

Strategic Plan

2022 - 2026

NISGA'A VALLEY HEALTH AUTHORITY





Nisga'a Valley Health Authority

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Executive Summary

The Nisga'a Valley Health Authority (NVHA) is committed to improving the health of our people, our communities, and our Nation. We consider the contributing factors in our approach to health and wellness, and hold our Nisga'a Ayuuk, language, and culture as foundational to our health and wellbeing.

The NVHA staff are experts in their respective fields. Each day, the staff, nurses, and physicians of Nisga'a Valley Health Authority rise to the challenge and provide excellent care in a rapidly changing, complex environment.

It is our pleasure to share our 2022-2026 Strategic Plan. This Plan was developed in early 2022 through an iterative, collaborative process led by the NVHA Board of Directors. Our Senior Management and Team Leads met over several days in April 2022 to share their perspectives, experiences, expertise, and program goals, contributing directly to the broad objectives, specific goals, and key actions shared in our Plan. All NVHA staff were also given the opportunity to contribute to our Strategic Plan.

Out of this process, and led by our values, vision, and mission, we identified four focal areas for the coming five years, each with related objectives and goals:

- 1. Working through the Nisga'a Paradigm in all that we do**
- 2. Prioritizing a community-based focus for our work**
- 3. Striving for excellence through consistent growth and improvement in organizational capacity**
- 4. Providing the best possible healthcare through strong, effective relationships**

Our Strategic Plan guides us in the decisions we make. It lays out the goals and specific actions that will continue to improve the high-quality health care we deliver to Nisga'a and non-Nisga'a citizens and helps us measure how far we have come in achieving those goals.

Our Board of Directors, Executive team, medical teams, and employees are all key to ensuring our success in implementing this Plan.

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Letter From The Board

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About Nisga'a Valley Health Authority

Our Nisga'a Foundations

Our health is Indigenous, guided by our traditional laws of **Respect for our Minds, Bodies, and Spirit.**

Our teachings tell us that listening, learning, and choosing healthy lifestyles are necessary to support a healthy mind, body, and spirit. We stand on the Nisga'a Principle of Life:

*Dim Hañiihitgumhl Aiihitgumhl
Ayuugam Gandidilshl Nisga'a*

We strive to integrate our cultural and traditional ways with the most up-to-date and responsive medical practices, resulting in a holistic, innovative, Nisga'a-informed and led approach to health and wellbeing.

A Brief History

The Nisga'a Valley Health Authority (NVHA) was formed April 25, 1984, at a Nisga'a Tribal Council (now Nisga'a Lisims Government) convention in Gingolx. The Tribal Council created NVHA to empower the Nisga'a Nation to deliver community health care in an effective and sustainable manner.

From our origin as a Diagnostic and Treatment Centre in one community, NVHA has grown to four health centres located in each of the Nisga'a communities. The main centre, the James Samuel Gosnell Memorial Health Centre (named in honour of the late James Gosnell), is located in Gitlaxt'aamiks.

NVHA is governed by the Nisga'a Lisims Government Programs and Service Delivery Act and the Health Programs and Service Delivery Agreement with the Nisga'a Nation. Under the Agreement, the Nisga'a Valley Health Authority is fully accountable to deliver on our Nation's vision for excellent health care.

NVHA also operates in accordance with the Constitution of the Nisga'a Nation. Our Constitution informs our values, the foundation of our language and culture to our work, and the role of our Elders guiding our way.

The four communities in the Nass Valley are the Nisga'a Village of Gitwinksihlkw, Gitlaxt'aamiks Village Government (formerly New Aiyansh), Laxgalts'ap Village Government, and Gingolx Village Government.



Our Board of Directors

The NVHA Board of Directors is currently comprised of three members appointed by the Nisga'a Lisims Government, out of a full complement of five members:

- **Kirby Azak**
- **Alvin Azak**
- **Roberta Stewart**

The NVHA Board of Directors is the governing body that is responsible for overseeing the provision of healthcare services and for the administration of the delivery of those services in keeping with its mission, mandate, legal framework, policies, and procedures,

The Board of Directors provides strategic leadership to the Nisga'a Valley Health Authority by ensuring formal strategic planning is undertaken on a recurring scheduled basis. The Board of Directors has the responsibility to ensure the Board is meeting its legal obligation to the Nisga'a Valley Health Authority, the Nisga'a Lisims Government, its community members, and other stakeholders.

