



## Policy Watch

**Niki Sharma**. Get familiar with that name, because this brand-new BC politician is being shaped to be the main contact for government for anyone in the non-profit sector.

Sharma is a BC lawyer who was elected for the first time in November as the MLA for Vancouver-Hastings. She's now BC's first Parliamentary Secretary for Community Development and Non-Profits. Her [mandate letter](#) from Premier John Horgan makes it clear that she's expected to be the point person on all things non-profit.

"Over the course of our mandate," notes Horgan's letter to Sharma, "I expect you will make progress on the following items: Work to ensure charitable organizations and the non-profit sector are engaged and supported through the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery; and support charitable organizations and the non-profit sector by acting as the advocate and key point of contact within government."

Point person or not, any smart non-profit knows better than to put our eggs in one basket. So make a plan to connect not only with Sharma but all the key cabinet ministers for the social services sector. [Click here for the bios](#) of the many new faces in cabinet, a striking number of whom have work backgrounds in social care. We've also posted [relevant ministries' mandate letters](#).

## What you need to know...

**Health Minister** Adrian Dix has appointed a task force to implement the 24 recommendations in Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond's [unsettling report](#) into widespread racism against Indigenous people in BC's health care system.

More than 2,800 Indigenous people and 5,000 health care workers responded to the survey that was part of that report, released today. "Extensive profiling" and stereotyping of Indigenous people was evident even in health care workers' survey responses. Among Indigenous respondents, 84 per cent reported experiencing discrimination in health care, including Indigenous health care workers themselves.

"I have been asked to look after my 'drunk relatives' in the ER or have had Indigenous patients reassigned to me on the wards when I was a resident," noted one Indigenous doctor.

Dix made an ["unequivocal apology"](#) to those who have experienced racism in health care, and promised action. "Racism has made B.C.'s health-care system an unsafe place for many Indigenous peoples to access services and the care they need."

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**To bylaw or not to bylaw?**

That was the question at the centre of a useful webinar put on by the Pacific Legal Education and Outreach Society this month in partnership with Vantage Point.

[Click here](#) for the full recording of the lunch-and-learn webinar, along with information sheets, notes and a PowerPoint to help your board understand the difference between policy and bylaw, and how to know what belongs where.

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**The Dec. 7** deadline is approaching fast for one-time funding through WorkBC for non-profits to provide 12 weeks of pre-employment training and \$1,200 a month in stipends to people designated either as Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers or Persons with Disabilities.

The [Work Experience Opportunities Grant](#) provides up to \$25,000 for organizations to run 12-week training sessions for up to five people. Participants will then be eligible for further WorkBC supports.

**Let's connect! Look for Board Voice on these social media platforms:**



**Queries, questions, concerns, ideas:**

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