



# OFS Canada JPIC Communiqué JPIC

## April 2021

**Editors Note:** Until the National Chapter of Election in May 2022, the National OFS JPIC Team will be focusing on the issues faced by the Indigenous people in Canada. Subsequent Communiqués are not meant to be thorough, but to invite Secular Franciscans in Canada to deepen their understanding of their Indigenous brothers and sisters.

## Indigenous health care



### How would you react if you faced...?



Long waiting lists, lack of doctors and nurses, costs not covered by your Health Benefits, and no transportation? These are [the main challenges to health care facing Indigenous people](#). When specialized treatment is needed, a patient has to endure a long journey to southern-based hospitals and leave behind families and support network for an extended period of time. Living in an urban centre is not much better for Indigenous people as they constantly face racism and discrimination. The rates of Indigenous people being admitted to hospitals and accessing emergency shelters are much higher than the general population.

### Public Health Care Services... available to all?

Indigenous children do not always have the same access to services as non-Indigenous children because different levels of government fund different services for Indigenous children, especially those living on-reserve. Jordan River



Anderson, for example, from Norway House Cree Nation in Manitoba was caught in one



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of these payment disputes. The federal and provincial governments could not agree on who should pay for his home-based care. Jordan stayed in the hospital until he passed away at the age of 5. Since then, to honour Jordan, [Jordan's Principle](#) was created: it is a child-first principle that aims to eliminate service inequities and delays for First Nations children. Jordan's Principle states that any public service ordinarily available to all other children must be made available to First Nations children without delay or denial.

### Is there Hope?



An article in the [Canadian Medical Association Journal](#) proposed strategies to improve the healthcare system which include acceptance of traditional Indigenous knowledge and cultural practices by Canadian physicians and collaborations between Indigenous people and

health providers and provisions of respectful/non-discriminatory environment in Indigenous-led partnerships. They need your help...

### You and your Fraternity can make a difference:



National Association  
of Friendship Centres  
Association nationale  
des centres d'amitié

- Organize a talk in your local parish groups to raise awareness about the history and its impact on the Indigenous health care at the provincial and federal levels. If possible, invite someone from an Indigenous community to speak about their current health care issues. [Contact your local Friendship Centre](#)
- Contacting a Friendship Centre is also a great place to reach out to the Indigenous community in your area and find out how you can help. If by chance, you get to know an Indigenous person or child with health issues, find out how you can help to ensure the proper medical care for him/her.



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Write a letter to your [federal MP, or provincial MPP/MLA](#)

- Ask them to introduce policies to eliminate discrimination and racism against the Indigenous people in the health care system.
- to improve Indigenous health care system as outlined in the [article](#) published by the Canadian Medical Association Journal.

### Some excellent online resources:

- [History of Indigenous people in Canada](#)
- [Indigenous or Aboriginal: Which is correct?](#)
- [Breaking down the barriers Indigenous people face in Canada's health-care system](#)

Stay up to date on JPIC Issues and Actions and bookmark Franciscan Voice Canada at <https://www.franciscanvoicecanada.com/>

Restez au courant des actions et des problèmes liés à JPIC et afficher en favori Chemins Franciscains à l'adresse <https://www.cheminsfranciscains.ca/le-siaf>