Our Programs and Services

Physician Services



The physicians in the Nass Valley provide comprehensive primary care services to our four communities: Gitlaxt'aamiks, Gitwinksihlkw, Laxgalts'ap, and Gingolx. Physicians also provide 24/7/365 urgent/emergency care.

Physicians work closely with nursing staff, public health, community health representatives, home care and mental wellness team to coordinate care for individual patients and to respond to community health needs.

Nursing Services



Our team of dedicated nurses provide family-centred care, integrating traditional wellness and culturally competent care to improve the health status and overall wellness of clients living within each Nisga'a community.

Nurses provide emergency care, urgent care, and non-urgent care and coordinate with our physician team, community health representatives, public health, mental health, and home care team to ensure delivery of quality essential healthcare services.

Through case management, patients are linked with allied health professionals (including home care, mental health team, physiotherapy, or occupational therapy and more) as part of a treatment plan to ensure each person's health is optimized.

Mental Health and Wellness



The Mental Health and Substance Use Program provides services that include traditional wellness, to assist individuals and their families experiencing difficulties with mental health and/or substance use. Our program provides a wide range of supports, including case management, clinical counselling and therapy, psychologist services, crisis response, and addictions supports including referrals to treatment.

Our program meets clients where they are and takes a Stepped Care approach. Stepped Care is a system of delivering and monitoring mental health treatment so the most effective, yet least resource-intensive treatment, is delivered first. Program intensity can then be either “stepped up” or “stepped down” depending on the level of client need to encourage client responsibility, autonomy, and resilience.

Nisga’a Health Benefits



The Nisga’a Health Benefits Program (NHB) is the Nisga’a Nation’s needs-based health benefit program that provides supplementary benefits for eligible Nisga’a people. NHB provides health benefits to all Nisga’a citizens, such as medication, dental services, vision care, medical supplies, medical transportation (formerly patient travel), crisis intervention, and counselling.

In January 2022, NVHA announced a new Prescription Drug Plan administered under the Nisga’a Health Benefit Program. The Reformulary Group, whom NVHA is working with, has conducted a thorough analysis to update and modernize the Prescription Drug Plan. This new plan will include current drugs that have the best clinical evidence to support coverage. This new plan intends to minimize or even eliminate delays and disruptions to Nisga’a citizens receiving their prescriptions.

Cultural and Community Health



Cultural and Community Health Representatives work very closely with nurses and others in healthcare teams to help improve and maintain the spiritual, physical, intellectual, social, and emotional well-being of individuals, families, and their communities.

