



Aknotmaq

Highlights of 2025-2026

Maternal and Newborn Health Gathering Brings Together Community, Traditions and Data

By: Coral Paul



Tajikeimik team members, Health Directors and community health staff touring the IWK maternal and newborn clinical spaces

Pregnancy and childbirth are often described as meaningful and magical life experiences. They bring joy and anticipation, but also physical, emotional, mental and financial changes that can feel overwhelming. These changes can happen before, during or after birth, and are felt not only by new mothers, but also by families and communities.

With this in mind, Tajikeimik, along with Health Directors and community health staff came together in September for a two-day gathering focused on maternal and newborn health. The event provided space to learn about IWK Health services, share Mi'kmaw perspectives on pregnancy and birth, review the latest data on maternal and newborn health, and identify opportunities to strengthen Mi'kmaw maternal and newborn health services and outcomes.

Day 1: IWK Tour and Mi'kmaw Birth Practices

The first day began with a tour of IWK Health's maternal and newborn

clinical spaces, including the Birth Unit, Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) and the Family Newborn Care Unit. Participants had the chance to see first-hand how care is provided, understand the supports available for mothers and infants – including those in complex or high-risk situations – and build connections.

The tour also provided an opportunity to advocate for ways to make facilities and services more culturally safe and responsive. Ideas included incorporating more Mi'kmaw language, increasing collaboration between hospitals and community health centres, and providing access to ceremonies like cedar baths that honour birthing parents and newborns.

In the afternoon, Paulina Meader, a Mi'kmaw LPN from Membertou First Nation and Health Director at Wije'winen Health Centre, led a workshop on Indigenous birth practices. The workshop explored

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Maternal and Newborn Health Gathering Continued...

By: Coral Paul

Mi'kmaw perspectives on pregnancy, birth and early life transitions.

Teachings such as Etuaptmumk (Two-Eyed Seeing), Netukulimk (Interconnectedness) and Msit No'kmaq (All My Relations) shaped discussions about how birth is not just a medical event, but also a spiritual, emotional, physical, mental and social experience. Participants learned about traditional ceremonies and practices connected to pregnancy and birth, discussed ways these practices can be respectfully used in modern healthcare settings, and had an open discussion on how cultural safety and trauma-informed care can be put into practice.

Day 2: Health Data and Indicators

The second day focused on building knowledge from data and sharing and identifying opportunities to strengthen Mi'kmaw maternal and newborn health services and outcomes. Data reports are prepared using the Mi'kmaw Client Linkage Registry. Participants reviewed the most recent maternal and newborn health data report prepared by the IWK's Reproductive Care Program of Nova Scotia. Data covered a variety of topics including pregnancy-related and pre-existing health conditions; maternal and infant care; and health outcomes and breastfeeding. Participants also shared feedback to inform the development of future reports.

Feedback and Next Steps

The gathering ended with a group discussion reflecting on the two-day event. Participants discussed priorities to improve maternal and newborn health programs and services and support culturally safe care. The insights shared will help guide future planning and steps taken to improve programs and supports for Mi'kmaw birthing parents, babies and their families.



Tour participants viewing a private suite in the IWK's NICU North.



Mental Wellness and Healing: A Year of Relationships

by Nik Phillips, Director, Mental Wellness and Healing



(L to R) Bridget Stevens, L'nui Npisun Consultant; Nik Philips, Director, Mental Wellness and Healing; Hannah Asprey, Mental Wellness and Healing Program Lead; Blossom LaBillois, Tajikeyumk Coordinator

As we come to the close of another fiscal year, I've been taking time to reflect on the path we've walked together. This year has been about relationships. About listening closely. About building the kind of wellness supports our communities have always asked for, supports that are grounded in who we are as L'nu, in our language, our teachings, and our responsibility to one another.

Over the past year, our Mental Wellness and Healing team has continued to grow in ways that directly reflect the needs of community. I stepped into the role of Director of Mental Wellness and Healing with deep humility and responsibility to serve our people in a good way. Since then, we've welcomed several new team members whose work strengthens the foundation of care across our communities in Nova Scotia.

We now have a Mental Wellness and Healing Program Lead guiding the implementation of our L'nu'k Mental Wellness and Healing Framework; a framework designed by L'nu, for L'nu, built from the stories, experiences, and knowledge shared by our communities.

