

How To Make A Referral

Making referrals to other organizations or agencies may be a practice that can be done on behalf of people who may find themselves in situations. Each Aboriginal community has programs and services available to it's band members. There are a number of service providers right in each community, people who can help and guide others towards leading a healthier lifestyle.

When seeking treatment services, it is best to have permission (most times it is required) from the person who will be receiving the services. If the person who is to receive the services is not willing to cooperate or consent, the attempts to find help for them may not be successful.

Remember that we cannot change anyone. It is up to each person to choose to change their lives. We can only support, encourage, and trust that they will make healthy decisions to better their lives.

Tips When Making Referrals:

- offer encouragement and support (be available as a support)
- be knowledgeable about what is available (know what services are in the community)
- be sure the referral is appropriate
- involve person who will be receiving services (participation is key)
- gather important information (health card numbers, status card numbers, etc)
- research and gather further information on outside organizations and services (be prepared to answer questions from person receiving services)
- try to establish and involve support from community members when referring to another agency or organization (other workers, leadership, Elders, etc)
- follow up with referral (to ensure the process is complete)
- advocate and assist with the referral process (may need to vocalize and represent the needs of the person requiring services, ie. translation, special needs, etc)

How To Make A Referral continued

When an individual is seeking services, we may sometimes need to look outside the community for appropriate help and assistance. However, we also need to look at how we can offer continual support (in community) after services have been accessed.

When helping community members seek treatment or other services outside the community, it is key to follow up and let the person know that you are still available to them. It may be just to talk and listen to experiences, or to make 'after care' plans with them.

There is an on-going need for continual positive relationships with one another to ensure that the healing continues. Healing is a slow process of recovery. It can take years to learn how to cope positively.

One person's healing affects another...that person can inspire other family members...that family can help other families...these families can inspire whole communities...