Home Support



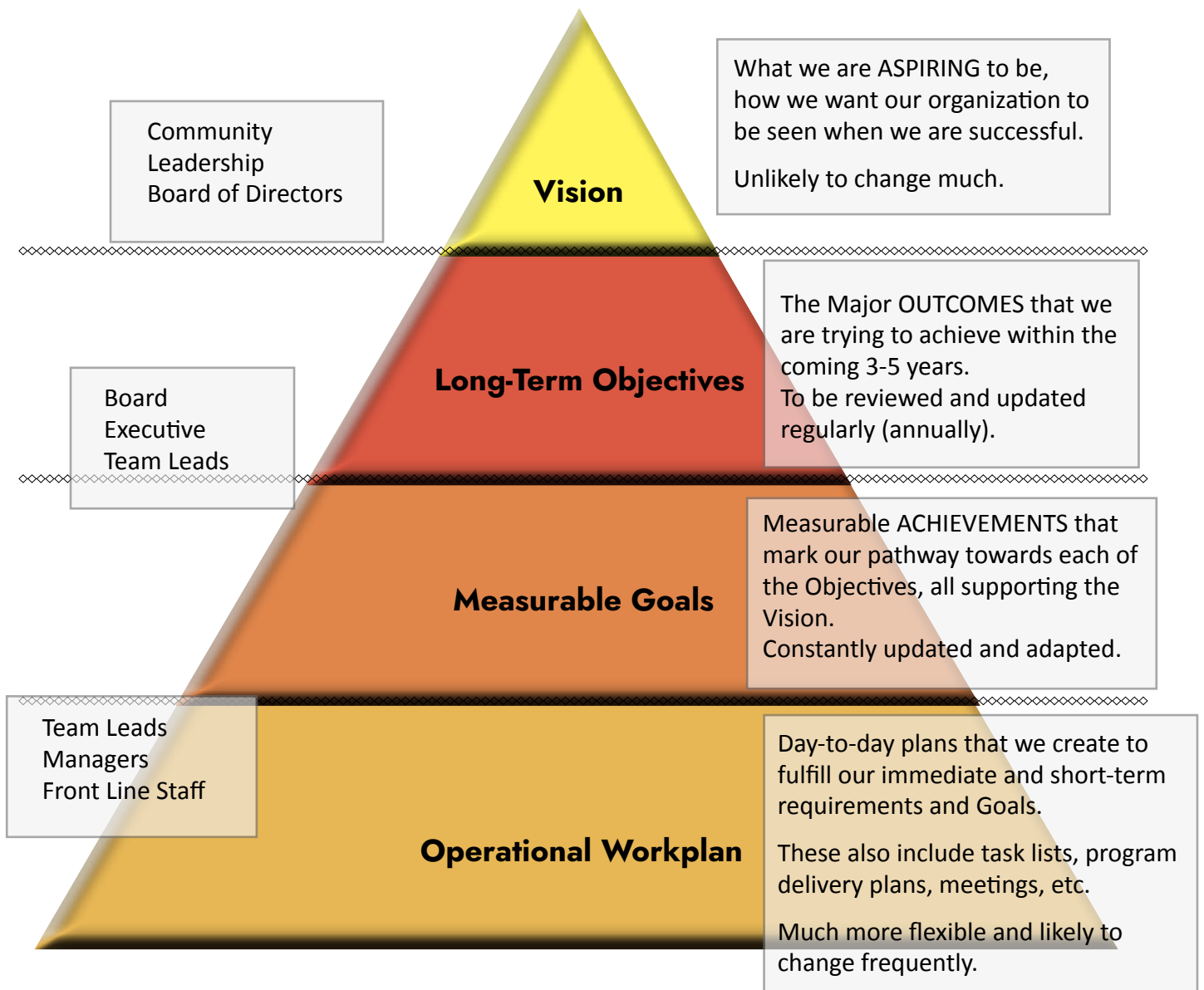
Our Home Care Program is based on Indigenous culture. Certified in-home care staff work directly with family members to give care to our Elders and others in need of their services. The first thing that is completed for a client is an assessment. The client, family, and the Home Care team agree on services to be provided, and a schedule is proposed.

Foundations of Our Strategic Plan

The Vision to Action model supports and connects our day-to-day activities and departmental work plans, to both the short-term goals and longer-term objectives of our organization, and our unifying vision for the future of NVHA and healthcare delivery in the Nass Valley.

Connecting our work to our shared vision ensures that we are all looking and working ahead in the same direction.

Vision to Action Approach



Achieving Our Vision and Mission

Our Vision

WE EMBRACE AND ENRICH THE STRENGTH OF NISGA'A PEOPLE IN WELLNESS AND SPIRIT, IN THE TRADITION OF SAYT-K'IL'IM-GOOT THROUGH A TRANSFORMATIVE NISGA'A HEALTHCARE DEDICATED TO EXCELLENCE AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT.

Our Mission

OUR PURPOSE IS TO PROMOTE A PATH OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS, DRAWING ON BOTH NISGA'A PRACTICES OF CULTURE AND CARE AND WESTERN MEDICINES, BY PROVIDING SERVICES AND SUPPORTS IN A TIMELY, CARING, AND EFFICIENT MANNER, TO THE HIGHEST PROFESSIONAL AND QUALITY STANDARDS FOR THE INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES OF THE NATION.

Our Values

Our approach comes from the Nisga'a paradigm and is based on the principle of succeeding together. Our Vision and Mission are born of our shared values:



Our Strengths

Our Strategic Plan is built upon the foundation of our strengths as a Nation, as a health organization, as a team committed to excellent and culturally informed healthcare, and as individuals who bring love for our communities into the work we do every day.

