



ORGANIZATIONAL STIGMA ASSESSMENT CYCLE BEST PRACTICES FRAMEWORK

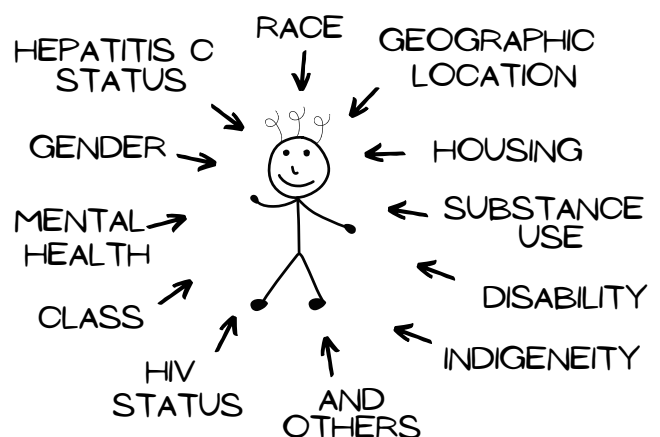
What are the key values and practices organizations can implement to provide stigma-free and discrimination-free services?

We recognize that stigma is ingrained within larger social and economic systems, including historical policies and practices. Organizations have a powerful role to play in shifting the way stigma and discrimination is experienced for people. The work that organizations do can influence change within these larger systems.

These guiding principles and practices fall within the scope of community-based organizations' work and practice. While there are larger systems pieces that need to be changed to shift some experiences of stigma, these are areas of work organizations can strive to implement and operationalize to make changes for the people they serve.

These guiding values and practices are built around intersectionality. Intersectionality is a way to think about different inequalities influenced by the characteristics that make you who you are. These inequalities cannot be separated from the larger systems that produce them (policies, societal attitudes, including stigma, political and economic systems). For instance, thinking about HIV-stigma on its own vs. intersectional stigmas based on HIV status + race + sexuality + drug use. The image identifies an example of intersecting identities, but we recognize there will always be more.

INTERSECTIONALITY...



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Overarching themes that need to be built into organizations

1. Cultural Safety

An environment that is respectful, safe, anti-racist, anti-stigmatizing, understands intersectional identities and allows for open communication. This value must be modeled from leadership and approached with an ongoing and intentional commitment that works to create systems and spaces where people feel respected and physically, emotionally, socially and spiritually safe to access services and supports.

2. Meaningful Engagement

Intentionally making people with lived and living experiences (PWLEs), Black, Indigenous, People of Colour (BIPOC), and other disproportionately affected groups, active partners and shared leaders in an organization. Include opportunities and structures that amplify voices and knowledge from people who are not part of dominant conversations, including smaller organizations or partners. While not leaning on PWLEs or BIPOC partners, actively work to include different forms of knowledge and culture, and advocate for self-determination.

6. Undoing Discriminatory Structures

Willingness to challenge and dismantle organizational structures that perpetuate discrimination. Organizations use privilege and position to support and amplify voices of people who experience stigma and advocate for systemic change across systems.

5. Culture of continuous learning and improvement

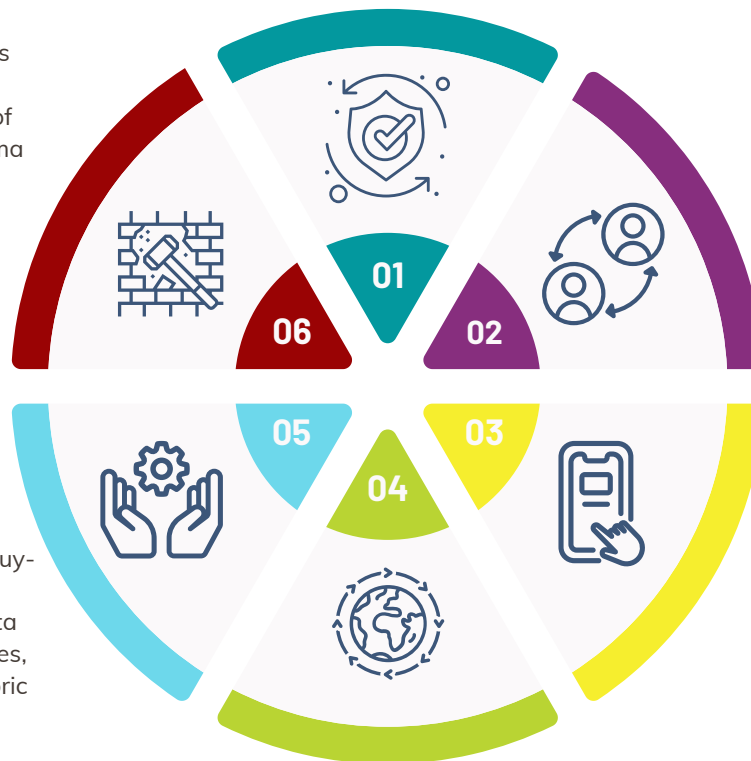
There is leadership and team buy-in for continued education, knowledge generation, and data collection centring PWLLE voices, to build understanding of historic and systemic contributions to stigmatized identities and experiences within an organization. There are protocols and accountability within the organization and people are willing and supported in calling out stigma, raising questions or concerns. There is a culture of transparency and opportunities to discuss stigma and areas of improvement openly.

