



STRATEGIC PLAN

Looking to 2025

December 2023



Cover photo: The Lakes District Hospital and Health Centre as seen in the summer.
Its emergency department averages 12,000 visits per year.
Back cover photo: X-ray technician in McBride.

Northern Health

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December 2023



Yawc', sas w'ela?
Dii guudang.ngaay 'laa ga,
dan hll kings g aaganah
T'ooyaksim' niin wil w'itgwin
'Niit, nda Hadī So'endzin
wila waan 'nit amhl wilawina?
Denēs Tunngasugit
Hoti'e! Welcome
Dan'che'a Yak'ei haat
Hadih yigoodée
kischi baen rseu tānisi
Aam wilaa wilina
Luu-aamhl goodiy' wil w'itgwin
je aa haanach'e

Welcome greetings in Indigenous languages of Northern B.C. including: Cree (Saulteau First Nation), Dakeh, Dane-Zaa, Gitksan, Haida, Haisla (x enaksialakala), Inuit, Métis (Michif), Nisga'a, Talhtan, Tlingit, Tse'khene, Tsimshian (Sm'algya x), Wet'suwet'en.

Mission

Through the efforts of dedicated staff and medical staff, in partnership with communities, organizations, and Indigenous peoples, we provide exceptional health services for Northerners.



Photo: A dietitian from the Interprofessional Team, Northern Haida Gwaii Hospital & Health Centre, tours a local greenhouse with community members.

Vision

Northern Health leads the way in promoting health and providing health services for Northern, rural, and Indigenous populations.

What if we could:

- Collaborate with partners to support people in the North to be well and stay independent?
- Create a health system built on person-centred care and cultural safety?
- Provide an environment that embraces diversity and a sense of belonging for all?
- Be the first place people look for rewarding careers with opportunities for growth?
- Use technology and innovation to provide access to services closer to home?



Photo: The Fort St. John Hospital and Peace Villa as seen on a sunny day. The population of Fort St. John is 21,000, but it services an area of approximately 69,000.

Values

Values statements guide decisions and actions. We will succeed in our work through:



Empathy

Seeking to understand each individual's experience



Respect

Valuing each person's unique perspective and contribution



Collaboration

Working together to build partnerships



Innovation

Seeking creative and practical solutions

Our values
guide us to a
commitment
to truth and
reconciliation.

Commitment statement to Truth and Reconciliation

Northern Health acknowledges the harms experienced by Indigenous peoples accessing the health system. We are committed to new ways of being, through building healthy and trusting relationships with Indigenous communities, families, individuals, and employees. These commitments are interwoven throughout the strategic priorities and are integral to the success of Northern Health.

Northern Health commits to:

- Striving to ensure that all Indigenous peoples have access to high quality, culturally safe, and respectful services.
- Narrowing health disparities experienced by Indigenous peoples.
- Implementing changes to address cultural safety, and to confront racism and stigmatization of Indigenous peoples.
- Building a health system that aligns with the values and knowledge of the people we serve.
- Centering Indigenous ways of being and knowing in the health services we provide.