Our Program Administrative Assistant has been working closely with Health Centres, practitioners, and partners to help keep our work coordinated and connected, ensuring we continue to communicate and share what we're learning together.

Through our Tajikeyumk Coordinator, we've created and supported circles of knowledge where space is held for conversation, reflection, and collective problem-solving. Places where voices are heard and our relationships are strengthened.

We also welcomed a Healing Through Loss Lead, who is walking alongside communities to develop a L'nu approach to crisis, grief, death, and healing. Supporting families and communities during some of life's most tender and difficult moments.

And our L'nui Npisun Consultant continues to ground all of our work in language, culture, and medicines, reminding us that wellness is not separate from who we are; it lives in our teachings, on the land, and in our ways of being together.

Together, this team reflects something important: that mental wellness must be community-led, culturally safe, and rooted in our own knowledge systems.

This past year has given us the opportunity to reconnect with familiar faces and build new, lasting, and accountable relationships. We've spent time with Health Directors, Saqamaq, members of the Santé Mawio'mi, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and many partners to continue mobilising our Mental Wellness and Healing Framework and strengthening our readiness to support community in meaningful ways.

I carry a lot of gratitude for the conversations, the invitations, the honesty, and the guidance that shapes our direction. Everything we do is informed by community voice.

As we move into the next year, we remain committed to building supports that feel safe, familiar, and reflective of who we are as Mi'kmaq.

~ Be well, Nik

We Officially Incorporated: Tajiikeimik Reaches another Milestone in Health Transformation

By: Coral Paul

We are proud that as of January 29, 2025, Tajiikeimik was officially incorporated under the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act, and on April 1, 2025, we officially began operating as our own, independent organization.

These milestones mark significant steps in our journey towards health transformation, bringing us closer to the goal of the Mi'kmaq in Nova Scotia taking control of the design and delivery of their health and wellness services.

Incorporation means that Tajiikeimik now stands as its own legal entity. Guided by the Chiefs and Health Directors from the 13 First Nations in Nova Scotia, this accomplishment represents years of dedication and collaboration. More importantly, it brings us one step closer to establishing a health system that is culturally appropriate, community-driven, and responsive to the unique needs of Mi'kmaw people and communities.

This moment has been years in the making. In July 2018, the Mi'kmaq Chiefs in Nova Scotia asked Ulnooweg

Development Group to host Tajiikeimik until it was ready to stand on its own. As such, we would like to extend our sincerest appreciation to Ulnooweg's Chief Executive Officer, Todd Hoskin, their Chief Operating Officer, Chris Googoo, along with their Board of Directors and team for their support and leadership throughout this journey. Their efforts have helped make this transition possible.

As part of the federal incorporation process, we have registered under the name Tajiikeimik Mi'kmaw Health and Wellness.

"Incorporation is another important milestone on this journey as it shows our readiness as an organization as we prepare to accept the responsibility and funding for health and wellness services and programs from Indigenous Services Canada," said Lindsay Peach, Executive Director at Tajiikeimik.

With this step complete, our focus remains on achieving our goal: realizing the transfer of responsibilities to ensure

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Membertou Incorporation Gathering (L to R): Alexa Sylliboy, Communications Specialist; Jenny Morgan, Program Lead; Cultural Safety and Community Care Transitions; Matthew Collier, Financial Data Analyst; Lucinda Googoo, Mi'kmaq Indigenous Nurse Education Specialist; Cavelle MacNeil, Tui'kn Partnership Administrative Assistant; Sharon (Paul) Rudderham, Director of Health Transformation; Stacey Lewis, Tui'kn Partnership, Project Manager; Erin Holmes, Mi'kmaw Cancer Care Lead; Kim MacDonald, Nuji-Apoqnmuet; Matle'n Joe, Nuji-Apoqnmuet; Charmaine Greencorn, Executive Assistant



Millbrook Incorporation Gathering (L to R): Lindsay Peach, Executive Director; Carolyn Pierce, Director of Communications & Engagement; Coral Paul, Communications Specialist; Nancy MacIntyre-Meagher, Director of Finance; Desiree Murray, Communications and Engagement Assistant; Mary-Jane Abram, Director of People and Organizational Development; Courtney Pennell, Mi'kmaq Indigenous Nurse Education Specialist; Emily Peter-Paul, Mi'kmaq Indigenous Nurse Education Specialist; Jessica Googoo, Nuji-Apoqnmuet; Alice Abram, Nuji-Apoqnmuet

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that Mi'kmaq communities have the tools needed to shape a health system that aligns with their traditions, values, needs, and identity.

