



ACPRO Association of Canadian Psychology
Regulatory Organizations

AOCRP Association des organisations canadiennes
de réglementation en psychologie

An Apology to Indigenous People and a Pledge to Be Anti-Racist

As the Association of Canadian Psychology Regulatory Organizations (ACPRO), an association of organizations that regulate the profession of psychology in Canada, we apologize to the Indigenous people (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) and communities who have experienced racism while engaging with the individual psychology regulatory organizations or with the psychology professionals we regulate.

As regulators, ACPRO's member organizations govern more than 19,000 professionals who provide regulated psychological services in Canada. The mandate of the regulator is to protect the public by ensuring that the delivery of ethical, safe, and quality care.

On October 16, 2020, the Federal Ministers of Health, Indigenous Services, Crown-Indigenous Relations, and Northern Affairs issued a joint statement which declared a commitment to eliminate systemic racism in the healthcare system, saying: "It is unacceptable that First Nations, Inuit and Métis continue to endure systemic racism and discrimination when seeking the care they need. Racism kills and systemic racism kills systematically". They further stated: "We must work together with Indigenous partners and health professionals, governing bodies, and provinces and territories in order to end racism and systemic discrimination and ensure equal and compassionate care of Indigenous Peoples."

ACPRO agrees with this joint statement. Specific actions must be taken to address Indigenous specific racism in the healthcare system and to ensure that the registered psychologists regulated by ACPRO member organizations, do the same. Our pledge now is to promote anti-racism and to support regulated healthcare professionals to do the same.

We will take this journey together, knowing that recognizing racism in ourselves and others will not be comfortable or easy. As a profession, psychology has relied on methods and epistemologies that may have been harmful to the rights and dignities of Indigenous people. As we acknowledge this failure to meet our ethical standards, members of ACPRO commit to moving ahead in a good way.

We will be guided by Indigenous elders and professionals and by the legal and ethical requirements to provide respect, dignity, and equity in providing psychological services for the Indigenous people of our jurisdictions. These actions are key in regaining and sustaining the trust of Indigenous people. It is only through consistent concrete action to uphold Indigenous rights and eliminate racism within the healthcare system that we can begin to slowly earn the trust of Indigenous people.

As an association of provincial and territorial regulatory bodies of psychologists, we strongly encourage our member organizations to take the following steps to demonstrate leadership and dedication:

- Be anti-racist leaders who will foster a speak-up culture, where stereotypes, discrimination and racism are called out and eliminated.
- Establish clear accountabilities for cultural safety and humility within their Colleges/Boards and for their registrants.
- Draw on Indigenous Knowledge Keepers and professionals to guide their work.
- Provide relevant and specific continuing competency training and explicit guidance on standards of practice to ensure Indigenous people receive culturally safe services from their registrants.
- Work to remove barriers and include supports to ensure that Indigenous people do not feel isolated or unsafe when filing a complaint.
- Ensure board, staff, and committee members are trained in cultural safety and humility, anti-racism, unconscious bias, and, as appropriate, trauma-informed care.
- Strive to broaden Indigenous participation on our boards and committees and staff teams.
- Promote anti-racism and Indigenous cultural safety and humility as core competencies for current and future health-care providers.
- Build partnerships with Indigenous-led organizations to promote system change and dismantle racism.
- Work with all other psychology regulators across the country to promote increased awareness and appropriate changes in professional standards related to research and practice.
- Identify and support changes in legislation and bylaws to deconstruct colonialism, value Indigenous ways of knowing, and eliminate harm for Indigenous people.

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