



**Grey Bruce  
Public Health**

**February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

**Attention:**

All Grey Bruce Healthcare partners

Good day, Healthcare partners in Grey Bruce,

We write you first, to thank you for your ongoing support, care, and professionalism in dealing with the opioid crisis locally. This is critical work that affects our communities profoundly. Thank you.

We must bring light to some of the perplexing factors that have stemmed from this crisis with the hope of inspiring engaging discussions, collaboration, and fostering impactful change that has positive effects on the health of our communities.

In December 2022, in light of the State of Emergency Declaration by the Chief and Council of the Saugeen First Nation, the Board of Health for Grey Bruce Public Health had a discussion on the subject and identified the stigma of seeking addiction and mental health support, as well as instances of Indigenous people being denied access to mental health care. Both issues were identified as major challenges that we all need more collaboration to address.

We all need to remind ourselves and our teams that addiction is a mental health issue - the two are not separate streams. The stigma felt by Indigenous residents is an unacceptable reality that suggests the inequity of healthcare is a present, compounding factor we must work on diligently and collaboratively to put an end to immediately.

We look forward to your response, your collaboration, and your partnership in bettering the health of all Canadians.

Yours truly,

Handwritten signature of Alan Barfoot.

Mr. Alan Barfoot  
Chair of the Grey Bruce Board of Health  
Saugeen First Nation

Handwritten signature of Gerry Glover.

Gerry Glover  
Band Administrator

Handwritten signature of Ian Arra.

Dr, Ian Arra  
Grey Bruce Medical Officer of Health / CEO

Grey Bruce Public Health  
101 17th Street East, Owen Sound  
N4K 0A5  
519-376-9420

Saugeen First Nation  
6493 ON-21, Southampton  
N0H 2L0  
519-797-2781



Cc: Alex Ruff, MP for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound  
Brian Saunderson, MP for Simcoe-Grey  
Rick Byers, MPP for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound  
Hon. Lisa Thompson, MPP for Huron-Bruce  
Ben Lobb, MPP for Huron-Bruce  
Terry Dowdall, MPP for Simcoe-Grey  
Bruce County Council  
Grey County Council  
Grey-Bruce OHT  
Ontario Health