



## Update May 16, 2017

The National Inquiry has been meeting with families, survivors, advocates and organizations on regional and issue specific matters, and we carefully listened to their valuable advice. We are grateful for the comments we have received. The honesty and directness of the advice is greatly respected. The gravity of the mandate of the National Inquiry is at the forefront of our minds and hearts as we work to build the National Inquiry.

We were told that the regional advisories were duplicating the pre-inquiry. As a result, we are moving from the advisory body format to a community visit approach.

An interdisciplinary team will participate in these community visits across Canada in order to lay the ground work for the Truth Gathering Process. We believe that these visits will allow us to meet with more survivors and family members in their own home communities, and facilitate their **understanding of** and their **involvement in** the National Inquiry. These visits will also allow for careful planning and preparation for community hearings. It is important that we continue in a way that will not cause any further harm to families and survivors, and we firmly believe this approach will allow for the most trauma-informed process.

We are focused on the upcoming community visits in three Yukon communities the week of May 15, 2017 and the Community Hearings the week of May 29, 2017 in Whitehorse, Yukon.

Where it is not possible for the Commissioners to hear from a particular survivor or family member, there are other options:

- provide their experience to a trained Statement Gatherer from the National Inquiry through video statement, audio statement or written statement
- by sharing through expressions of art, poetry, music and personal audio or video recordings

We will assess the Truth Gathering Process in June and take stock of what we heard from families and survivors. This assessment will help us greatly understand our process. We seek to be flexible, able to adapt to the most effective process. We hear the need to move forward to the Truth Finding Gatherings across the Country in an expedient manner, and we seek to balance need with a cautious, respectful and well informed process.

We will not go ahead with regional advisory meetings in Edmonton, Thunder Bay, Winnipeg, Halifax, Saskatoon, and Northern British Columbia as originally planned. The community visit approach will focus on helping prepare families and survivors of violence to participate in the National Inquiry.

There is much work for the National Inquiry to continue to do and over the next few months. Our growing staff will, for example:

- plan and prepare for community visits in other locations
- continue to build pro-active and respectful relationships with community organizations and regional coalitions
- review and analyze existing reports and data
- work with institutions to receive and review evidentiary records
- meet with families and survivors
- hold expert panels to assist the National Inquiry with a framework for a decolonizing approach that is respectful of and engages with Indigenous legal traditions
- update communication platforms and processes to share information in the right way at the right time.