“This is an exciting time for those of us who are involved in health care in our communities. I have been fortunate to be involved in the development of Tajikeimik as a community Health Director and have already seen the positive impacts of this organization on our health and wellness with some of the new, culturally relevant programming and supports it provides. I’m looking forward to seeing the good work this organization will do for our communities in the years to come,” said Carla Moore, Millbrook First Nation Director of Health Services.

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to everyone who has contributed to this journey, and we look forward to continuing this important work together.



Want to see how Tajikeimik came to be?
Scan the QR code to watch our origin story video.

Get to Know Our Mental Wellness and Healing Team



Nicholas (Nik) Phillips
Director, Mental Wellness and Healing

Millbrook

“I currently reside in Bible Hill with my family. I have two young children and several dogs, a lizard and a guinea pig, a.k.a. a farm. I love biking and swimming. I enjoy teaching fitness classes in my high energy moments, and enjoy beading on my down times.

“My favourite winter activity is ice fishing. I enjoy the time it takes for the ice to freeze in anticipation of a good smelt harvest. I also enjoy it because it’s a time when many of us gather in the activity, bringing our children and extended family to be present in place.”



Blossom LaBillois
Tajikeyumk Coordinator

Eel River Bar

Is proudly Mi’kmaq/Wolastoqiyik. She loves to travel and embrace new adventures. In the summer, she enjoys time on the golf course, and in the winter, she can be found at the rink, playing hockey or cheering on her nieces and nephews.



Abigail Binns
Administrative Assistant

Sydney

“I currently live in Sydney with my family. I have a wonderful partner (Juny) and a Weiner Dog named Odin. I love to play soccer, doing yoga and enjoy taking Odin for walks. Time with family and friends is how I love to spend my days.

“My favorite winter activity is snow shoeing with my family and going skating at Castle Bay Beach when it freezes with Juny.”



Nik Phillips sharing the L’nu’k Mental Wellness and Healing Framework at the Mi’kmaq Justice, Mental Health and Addictions Conference in June

Tajikeimik Mental Wellness & Healing: Who We Are, What We’ve Done and Where We’re Going

By: Hannah Asprey and Coral Paul

Listening to Mi’kmaq community members speak about the need for more culturally safe and responsive supports for mental health, Tajikeimik took action by creating a Mental Wellness and Healing team. This team includes five individuals who bring energy, expertise, and insight from their own lived experiences as L’nu’k to help guide the work.

One of our first priorities was to design a framework that would shape our work in a meaningful and lasting way. Rooted in Mi’kmaq culture and values, and guided by what we heard directly from community, our team developed the L’nu’k Mental Wellness and Healing Framework. This framework outlines a clear path forward for supporting mental wellness in culturally safe and responsive ways, and is organized around four priority areas:

1. Nikanita’simk (thinking ahead): Prevention and Engagement
2. Tajikeyumk (state of being

healthy): Programming and Maintenance

3. Nepisultimk (actively healing together): Crisis and Response
4. Cultural Quality and Safety: Infrastructure, Capacity and Workforce

With the framework in place, our team quickly moved from planning to action. One of our first major activities was co-hosting the Mi’kmaq Justice, Mental Health and Addictions Conference in June with Kwilmu’kw Maw-klusuaqn (KMKNO) and the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi’kmaq Chiefs. During the three-day conference, Nik Phillips, our Director of Mental Wellness and Healing, shared the L’nu’k Mental Wellness and Healing Framework and led discussions on how Mi’kmaq health and wellness connects to the justice system.

Since the conference, our team has been building several partnerships

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Who We Are Continued...

to strengthen mental wellness and healing for Mi'kmaw communities in Nova Scotia. These include connecting with Medicine People across our communities to learn about traditional medicines and how they are harvested and used, as well as establishing partnerships with the following organizations:

- 811
- Eskasoni Crisis Line
- Human Trafficking & Gender-Based Violence Tables
- Menopause Society of Nova Scotia

Looking ahead, our team is preparing to launch two new circles to support wellness in Mi'kmaw communities. The Food Circle, which focuses on food security and food sovereignty, will bring resources together and support programs that increase access to food — especially traditional foods — in Mi'kmaw communities. The Wellness Circle will bring together our partners who are working collectively to strengthen

mental wellness and healing for Mi'kmaw people.