Our independence: the Nisga'a Nation can design a healthcare system specific to our citizens

Our Elders and traditional knowledge holders that are available to guide us

Our responsive, accessible healthcare system that provides unparalleled access to nurses and physicians

Our lands, traditional foods, and our culture

Our focus on approaching clients with understanding and compassion

Our skilled and experienced healthcare providers

Our team-based model

Our Vision of an Ideal Health Organization

Our vision of an ideal health organization guided us to identify our vision, mission, and long-term objectives. In our vision, our organization operates with excellence, inspires confidence, leads by example, and supports our people in their wellness journeys.

Our staff and operations:



- **Our staff are healthy**
- **We always remember why we are doing this work, who we are working for, and what we are striving for**
- **We have open communication and a shared understanding of our shared goals and individual roles**
- **We work collaboratively towards our shared goals professionally, respectfully, supportively, and culturally**
- **We have well developed, adequately resourced, and properly staffed programs and services**

Our connections to our communities:

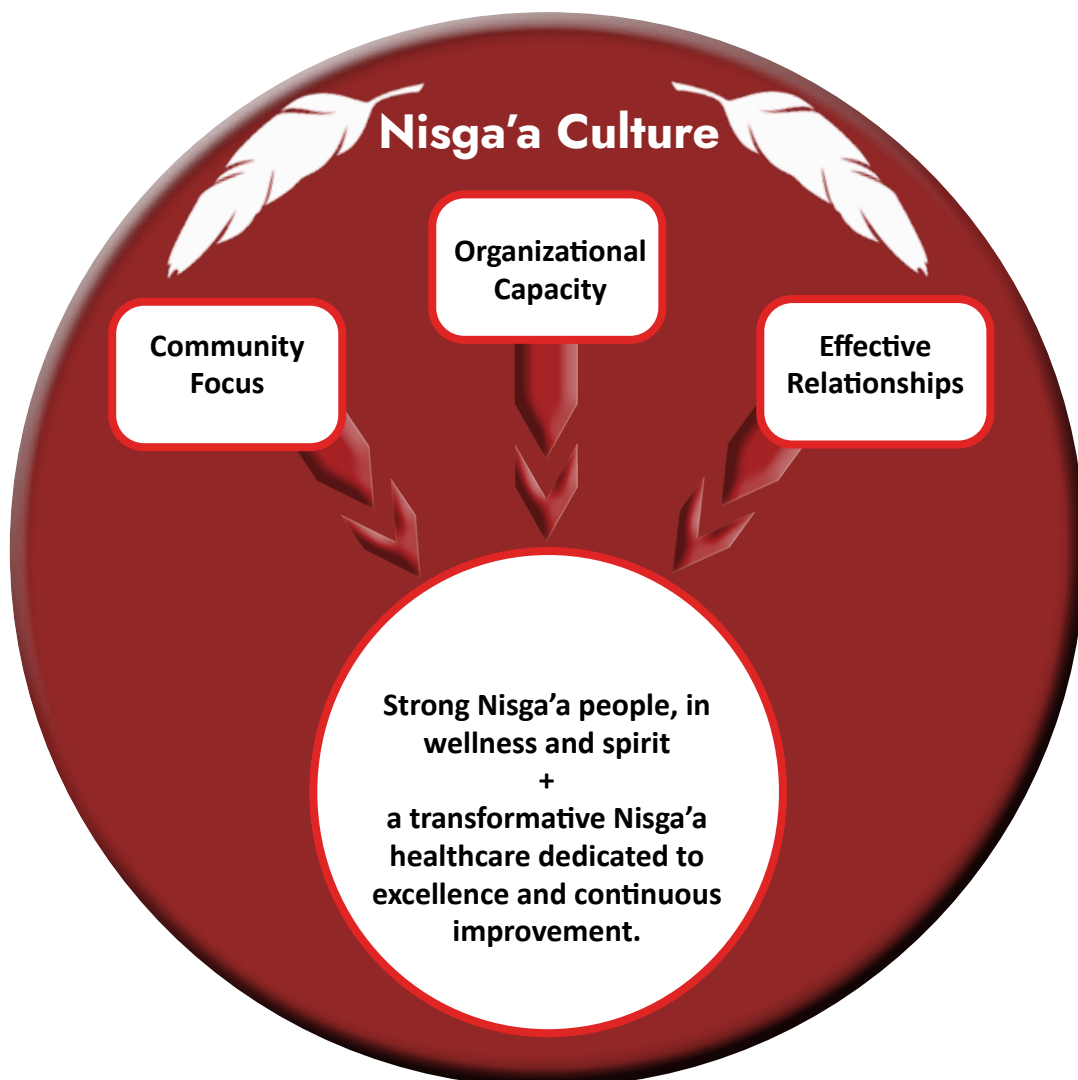
- **We communicate regularly and clearly**
- **We maintain consistency in our schedules, services, and programs to grow confidence**
- **We are inclusive, demonstrating that each person is equal and important**

