

CCP Case Study: Indigenous Cultural Safety and Humility

In 2017, every healthcare regulatory college in BC signed a [declaration of commitment](#) to Indigenous Cultural Safety and Humility with the First Nations Health Authority. We know from testimonies of Indigenous people accessing healthcare that racism, discrimination and violence toward them is prevalent and often results in traumatising experiences and receiving improper care. Opticianry is not exempt from this. The following quotes were taken from a focus group organised by the First Nations Health Authority earlier this year:

“When we choose glasses, the optician tells us that we can only get certain frames and directs us to the ‘Indian Affairs’ glasses, which are ugly. It is an embarrassing experience and it makes us want to walk out of the store” *Stellat’en Focus Group, March 26th, 2019*

“I haven’t seen a vision provider in a long time, because of cultural safety issues. I don’t have trust for opticians” *Esquimalt Focus Group, February 21st, 2019*

Part of our commitment is to communicate to our registrants what we have learned through our own journey of cultural safety and humility and share ways in which they can be more responsible as individual practitioners in combatting the systemic racism that exists within healthcare.

Incorporating your learning into your Continuing Competency Program is a great way to do this and there are many ways to make this happen. You can:

- Take the [San’yas Indigenous Cultural Safety Training](#)
- Watch the [Cultural Safety and Humility webinars](#) on the FNHA website
- Find other courses or seminars you can attend to learn about Indigenous cultures in BC

So far, 75% of staff and 50% of the COBC board have completed the [San’yas Indigenous Cultural Safety Training](#), many of whom are also practicing, Licensed Opticians. Completing this program could be developed into two learning goals as it is a fairly in-depth training program. For example:

Joan is a Licensed Optician with the College and has one year left of her Continuing Competency cycle so has completed four learning goals and just needs to complete two more. When she took her CCP assessment, she found that [competency 1 – Assumes Professional Responsibilities](#) - was something she needed to work on. Joan is interested in learning more about the effects of colonization on the Indigenous peoples of Canada and how she can make a positive contribution to reconciliation through her work as an optician. This is an area that aligns well with competency 1, so she will choose this competency and create her next goal. She is aware of the [San’yas Indigenous Cultural Safety Training](#) and knows that it will help her achieve her goal. Given the in-depth nature of the course, she can likely work it into two similar, but different learning goals.

As we move forward with our commitment, we encourage you to join us in helping to make healthcare and opticianry in particular, a place free from discrimination and safe for Indigenous people in BC.