For updates on our Mental Wellness and Healing team, or to explore our resources, visit the Tajiikeimik website at www.mhwns.ca/programs.

Join the NADACA Virtual Aboriginal Wellness Program

NADACA is now accepting intakes for their 4-Week Certified Virtual Wellness Program, hosted through Google Classroom. The program will cover a variety of topics including cultural teachings, 7 sacred teachings, sweats, boundaries, self-esteem, mental wellness, mindfulness, goal setting and more.

Program Dates:

- September 15th - October 10th
- October 20th - November 14th
- November 24 - December 12th

To learn more or register for the program, please visit www.nadaca.ca, or call 902-379-2262 to speak with reception.



(L to R) Chief Annie Bernard-Daisley, Nik Phillips, Janice Maloney at the Mi'kmaw Justice, Mental Health and Addictions Conference

Get to Know Our Mental Wellness and Healing Team



Hannah Asprey

Mental Wellness and Healing Program Lead

Millbrook

"Me and my fiancé (Jeff) are raising three amazing kids, ages 17, 14, and 3. We're an outdoorsy family who loves sports and staying active. In the summer, you'll usually find me in the garden growing flowers and veggies, playing softball, or planning our next adventure. When winter rolls around, I'm happiest sledding or snowshoeing with our family."



Bridget Stevens

L'nui Npison Consultant

Eskasoni

Bridget Stevens is from Eskasoni and is passionate about Mi'kmaw language, culture, and history. She believes in the importance of preserving traditional knowledge and medicines to help support healing within our communities. She is committed to learning from Elders and strengthening her connection to land-based teachings.

"My favourite winter activity is walking outdoors and enjoying the beauty and peacefulness of nature. Being on the land brings me peace, clarity, and a deeper connection to culture and community."



Serena Lewis

Healing Through Loss Lead

Truro

"I am a mother of two sons, and soon to be grandmother. I love being outdoors hiking, in the woods and beaches, with my loyal canine companion. I am excited to have joined the Tajiikeimik team as the Healing Through Loss Lead.

"My favorite winter activity is snowshoeing, (especially at night) and tasting freshly made maple syrup."

Our Team is Growing!

We're excited to introduce new Tajĩkeimik team members who have recently joined our organization! To help you get to know them a bit better, we asked each of them "if you could be any animal, what would it be and why?" Here's what they had to say:



Mary Jane Abram
Director, People & Organizational Development

Millbrook First Nation

If I could be any animal I would be a **wolf** (my animal birth totem) because they are compassionate and caretakers for their community and family.



Hannah Asprey
Program Lead: Mental Wellness and Healing

Millbrook First Nation

If I could be any animal it would be the **Putup** (Whale) as I love our oceans and there is so much beneath the sea I would love to see. I could also freely travel along the costal shores and down to the Caribbean waters whenever I wanted.



Blossom Labillois
Tajĩkeyumk Coordinator

Eel River Bar First Nation

If I could be any animal, it would be an **eagle** because I would love to soar in the sky. I have always felt a spiritual connection with the eagle.



Bridget Stevens
L'nui Npisun

Eskasoni L'nue'kati

If I could choose a spirit animal, I would choose the **owl**. In many Indigenous traditions, owls are seen as symbols of wisdom, intuition, and the unseen. They remind us to trust our instincts and listen to our inner voice. Owls also teach the importance of observation and reflection, encouraging us to pause, assess, and respond with intention. These are qualities I strive to embrace and embody.



Matle'n Joe
Nuji-Apoq̃nmuēt

Membertou First Nation

A **hummingbird**. Because they are smart, fast, and beautiful.



Abigail Binns
Mental Wellness and Healing Administrative Assistant

If I could be any animal I would choose a **Tortoise**. They move calm and with intention. Trusting their pace, they gain steady progress.



Serena Lewis
Healing Through Loss Lead

If I could be an animal, I would choose an **eagle** for their incredible view of the big picture, and their ability to soar.



Julian MacLean
Manager of Accounting

If I could be any animal, I'd be a **chameleon**: I like to blend in with my surroundings



Alyssa Abram
Graphic Designer

Millbrook First Nation

I'd be an **octopus**: clever, creative, emotional intuitive... and fully prepared to ink my way out of awkward situations.



