

Murray Sinclair\*: *“Systemic racism is when the system itself is based upon and founded upon racist beliefs and philosophies and thinking and has put in place policies and practices that literally force even the non-racists to act in a racist way.”*

\*Calvin Murray Sinclair (born January 24, 1951) is a member of the Canadian Senate and [First Nations](#) lawyer who served as Chairman of the [Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#) from 2009 to 2015.

The Rural Coordination Centre of BC (RCCbc) is devoted to the wellness and health of rural people and their communities, including First Nations. Systemic and inter-personal racism negatively impacts the health and well-being of patients, providers, and staff. As Justice Murray Sinclair has said, *“Reconciliation is not an aboriginal problem, it is a Canadian problem. It involved all of us.”* The RCCbc believes that the current constellation of events, arising within the global pandemic and all its uncertainty, calls forth both *urgency* and *opportunity* to address racism as it impacts all of us. We are looking at how we can move beyond good intentions to *collective wise action*.

The basis for this, and the actions that all Canadians should undertake in response, are well outlined in the “Calls to Action”; of the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report](#). After extensive consultation and study, it calls upon each of us and our organizations to review ourselves and the impact of our current action on the health, welfare and experience of justice of Indigenous Canadians. This is neither an easy, nor a comfortable task. Yet, act we must.

We are recognizing and addressing how the TRC Calls to Action are considered and applied throughout all of RCCbc’s projects and programs, and, specifically we are supporting the Indigenous Physicians Network under the guidance, wisdom, and leadership of Dr. Terri Aldred. The network brings together learners, residents and physicians who are Indigenous and those who support Indigenous communities. We are also partnering with UBC Rural Continuing Professional Development on the [Indigenous-Led Patient Mediated CPD](#) project, which is working with communities to listen to and learn from the elders and community members seeking to guide medical education for local health practitioners and providers.

We will continue our work within the RCCbc as well as with our partners in the [First Nations Health Council](#) and [First Nations Health Authority](#) to broaden our own knowledge and then our network’s impact throughout rural British Columbia. Additionally, we will continue to bring the poignant voice of equity, anti-racism, and justice to our conversations with all our health partners including policy makers, health system managers, communities, health professionals, academics and linked sectors (industry and non-profit).

The RCCbc, in the spirit of learning and improvement, commits to building upon our many current activities and, through joint partnerships, to constantly refining the reach of our of actions through listening and learning to ensure that the injustices that have sadly endured for many generations directed against our Indigenous communities and citizens stops once and for all with our own.

Rural Coordination  
Centre of BC



Enhancing rural health through education and advocacy