Through collective and individual efforts towards achieving the goals and objectives in this Strategic Plan, our ideal health organization is possible.



Our Strategic Objective and Priorities

To work towards our objectives, we have identified measurable goals for the coming 3-5 years. These Goals will be the basis for specific operational work plans and will be adjusted over time. Our pathway towards our vision sets us working through the **Nisga'a Paradigm** in all that we do. We will prioritize a **community-based focus** for our work, striving for excellence through consistent growth and improvement in **organizational capacity**, and providing the best possible healthcare through strong, **effective relationships**.



We Strive to Have Strong **Organizational Capacity**

- We have strong, effective, and open communication across all levels of NVHA as well as with Nisga'a Lisims Government (NLG) and our communities.
- Our staff, administration, and Board Members are healthy emotionally and spiritually.
- We have an effective staff that is skilled, knowledgeable, and experienced.
- We have an effective Board that is diverse, skilled, knowledgeable, and experienced in health and wellness practice.
- We are financially and structurally stable with the necessary resources and capacity to provide effective services to Nisga'a citizens and residents in the Nass Valley.

We Maintain a **Community Focus**

- We are recognized as an organization that is welcoming, caring, knowledgeable and committed to serving our Nation.
- Our members have equal access to the health and wellness services and supports they need, regardless of where they live.

We Value Strong, **Effective Relationships**

- We collaborate and have effective partnerships with other service providers, support networks and resources to improve our knowledge, capacities, and health service to our people.

We Work through the **Nisga'a Culture**

- Our work is based on Nisga'a culture, traditions, and practice.
- Our work is guided by our Constitution, the wisdom of the Elders and the needs of our future generations.