Semise'l Sa'n
Policy and Protocol Advisor

Eskasoni L'nue'kati

My animal...I'd be a **bear** so I could rest and hibernate through the winter.



E'tasiw Mijua'ji'j Mekite'tasit: The Story Behind Our 2025 Orange Shirt Design

By: Alexa Sylliboy and Coral Paul

We are excited to share our design for Tajikeimik's Orange Shirt in honour of National Truth & Reconciliation Day. Drawing inspiration from our own lived experiences and the team at Tajikeimik, our hope is that this design serves both as a tribute and a reminder – for the children who never returned home, for our survivors who carry the weight of their experiences, and for the collective strength and resilience of our people and communities.

The Front Design

On the front, we chose to feature a pair of moccasins in honour of the 215+ children whose remains were found at the former Kamloops Indian Residential School site in B.C. After this discovery, many people across Canada placed moccasins or shoes on their doorsteps to show respect and raise awareness. For many, it was a pivotal moment – the first time the country could no longer look away from the truths of the Indian Residential School system.

“The moccasins on the front of our shirt are a symbol of the aftermath of the children being discovered. For us, it felt like a turning point – when Canadians began paying attention, asking questions, and wanting to learn more,” says Alexa Sylliboy, Communications Specialist.

“Placing the moccasins on the front was also intentional. It's the first image people see, just as the discovery in Kamloops was, for many, the first time Canadians were forced to truly see and acknowledge the horrors and impacts that Residential Schools had on our people.”

The Back Design

We wanted the back of the shirt to reflect the weight Indigenous people continue to carry because of the Residential School system.

We began by placing a river at the bottom to represent the Shubenacadie River, which flows beside the site where the Shubenacadie Indian Residential School once stood before burning down in 1986. During the school's operation, the river was a witness to great tragedy, but today, our communities have reclaimed it as a place of remembrance, strength and resilience.

Above the river, we placed a sunrise to represent the “People of the Dawn.” A name used for the Nations a part of the Wabanaki Confederacy. This was to honour not only the Mi'kmaw children, survivors and families impacted by the Shubenacadie Indian Residential School, but also the children, survivors and communities from the Wolastoqiyik and other Nations across the maritimes and parts of Quebec - who were also taken to Shubenacadie because it was the only institution in Atlantic Canada.

Within the sun, an Elder and a child are facing each other. This was to honour our survivors who have to grieve the fact that their childhoods were stolen from them inside these institutions.

“We wanted to honour our survivors in a way that also acknowledges the painful truth – that their childhoods were stolen from them. That's not something anyone



should ever have to carry, yet it's a reality our survivors continue to live with and grieve every day,” says Coral Paul, Communications Specialist.

“By including this, we hope to spark conversations and understanding about what they and their families have endured, and continue to endure, because of this system. There's still so much healing that needs to happen – our survivors need support, and so do their families and communities.”

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Orange Shirt Design *Continued...*

A Shirt with Meaning

We wanted each element to reflect the lived experiences and strength of our people. For us, this design is not only a tribute to those we have lost, but also a reminder of the on-going journey toward healing. As Indigenous people, we live with and have witnessed the impacts of Indian Residential Schools firsthand, and we know these impacts continue to shape the wellness of our families and communities.

Our hope is that this design helps spark conversations and create more understanding of these truths, so everyone can truly see the weight survivors and families continue to carry. While there has been progress — like the creation of Tajikeimik, our own organization that is dedicated to transforming health and wellness services for Mi'kmaw people in Nova Scotia — we know there is still much more work to do, and more support is needed for our people and communities across Turtle Island.

Mental Wellness and Healing Circle Gathers for Second Convening

by Mental Wellness and Healing Team

Last March, the Mental Wellness and Healing Circle gathered for its second meeting, continuing the important work of bringing people together in relationship, reflection, and shared responsibility for the wellness of our communities.

The Circle is made up of community members, local clinicians, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and representatives from Mi'kmaw organizations. Each person bringing their own teachings, experiences, and perspectives, yet united by a common commitment in supporting the mental wellness and healing of L'nu'k across our communities.

Rather than operating as a formal committee, the Circle is grounded in the spirit of gathering. It is a space to listen deeply, to learn from one another, and to strengthen connections across communities and services. Through coordinated sharing, collective brainstorming, and open



Richard (Buddy) Young at the Mental Wellness and Healing Circle

dialogue, members work together to identify gaps, highlight strengths, and explore how we can better walk alongside those seeking support.