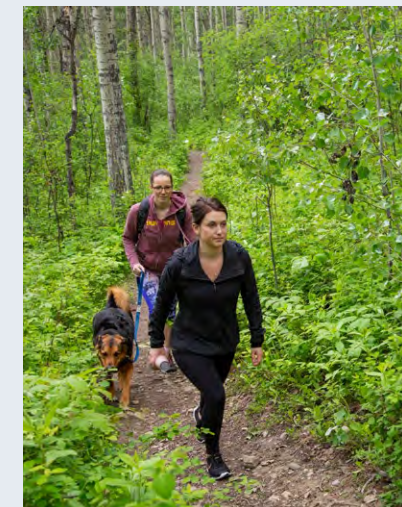
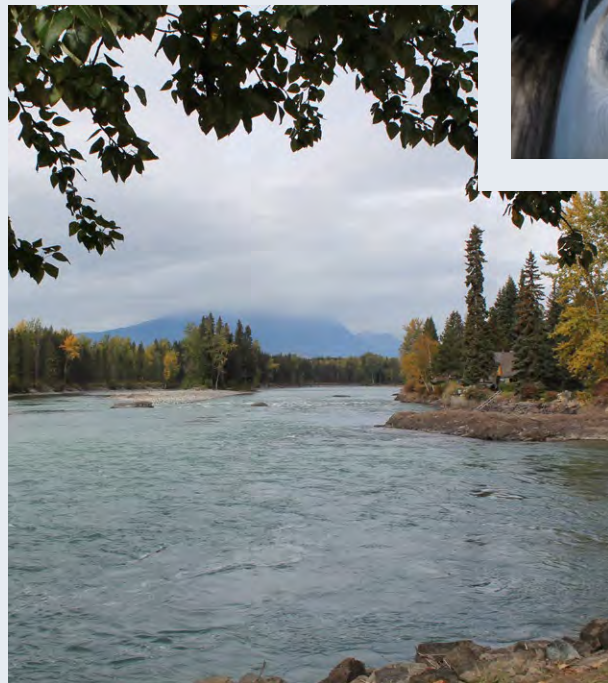
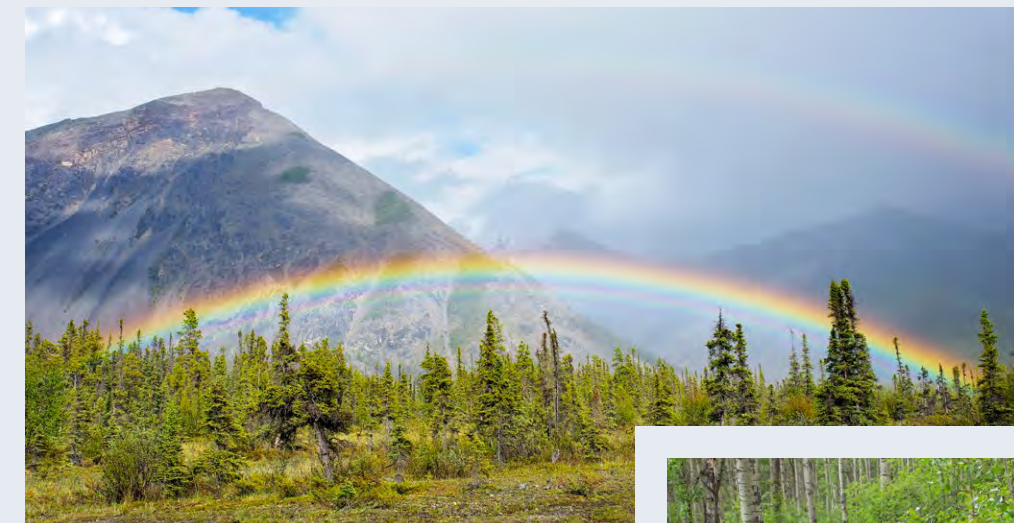