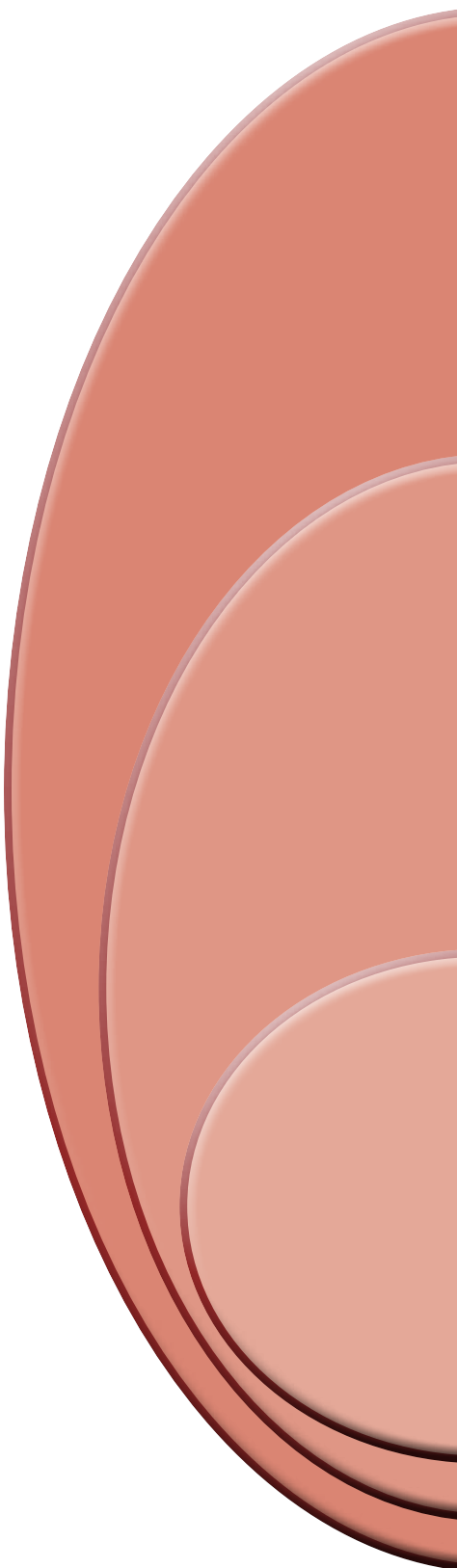
Summary of Priorities

Our objectives have differing levels of urgency, and we have prioritized them accordingly.

Objectives that are not a high priority are no less fundamental to the achievement of our vision and mission. Rather, they are objectives that we will continue to build through everything that we do as an organization.

As is clear by our priorities, we view **stability, reliability, effectiveness, and accountability** of NVHA as foundational towards achieving our vision for an ideal health organization.

We also see these objectives as foundational towards achieving our longer-term aspirations.



Long Term Priority

Our Aspirations

- Work led by Nisga'a culture
- Work guided by the wisdom of our Elders

Medium Term Priority

Builds on our Foundation

- Welcoming, caring organization
- Collaboration
- Equal access to health and wellness services and supports

Immediate Priority

Foundational to Success

- Strong, effective, and open communication
- Organizational health
- Effective Board
- Effective Staff
- Financial and structural stability

Foundations of Our Success

Introduction - Immediate Priority

The success of NVHA depends on the contributions of every person involved with the work of our organization. To succeed in providing excellent healthcare and support for our communities, our leaders, managers, and staff must be healthy and adequately trained and prepared to succeed in our roles. We value and promote opportunities to train, employ, and develop the skills and gifting of our own people in the pursuit of community-defined health goals.

We will know that we have achieved strong organizational capacity when we successfully recruit and retain the most qualified, capable, and culturally competent Board members and staff and our organization is making great strides forward in the development of healthcare facilities that meet our Nations needs today and into the future.

Building on our vision for an ideal health organization and connected to our values of competence, excellence, adaptability, progress, we have five high priority objectives.

Strategic Objective 1	
We have strong, effective, and open communication across all levels of NVHA and with NLG and our communities.	
GOAL	<p>1.1 Increased communication across NVHA.</p> <p>1.2 Improved communication mechanisms between NVHA and our communities.</p> <p>1.3 Our community members, government, and all stakeholders are informed about our health organization, our roles, and our shared responsibilities.</p>
INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting schedule developed and successfully maintained • Communications Officer hired • Well functioning telephone switchboard system for NVHA • Updated Website • Informational materials developed and shared in each community • Nisga'a Healer • Updated Service Agreement • Updated policies and Terms of Reference
ACCOUNTABILITY	<p>⇒ Board of Directors</p> <p>⇒ CEO</p> <p>⇒ Senior Managers</p> <p>⇒ Team Leads</p>
PRIORITY LEVEL	High

<p style="text-align: center;">Strategic Objective 2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Our staff, administration and Board members are healthy physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.</p>	
GOAL	<p>2.1 Promote an open, supportive environment for all staff of the health organization.</p> <p>2.2 Support staff health and wellbeing.</p> <p>2.3 Create opportunities to acknowledge and celebrate staff and the strengths and accomplishments of the health organization so staff feel valued.</p>
INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full complement of nursing and home care staff • Low staff turnover (high retention) • Staff appreciation days included in the annual calendar • Annual retreat takes place • Staff express feeling positive in the workplace and high satisfaction with their jobs
ACCOUNTABILITY	<p>⇒ The CEO, Team Leads, and Managers will lead this goal, providing support and direction to staff across all programs in all communities</p>
PRIORITY LEVEL	<p>High</p>