At its heart, the Circle reflects our ways of doing.

The Circle also serves as an important networking partnership, strengthening collaboration among Mi'kmaw organizations and creating a more unified presence when working with non-community partners. By coming together in this way, we ensure that decisions, priorities, and approaches remain grounded in L'nu knowledge, values, and our lived realities.

Each gathering continues to remind us that wellness does not happen in isolation. It grows through connection, through sitting together, sharing stories, and carrying responsibility collectively.

As the Circle continues to meet, it will remain a space where community voice guides direction and where relationships form the foundation of meaningful change.



Marie Sack, FILU/MMIWG Coordinator; Nik Phillips, Director, Mental Wellness and Healing at the Mental Wellness and Healing Circle



Tajikeyimik Team Retreat: Culture, Reflection and Reconnection

By: Alexa Sylliboy and Coral Paul



Front Row (L to R): Julie Francis, Tonya Francis, Sharon (Paul) Rudderham, Emily Peter-Paul, Lucinda Googoo, Blossom Labillos, Hannah Asprey, Jessica Googoo, Desiree Murray, Courtney Pennell, Matle'n Joe, Mary (Mali) Sylliboy
Back Row (L to R): Alice Abram, Nik Phillips, Johnny Bernard, Lindsay Peach, Matthew Collier, Stacey Lewis, Alicia Landry, Judy Googoo, Charmaine Greencorn, Bridget Stevens, Coral Paul, Carolyn Pierce, Alexa Sylliboy

In July, the Tajikeyimik team came together for a two-day retreat focused on culture, reflection and reconnection.

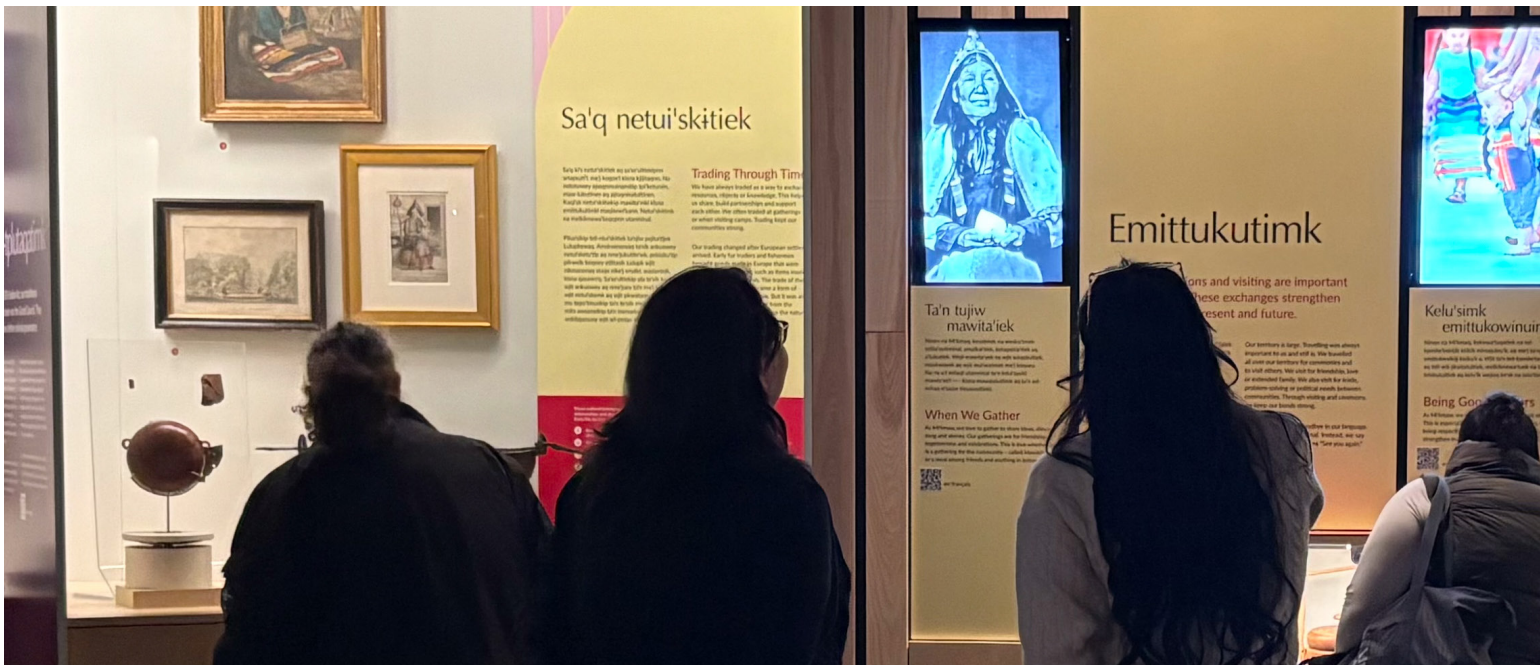
This time was a meaningful opportunity to provide our Mi'kmaw and Indigenous staff space to reconnect with community, the land and traditional teachings. It also provided our non-Indigenous allies a chance to listen, learn and deepen their understanding of Mi'kmaw culture and history.

