

Good Medicine Nelson's Healthcare History

Introduction

What is good medicine to you?

How do you define healthcare? Ideas about health, and approaches to preventing and treating illness has changed over time, depending upon many factors, including cultural values, technology, economics and the political landscape. While some approaches focus more on treating illness, others are more preventative; aimed supporting health, whether it be physical, mental, emotional or spiritual.

This exhibit will take a brief look at the evolution of health care in Nelson from pre-contact times to the present, as well as invite visitors to contemplate the future of health care in our region, given the changing economic, political and cultural landscape.

Nelson: Eclectic, Isolated, Resourceful. This is the way Nelson is described in our permanent museum, and it continues to ring true today. Nelson is remote, but it's diverse group of citizens are very committed to the wellbeing and resilience of the community and it's inhabitants. The stories that are told through this exhibit are ones of vision, struggle, community collaboration and success despite limited resources and at times divisive politics.

First Nations

Before the arrival of Europeans, this landscape supported the physical and spiritual wellbeing of the Sinixt and Ktunaxa people. Their intimate knowledge of the land allowed them to thrive for thousands of years, reliant solely on the plants and animals they could use for food, medicine, clothing, tools and shelter, and the stones around them that they fashioned into tools. Medicine men and women were called upon to heal others physically and spiritually.

Arrival of Europeans

When Europeans arrived, they relied heavily on the First Nations to help them survive. Even with the tools and technology brought over from Europe, they didn't have the connection to the land that was necessary to survive through the harsh winters when it was no longer possible to grow food, and trading posts were still scattered far and wide.

Social determiners for health

The term social determiners of health is one that is used For a small town, we have the highest number per capita of co-ops, the most community service organizations, the best maternity ward in BC,