



NDS First Nations Navigator Role Description

Evidence shows that inviting persons with a history of injection drug use (IDUs) to participate in service evaluations is a harm reduction best practice. As the clients of needle distribution services IDUs understand needle distribution at a practical level: they provide insights about new needle availability, sharing practices, and disposal, program strengths and weaknesses. Their status as peers links evaluation and program staff with local IDU communities and helps to uncover IDU fears and concerns, validate consumption trends (volumes/routes of transmission/drugs of choice), and establish communication with IDU communities. Engaging IDUs makes their experiences visible and accessible to *Approaches to Community Well-Being* program planners.

NDS hopes to recruit an IDU Navigator in each First Nation that it visits. The Navigator's role includes:

Before the Community Visit

- Inform PWUDs that an independent evaluator will be coming to the community to learn from their experiences.
- Ask people in the IDU community if they would like to meet with the evaluator – as individuals – or as a group
- Help to organize a feast where all community members can learn about the NDS and its evaluation. During the meal everyone attending will be invited to participate in **confidential** personal or small group interviews.
- Promote this event within the local IDU community.

During Community Visits

- Based on *their own comfort level*, the Navigator will be asked to provide information about the local drug injection scene. In addition to participating in an anonymous interview with the evaluator, this may include places where needles are thrown away, descriptions of injection drug use harms common in the community, locations where people meet to inject drugs, and introducing the evaluator to IDUs/encouraging IDU participation in group or individual interviews.
- Describe the needs of people who use the NDS: what works and what doesn't work well for people who inject drugs.

After the Community Visit

- Circulate plain-language and **anonymous** summaries of what the evaluator heard while in the community
- Send feedback (corrections, clarifications, additional information) to the evaluator
- Based on *their own comfort level*, participate in a follow-up conference call with Navigators who are helping with the evaluation in other First Nations.

Qualifications

- Is recovering from injection drug use or is an injection drug user who feels able to fill this role
- Has access to e-mail and/or mobile phone
- Lives in the community and is familiar with the local drug injection scene.

Payment

- Each Navigator receives a total of \$400.00. The first payment of \$200.00 is made at the end of the community visit; the second payment of \$200.00 following the Navigator conference call.

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