A heartfelt thank you to the Debert Hospitality Centre for hosting us, Mercedes Peters for sharing knowledge on the Mi'kmawey Debert Cultural Centre, Kamden Nicholas for sharing the art and teachings of wooden flowers, and to our very own Nik Phillips, for providing sweetgrass teachings and organizing the entire experience with care and intention.

We left with full hearts, renewed respect and a stronger sense of our shared mission to improve health and wellness for Mi'kmaw communities in Nova Scotia.



Tajikeyimik team members listening to Nik Phillips provide sweetgrass teachings



2026 Winter Staff Gathering in Kijipuktuk

By: Coral Paul

In late January, the Tajiikeimik team gathered in Kijipuktuk (Halifax) for two full days together. Between great conversation and lots of laughter – the kind Don Burnstick describes as the Native woman’s laugh: head back, the one clap and leaning into or slapping whoever’s next to you – our team took part in various activities.

We started with a quill medallion workshop led by Karen Beals, a

Mi'kmaw artist from Glooscap First Nation. It didn't take long for the room to shift into deep concentration, broken up by bursts of laughter and the occasional “okay, don't look at mine yet.” The workshop gave us a real appreciation for the skill and patience behind quillwork, and everyone left with a medallion that reflected their own style.

Next, we took part in a Personality Insights session, which brought us a different kind of learning. It helped us understand how each of us approach our work – from how we communicate and make decisions, to how we plan, problem-solve and respond under pressure. This session gave us a shared understanding to communicate more clearly and support each other’s strengths to move projects forward



Tajiikeimik team photo





Team members during the Pjila'si gallery tour

more efficiently for our Mi'kmaq communities.

Finally, Kayla Rudderham from Membertou First Nation and Curator of Mi'kmaq Cultural Heritage, gave us a tour of the Pjila'si gallery located at the Museum of Natural History. For many of us, it was a meaningful experience. With most of our team being Mi'kmaq, the space led to honest conversations about our own families

and home communities. Seeing our language, teachings and shared experiences reflected in the gallery was a powerful reminder that the work we do is grounded in who we are and the people we represent. We'd like to extend a sincere wela'liek (thank you) to:

- Hampton Inn by Hilton Halifax for providing us a welcoming space

- Karen Beals, for hosting the quill medallion workshop
- Kayla Rudderham for giving us a tour of the Pjila'si gallery
- And members of our team for coordinating and bringing us all together



Team members viewing artifacts at the Museum of Natural History (L to R): Nik Phillips; Kayla Rudderham, Curator of Mi'kmaq Cultural Heritage; Matle'n Joe



Tajikeimik team members working hard on their quill medallions (L to R): Matle'n Joe, Emily Peter-Paul, Desiree Murray, Alexa Sylliboy, Coral Paul and Judy Googoo



L'nuwey Mijipjuwey Circle: Strengthening Food Sovereignty Together

by Mental Wellness and Healing Team



(L to R) Dawn Matheson, Justine Maloney, Blossom LaBillois, Nik Phillips, Zabrina Whitman, Jillian Shaw, Matt Davis, Hannah Asprey, Philippa Pictou, Skarlette Young, Lee Denny

The Mental Wellness and Healing team has supported the establishment of the L'nuwey Mijipjuwey Circle; a networking circle grounded in our collective responsibility to care for one another through food, land, and traditional ways of living.

“L'nuwey mijipjuwey” speaks to our food systems; in the ways we harvest, prepare, share, and sustain ourselves as L'nu'k.

