOSM's development.

Scope of Work

The reporting structure is designed to ensure partnership and transparency throughout the process. The Panel will liaise regularly with a Liaison Group (LG) composed of equal numbers of NOSM Executive Group (EG) nominees and IRG nominees and will be co-chaired by the Vice Dean Academic (VDA) and an IRG member. The LG will serve as the primary conduit for information gathering and sharing (See [Appendix E](#) for Terms of Reference for the LG). Administratively the Panel will report to the VDA.

The majority of the Panel work will involve consultation of stakeholders and key informants who can share their observations and experience with NOSM and its people, programs/services. The list of key interviewees will be determined and agreed to by both NOSM Executive Group (EG) and the IRG. The Panel may identify other interviewees as well.

The Panel will undertake a Desktop Analysis as a first step, followed by a face-to-face Meeting of Panel and visits to NOSM, including several community sites.

A desktop analysis of key documents will also help inform the Panel in their undertaking. The lists of these documents include, but are not limited to:

1. NOSM's Response to the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action
2. Indigenous Reference Group Terms of Reference
3. NOSM Strategic Plan and Roadmap to 2020
4. Follow Your Dreams Report 2003
5. Walking the Vision 2014 Report
6. Indigenous Research Gathering 2016 Report
7. Pathways to Wellbeing Workshop 2017 Report

8. IRG Issues and Recommendations 2017
9. Evaluations of IRG relationships and community gathering
10. Other appropriate documents as requested by the Panel, IRG or stakeholders

These documents can be referenced in [Appendix D](#)

Key elements that are to be included in the Panel's final recommendations are as follows (but not limited to):

- Summary (Environmental Scan) of how other jurisdictions (provinces, facilities, educational organizations, etc.) are: responding to the TRC 94 Calls to Action; as well as supporting the rights of and enhancing partnerships with Indigenous Peoples.
- Identification of steps that all must pursue immediately to recognize, respect and support the immemorial, constitutional, treaty and international rights of Indigenous Peoples and strengthen meaningful relations between NOSM and Indigenous Peoples and communities
- Description of needs for academic and cultural support for Indigenous learners, along with suggestions on how to overcome any deficits in provision of resources/support to meet those needs.
- Recommendations on how Indigenous history, tradition and culture should best be included in NOSM education programs.
- Recommendations on how NOSM can improve internal processes to respect Indigenous history, tradition and culture including through education/professional development for NOSM staff and faculty members, and through revisions to policies and procedures.
- Recommendations for renewing the role and function of the Indigenous Reference Group and Elders Council.
- Recommendations on how IRG, NOSM and Indigenous communities can work in partnership to:
 - Support Indigenous communities across Northern Ontario to move towards self-determination, health equity, and access to health care
 - Build upon the NOSM response to the TRC 94 Calls to Action that are within NOSM's capacity.
 - Ensure that the rights, voices and influence of Indigenous Elders, learners, faculty, staff and communities are recognized when participating in School programs, activities and services.

Deliverables

- Project Status Reports (initial findings/trends/patterns and quick wins) provided to EG and IRG on *(April 30th and May 30th 2018)*

- Draft Report (recommendations) submitted to IRG and NOSM EG – (July 31st)
- Final Draft Report – (September 19, 2018)

Milestones

The project will commence in February 2018 with an expected completion (final report presented to the EG and IRG) on September 19, 2018 at the Indigenous Community Partnership Gathering in Kenora. The following is a suggested workplan/timelines, subject to review and periodic amendment/refinement:

Item #	Activity	Responsibility	Date 2018
1	Terms of Engagement Approved by EG	EG	Feb. 14
2	Terms of Engagement revised in consultation with Panel and IRG		Feb 20 - 28
3	Terms of Engagement Finalized		March 7
4	Finalize contract/letters of commitment	NOSM and Panel	March
5	Identification of Key Stakeholders	IRG and EG	Feb. 28 ongoing
6	Meeting of the Panel	Panel	By March 7
7	List of key documents/establishment of Drop Box for Panel	Dean's Office	Mar 2
8	First meeting of Liaison Group (LG) and the Panel	Co-Chairs LG	By Mar 30
9	Desktop Analysis of pertinent documents	Panel	Mar. – Apr.
10	Consultations	Panel	March - June
11	Meetings with Liaison Group as needed	Panel LG	March - June
11	Project Updates #1 to the Liaison Group	Panel	By Apr. 30
12	Attendance face-to-face IRG – tentatively Sudbury	Panel	May 22
13	Project Updates #2 to the Liaison Group	Panel	May 30
14	Submission (and review) of Draft Report	Panel, IRG and EG	July 31
15	Submission (and review) of Final Report	Panel, EG and IRG	Sept 19

Initial Principles for Discussion

- Recognition of the success and gains made since the creation of NOSM (2002).
- Recognition of the valued resource IRG provides to the Dean and CEO, the EG and NOSM as a whole school.

- Acknowledgement by all that the review is intended to help strengthen and improve trust, respect and partnerships going forward.
- Be mindful and tolerant of the cultural views and ways of all participants in the review.
- Recognition of the traumatic legacy and ongoing effects of colonization that result in severe inequities in health care and longstanding structural barriers that exist for Indigenous Peoples.
- Emphasis on a “shared responsibility” to implement solutions that are grounded in trust, mutual respect and collaboration.
- Recognition and respect for traditional knowledge and worldview of Indigenous Peoples and a holistic approach.
- Recognition of NOSM’s obligations to comply with government policies/directives, accreditation standards, and legal statute/precedents.
- Pursue strategies that balance the needs and interests of the Indigenous Peoples and communities, and all NOSM learners, staff and faculty, including fiscal abilities of organizations.
- Other principles to be added or developed when needed

Appendix A

Four individuals with combined clinical, medical education and research, Indigenous and non-Indigenous backgrounds have been approached and accepted to serve on the Expert Panel.

- Dr. Marcia Anderson, Medical Officer of Health, Winnipeg Regional Health Authority; Executive Director of Indigenous Academic Affairs, Ongomiizwin Indigenous Institute of Health and Healing, Rady Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Manitoba.
- Dr. Sheila Cote-Meek, Associate Vice President, Academic & Indigenous Program, Professor, School of Rural and Northern Health, Laurentian University, Sudbury.
- Dr. Jerry Maniate, Vice President, Education, The Ottawa Hospital; Assistant Professor of Medicine, University of Ottawa; Invited Member, Wilson Centre for Research in Education, University of Toronto.
- Dr. Lisa Richardson, Co-lead, Indigenous Medical Education, Assistant Professor, Department of Medicine, University of Toronto; Education Researcher, Wilson Centre for Research in Education, University of Toronto.