Strategic Objective 3	
We have an effective staff that is skilled, knowledgeable, and experienced.	
GOAL	3.1 Ensure that staff receive meaningful, and effective professional development and skill building that supports the delivery of their work.
INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional development plans for staff are developed and connected to departmental workplans and budgets
ACCOUNTABILITY	⇨ Team Leads ⇨ Senior Managers
PRIORITY LEVEL	High

Strategic Objective 4	
We have an effective Board that is diverse, skilled, knowledgeable, and experienced in governance, health, and wellness practice.	
GOAL	4.1 Work towards a full Board, with all positions filled. 4.2 Cultivate strong board skills and a strong board relationship. 4.3 Increase opportunities for interaction between NVHA staff and Board.
INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five positions on the Board are full Board professional development plan developed Annual full staff and Board meetings
ACCOUNTABILITY	⇨ NLG has the responsibility to develop a full Board ⇨ Board of Directors is accountable for pursuing capacity development and ensuring interaction with the NVHA staff
PRIORITY LEVEL	High

Strategic Objective 5

We are financially and structurally stable with the necessary resources and capacity to provide effective services to Nisga'a citizens and residents in the Nass Valley.

GOAL	<p>5.1 Identify capital project targets to support wellness targets in the five-year Nisga'a National Health and Wellness Plan. Cultivate strong board skills and a strong board relationship.</p> <p>5.2 Develop comprehensive business plans connected to capital project targets and submit well-constructed business proposals to NLG.</p> <p>5.3 Undertake proactive, collaborative annual budget development.</p> <p>5.4 Ensure NVHA is proactive in addressing evolving financial needs to serve a growing population in the Fiscal Finance Agreement.</p>
INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful approval for capital projects identified in annual business plans • Successful budgeting process - programs have budgets connected to work plans prepared ahead of annual budget meetings with CFO • Budget preparation calendar and guidelines shared with each department • Every department has budget meeting with CFO
ACCOUNTABILITY	<p>⇒ Village Governments</p> <p>⇒ NLG</p> <p>⇒ Board of Directors</p> <p>⇒ CFO</p> <p>⇒ CEO</p>
PRIORITY LEVEL	High

We will know that we have achieved strong organizational capacity when we successfully recruit and retain the most qualified, capable, and culturally competent Board members and staff and our organization is making great strides forward in the development of healthcare facilities that meet our Nations needs today and into the future.



Building on Our Foundation

Introduction - Medium Term Priority

Improving the overall health and well-being of people is not only an important element of the Nisga'a Valley Health Authority mandate, it is contingent on our relationships with community members, village governments, the Nisga'a Lisims Government, and our involvement of a wider range of partnerships. NVHA provides the delivery of health services on and off Nisga'a Lands. The work NVHA has undertaken with the various stakeholders has contributed to the many improvements and innovations in how health programs and services are delivered.

We will know that we are successfully focusing on welcoming and equitably serving our communities when NVHA has a positive, strong reputation for being inviting and treating every person in the Nass Valley and every Nisga'a citizen with equal respect, dignity, and excellent care.

We will know that we have achieved strong, effective relationships with community members and partners when these relationships operate smoothly, the reputation of NVHA is strong, we have a simple to use call-in system, and our community members are clearly informed about our programs, services, and activities.

We have three objectives connected to our vision of an ideal health organization that is community focused and inclusive and emerging from our values of stability, dependability, trust, and integrity.

Strategic Objective 6

We are recognized as an organization that is welcoming, caring, knowledgeable, and committed to serving our Nation.

GOAL	6.1 Cultivate a welcoming atmosphere across all NVHA clinics.
INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete orientation package• Record of all current and new staff participating in cultural orientation• Staff meetings include support to teach staff to greet patients and clients in Nisga'a
ACCOUNTABILITY	⇒ The CEO, Team Leads, and Managers will lead this goal, providing support and direction to staff across all programs in all communities
PRIORITY LEVEL	Moderate

Strategic Objective 7	
Our members have equal access to the health and wellness services and supports they need, regardless of where they live.	
GOAL	7.1 Communicate services, programs, and eligibility for support available to all Nisga'a members.
INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Liaisons in place in urban centres • Informational booklet on NHB completed and shared across membership • Policy review and update • Standardized complaints process in place and effectively monitored and addressed
ACCOUNTABILITY	⇨ Senior Management ⇨ Team Leads
PRIORITY LEVEL	Moderate

We will know that we are successfully focusing on welcoming and equitably serving our communities when NVHA has a positive, strong reputation for being inviting and treating every person in the Nass Valley and every Nisga'a citizen with equal respect, dignity, and excellent care.