This Circle was created with a clear purpose: to strengthen access to traditional foods, support food safety and food security, and, most importantly, advance food sovereignty for Mi'kmaw communities.

The Circle brings together communal harvesters, Knowledge Keepers, and representatives from Mi'kmaw organizations to gather in relationship and shared learning. In these spaces, participants cross-share ideas, discuss ongoing initiatives, and provide updates on community efforts from harvesting and preservation, to distribution and education.



Bridget Stevens, L'nui Npisun Consultant

“Like all our work, this is not simply about coordination. It is about connection,” says Nik Phillips, Director of Mental Wellness and Healing.

By networking in this way, communities are better able to support one another, reduce duplication, and move forward with greater strength and unity. The Circle also provides a collective voice when engaging with non-community partners, ensuring that conversations about food systems remain grounded in Mi'kmaw rights, knowledge, and priorities.

“Food has always been more than sustenance,” says Bridget Stevens, L'nui Npisun Consultant. “It is culture. It is relationship. It is ceremony. It is sovereignty.”

Through the L'nuwey Mijipjuwey Circle, we continue to return to these teachings. Remembering that caring for our food systems is also caring for our people, our land, and future generations.



(L to R) Nik Phillips, Director, Mental Wellness and Healing; Blossom LaBillois, Tajikeyumk Coordinator; Philippa Pictou, Director of Policy and Planning; Hannah Asprey, Mental Wellness and Healing Program Lead



Support for Mi'kmaw & Indigenous Patients in Nova Scotia Hospitals

Tajikeimik's Nuji-Apoqnmuet (Mi'kmaw Patient Helper) program is here to support Mi'kmaw and Indigenous patients and their families, while in hospitals in Nova Scotia.

How We Can Help

Communicating with Care Team

- Mi'kmaw language support/conversational translation
- Assist with talking to doctors, nurses, or other care team members
- Communicate with health care team in hospital and community, as required

Cultural Support

- Advocate for safe and respectful services
- Support to include culture and ceremonies into care
- Connect patients with spiritual or religious services or supports

Collaboration & Resources

- Help build patient awareness about available services in the hospital, or provide information about resources, when possible
- Work with the patient's community, when needed

Direct Support

- Make friendly visits, and prayers with patients when requested

To learn more, check out our website:
www.mhwns.ca/programs
 or scan the QR code



Contact Our Team



Halifax

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Calling All Educators!

Invite a Mi'kmaw Nurse into your classroom

Looking to inspire your Mi'kmaw/Indigenous students to explore a future career in nursing? Our Office of L'nu Nursing team can share information about the different pathways into nursing, provide guidance on high school courses, and discuss what it takes to meet nursing program requirements.

Connect with one of Tajikeimik's Mi'kmaw Indigenous Nurse Education Specialist today to schedule a visit!

Contact Our Team



St. Francis Xavier University; NSCC Pictou, Cumberland, and Truro campuses; and Mi'kmaq LPN Cohort

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Cape Breton University; NSCC Strait Area and Sydney Waterfront campuses

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To learn more, check out our website: www.mhwns.ca/programs
 or scan the QR code





Contact Our Team



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Msit Mijua'ji'jk

Msit Mijua'ji'jk (All the Children) supports Mi'kmaw families with young children, ages 0 to 4, during the critical stages of their development. We provide parents and caregivers with the tools they need to be their best teachers.

Through one-on-one home visits, families receive guidance with prenatal health, birth planning and child development, along with cultural support, play-based learning and advocacy.

We also offer group gatherings and community support. This includes cultural workshops, sharing circles with Elders and knowledge keepers and parenting sessions, so families can connect, learn and grow together.

Msit Mijua'ji'jk is currently offered in Membertou, Eskasoni, Potlotek, Paqtnkek, Sipekne'katik and at the Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre.

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About Us

Tajiikeimik is the new and developing health and wellness organization that is leading health transformation on behalf of Mi'kmaw communities in Nova Scotia. In collaboration with Chiefs, Grand Council, and Health Directors, Tajiikeimik will build on and evolve the health and wellness services and programs used by Mi'kmaw people in Nova Scotia; improve health service delivery; and strengthen coordination with Federal and Provincial health system partners - with the goal of improving overall health for Mi'kmaq and communities.

Elukuti'kw wjit naji-wlo'tinenew utanminal. We are working toward better health for all in our communities.

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Membertou Office

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To learn more, check out our website:
www.mhwns.ca/about-us
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