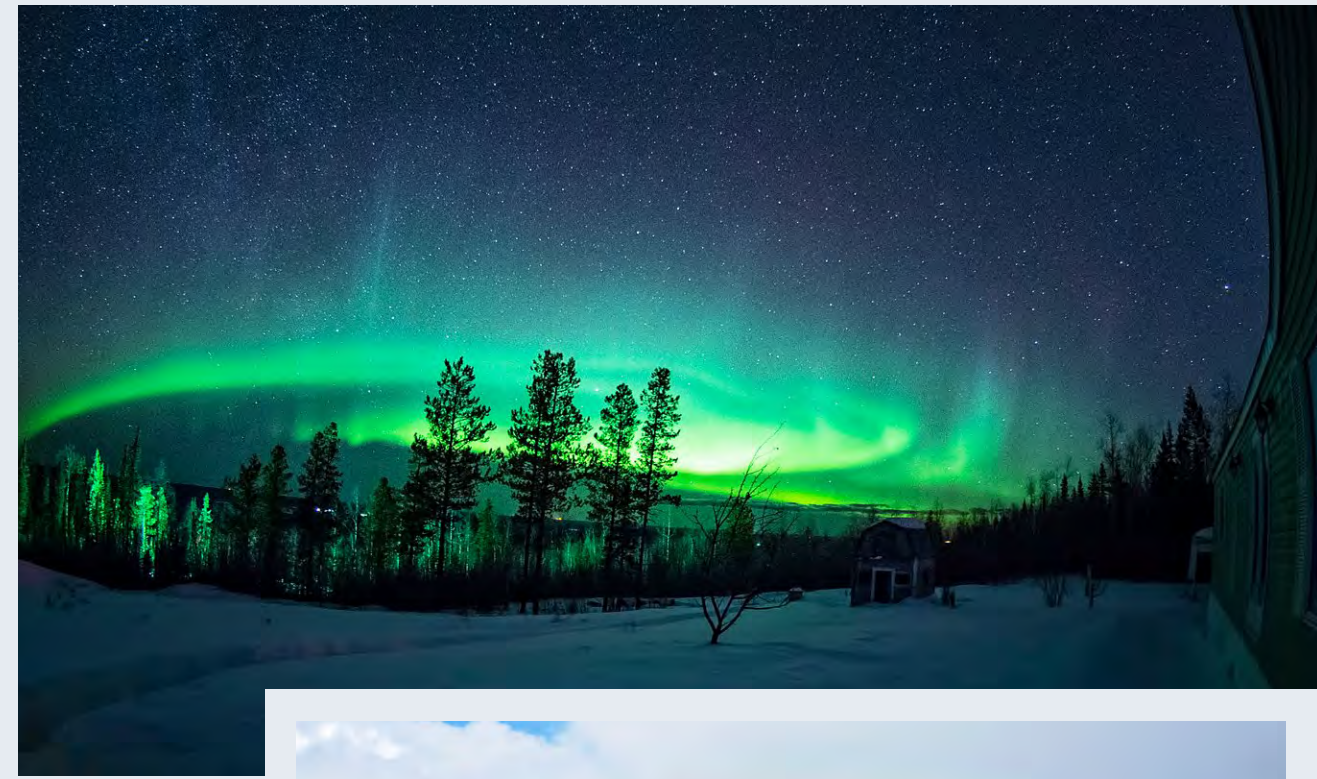
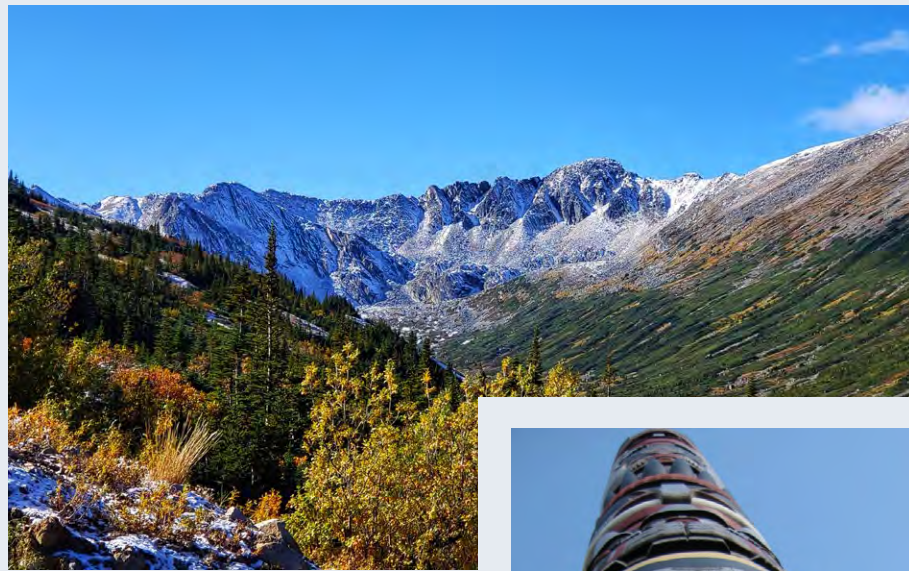