Strategic Objective 8	
We collaborate with other service providers, support networks, and resources to improve our knowledge, capacities, and health service to our people.	
GOAL	<p>8.1 Work with village governments to develop complementary services that support a holistic approach to the wellbeing of Nisga’a citizens and residents of the Nass Valley.</p> <p>8.2 Strong Nisga’a participation and representation across regional, provincial, and national levels. Undertake proactive, collaborative annual budget development.</p>
INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular meeting schedule between CEO and village governments • Strong Nisga’a representation across working groups
ACCOUNTABILITY	<p>⇒ Board of Directors</p> <p>⇒ CEO</p> <p>⇒ Senior Managers</p> <p>⇒ Team Leads</p>
PRIORITY LEVEL	Moderate

We will know that we have achieved strong, effective relationships with community members and partners when these relationships operate smoothly, the reputation of NVHA is strong, we have a simple to use call-in system, and our community members are clearly informed about our programs, services, and activities.

Our Aspirations

Introduction - Long Term Priority

We are *Hli gadihl Nisga'a ahl K'alii Aksim Lisims* — Nisga'a, People of the Nass River. Our Ayuuk, language, and culture are the foundation of our identity and sit at the core of the work we do today, and into the future. The traditional role that the Simgigat and Sigidimhaanak', and respected Nisga'a Elders, as recognized and honoured in Nisga'a culture from time immemorial, will be respected in the work that we do.

NVHA is modern and forward-thinking, and grounded in our Nisga'a culture and values. Through a two-eyed seeing approach, we strive to integrate our cultural and traditional ways with the most up-to-date and responsive medical practices, resulting in a holistic, innovative, Nisga'a-informed and led approach to health and wellbeing.

We will know that we are successful in our pursuit of working through the Nisga'a culture when our Ayuuk, language, and traditions are seamlessly a part of everything that we do.

<p style="text-align: center;">Strategic Objective 9</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Our work is guided by our Constitution and the needs of our future generations.</p>	
GOAL	<p>9.1 Engage Elders Committee in Planning and Operational Program Development and seek opportunities to include Elders in programs.</p>
INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semi-annual meetings with the Elders Committee to discuss National and community wellness needs • Annual Ayuuk information sessions • Elder presence and guidance in community wellness programs and activities
ACCOUNTABILITY	<p>⇒ The Board will oversee accountability of this goal</p> <p>⇒ The CEO and Senior Management will support this goal</p> <p>⇒ Community Wellness and Cultural Community Health Representatives will operationalize this goal in their day-to-day activities</p>
PRIORITY LEVEL	<p>Aspirational</p>

Strategic Objective 10 Our work is based on Nisga'a culture, traditions, and practice.	
GOAL	<p>10.1 All staff and professionals have orientation that includes Nisga'a values, history, cultural practices, rules, roles and responsibilities, and expectations / considerations about health service delivery. (i.e., roles of families, rituals, and ceremonies, etc.)</p> <p>10.2 Infuse traditional practice into the way that NVHA operates.</p> <p>10.3 Develop training and orientation materials for new staff, and for regular re-orientation for staff.</p> <p>10.4 Staff are trained and supported to learn to welcome and greet clients in Nisga'a.</p>
INDICATORS OF SUCCESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete orientation package • Record of all current and new staff participating in cultural orientation • Departments have templates for meetings that provide Nisga'a ways of opening and closing meetings • Staff meetings include support to teach staff to greet patients and clients in Nisga'a • All staff capable of greeting patients and clients in Nisga'a
ACCOUNTABILITY	<p>⇒ The Board will oversee accountability of these goals</p> <p>⇒ The CEO, Team Leads, and Managers will work towards these goals</p>
PRIORITY LEVEL	Aspirational

We will know that we are successful in our pursuit of working through the Nisga'a culture when our Ayuuk, language, and traditions are seamlessly a part of everything that we do.





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