Indigenous is a general term inclusive of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit. We acknowledge that inclusive terms have the potential to diminish diversity and the unique realities of different peoples. The use of Indigenous in this case is intended as an inclusive commitment to improving health outcomes for each group.



Line drawings of a bear, dragonfly, hummingbird, and turtle by Indigenous artist Carla Joseph, who lives on Lheidli T'enneh territory.

We honour the strengths, perspectives, and values in both Indigenous ways of knowing and Western knowledge systems. We walk together with openness, curiosity, and humility, guided by the wisdom of both understandings to improve the health and wellness of all.



Northern Health covers an area of nearly 600,000 square kilometres and offers health services in over two dozen communities through all our facilities. The population of our communities ranges from a few hundred people to over 80,000 people, for a total regional population of approximately 300,000 people.

Priority 1 Healthy people in healthy communities

Northern Health will collaborate with partners to support people to live well, foster a sense of belonging, and prevent disease and injury.

We will:

- » Collaborate to support health promotion activities and foster resiliency in communities.
- » Foster partnerships that are grounded in the social determinants of health.
- » Improve health system monitoring and understanding of population health status to inform programs that can address health disparities.
- » Create more opportunities for Northern Indigenous people to shape, and benefit from health promotion and prevention programming through partnership, sharing of data and incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing.
- » Enhance access to preventive and screening services and supports.
- » Partner with staff, medical staff, communities, organizations, and researchers to build a climate-resilient health system.

Social determinants of health are the non-medical factors that influence health outcomes. Examples include access to affordable health services, housing, early childhood development, food security, social inclusion, and more.

Priority 2

Coordinated and accessible services

Northern Health will provide health services across the life span based in Primary Care Networks with coordinated pathways to acute and specialized services.

We will:

- » Design and distribute health services to meet the needs of the unique geography and diverse populations we serve.
- » Strengthen pathways between primary care and specialized community services.
- » Increase access to culturally safe health services through meaningful participation of Indigenous peoples in health service planning, delivery, and evaluation.
- » Prioritize service enhancements that sustain and improve the quality of acute care services.
- » Strengthen team-based care models for perinatal families, people experiencing mental health and substance use issues, and those who face medical complexity and frailty.
- » Use technology to enhance coordination and access to services, and to facilitate sharing of information across the care team.
- » Create and support strong, sustainable teams tailored to the services required.



Photo: Dawson Creek and District Hospital Indigenous art installation, taken by Logan Richter, Chetwynd General Hospital Indigenous Patient Liaison.

Priority 3 Quality

Northern Health will be a learning organization focused on continuous improvement.

We will:

- » Embed evidence-based practice standards in Northern Health's systems and services.
- » Gather and analyze data to guide health system improvement in the North.
- » Engage with the people we serve, communities, and organizational partners to inform the design and distribution of services.
- » Better understand Indigenous patient experiences to inform Northern Health's decision-making processes and policies, and to promote equity, service improvement, and cultural safety and humility.
- » Collaborate with partners to advance research and innovation.
- » Support time for staff and medical staff to engage in practice assessment and quality improvement action.
- » Strengthen leadership development for managers and enhance the consistency of management processes.



Photo: A health care worker in Dawson Creek chats with residents at Rotary Manor.



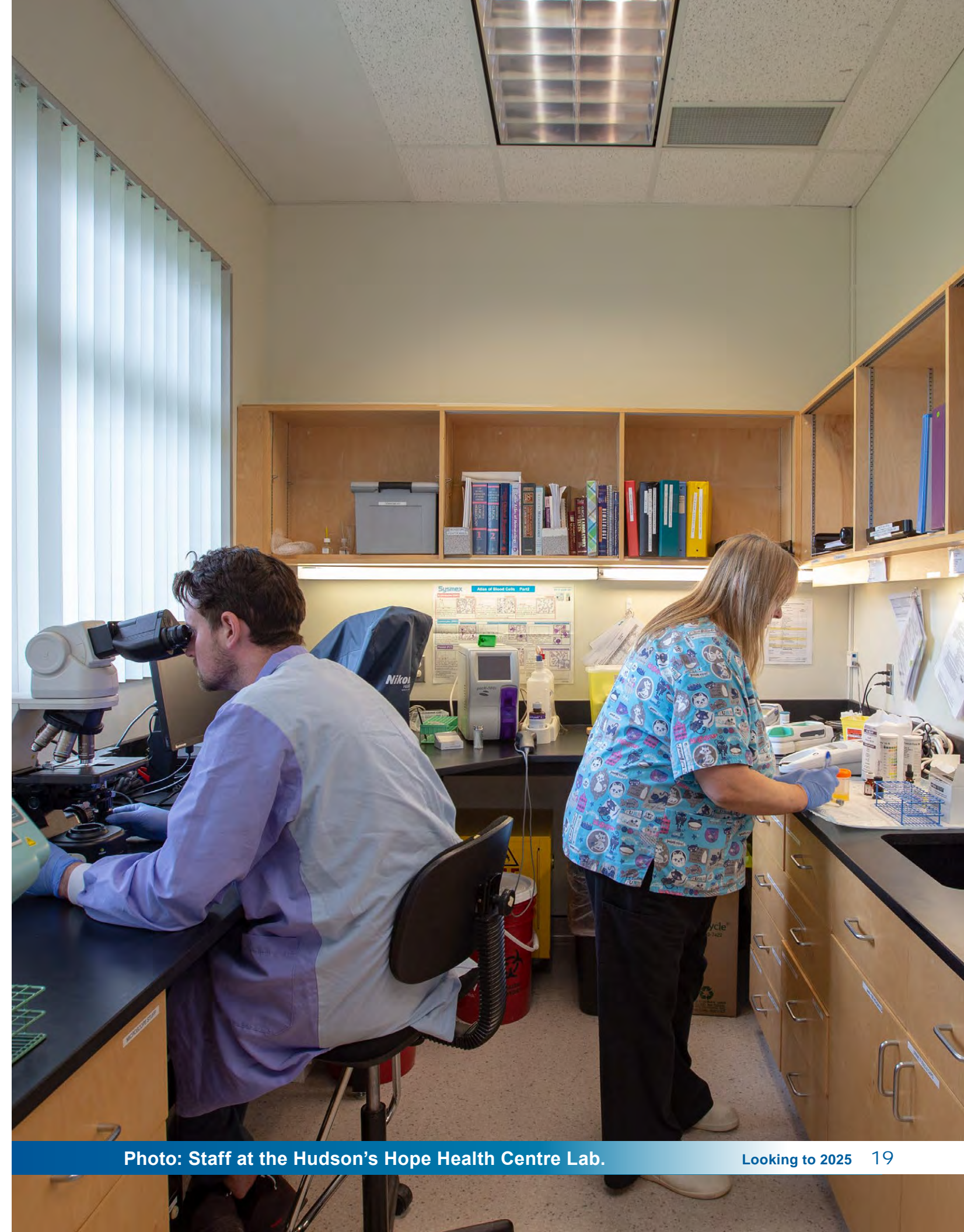
Photo: Pharmacy Assistant in Kitimat.

Priority 4 Our people

Northern Health will provide a positive and inclusive environment where staff and medical staff experience a sense of belonging.

We will:

- » Foster a workplace that is inclusive, diverse, equitable, and accessible.
- » Engage students, staff, and medical staff to identify and pursue opportunities to promote retention.
- » Advance a learning culture that provides opportunities for growth, and builds capacity, capability, and cultural safety.
- » Increase the representation of Indigenous peoples in the Northern Health workforce.
- » Partner with communities, organizations, and educational institutions to improve the alignment between the availability of, and need for, essential health professionals.
- » Implement policies and processes that align with a physically and psychologically safe workplace.
- » Endeavour to be flexible to the needs of individual staff and medical staff, and support work-life balance.



Priority 5 Communications, technology, and infrastructure

Northern Health will advance innovative approaches to communications, technology, and infrastructure.

We will:

- » Modernize capital infrastructure and equipment to meet the needs of Northerners.
- » Partner to enhance health transportation and accommodation options, especially for those living in the most remote parts of the North and for First Nations communities.
- » Further invest in digital infrastructure and access to virtually enabled services for rural, remote, and Indigenous communities.
- » Train and support staff and medical staff to use technology required for delivering quality care.
- » Improve communication with Indigenous people and employees to build trust, encourage partnership, and inform the improvement of service quality.
- » Maintain and enhance trust with the people we serve by providing secure digital systems.



Photo: The site of the new Stuart Lake Hospital Replacement Project is toured in August 2023.



northern health
the northern way of caring