4. Leadership & Organizational Buy-in

A stigma-free organization requires commitment and participation from the governing board, leadership and staff. Organizational change is propelled by passionate champions.

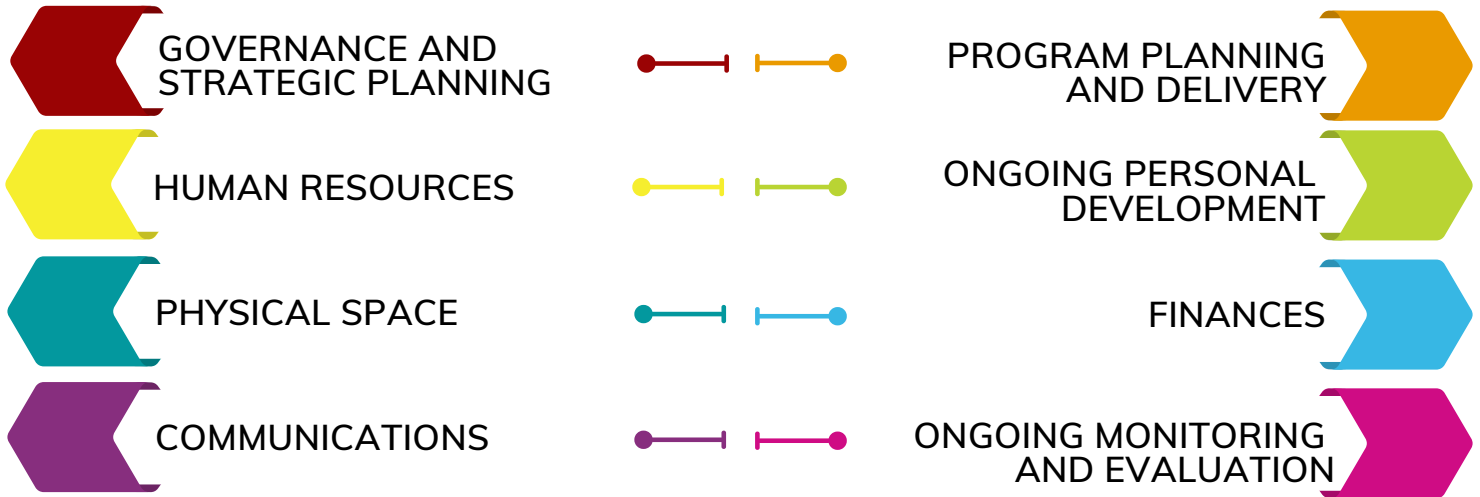
3. People & Community-Centered Work

A people-centered approach encompassing trauma and equity informed practice that weaves Indigenous strength and resistance into these practices. A people and community-centred approach ensures clients are comfortable, supported and welcomed. This approach uses a strengths-based and capacity building approach and fosters opportunities for choice, collaboration and connection for people in an organization.



ORGANIZATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION

Approaches



GOVERNANCE AND STRATEGIC PLANNING

- Formal organizational mandate and policies are anti-stigma and messaging is integrated throughout organization
- Ensure that all staff and clients are aware of organizational values and formal policies – transparency is critical, and all information should be easily accessible by anyone
- Clear policies and procedures for addressing issues of discrimination
- Implementation of policy is reviewed at regular intervals and there is a response or changes made when there are problems, or the policy is not working
- PWLLE should be actively recruited and supported to take on leadership roles in organizations
- Intervention success is most likely when formally adopted

PROGRAM PLANNING AND DELIVERY

- Make connections and partnerships with diverse groups (e.g. BIPOC, people who use drugs, people with disabilities, 2SLGBTQIA+)
- Partner and participate in events celebrating diverse identities
- Update/revise program delivery regularly based on new information, evidence, evaluation data, and best and emerging practices
- Ensure anti-stigmatizing language is used
- Respect for privacy and confidentiality
- Free and prior informed consent



HUMAN RESOURCES

- Apply intersectional lens across all human resource practices
- Performance reviews include anti-stigma learning and performance objectives
- Hold space for BIPOC employees to gather (e.g. employee resource groups)
- Access to Elders, Knowledge Keepers, mentors, for Indigenous employees
- Service providers possess the core competencies relevant to their professional roles -- knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours that front-line service providers need in order to strengthen services and improve health outcomes of clients
- Human resource policies are reviewed for discriminatory practices and language, and developed with an intersectional lens
- Focus on recruitment and retention with diverse communities (e.g., BIPOC, people who use drugs, disabled people, 2SLGBTQIA+). This work includes relationship building in recruitment spaces
- Staff and volunteers feel supported within the organization – have ways to raise questions, concerns, and experiences about stigma and discrimination openly and without fear of repercussions and recrimination



FINANCES

- Budgets are values documents in that they show what an organization prioritizes spending money on – ensure that budget aligns and supports organizational values
- Budget resources for anti-stigma and anti-discrimination work
- Elders, PWLEs are compensated fairly for their work and contributions



PHYSICAL SPACE

- Space is welcoming and safe
- To what extent is the organization and its services accessible for people with disabilities?
- To what extent are anti-discrimination policies and values displayed?
- Is display material representative and respectful of different identities?
- Appropriate space for activities that participants need (e.g., ceremony, drug use, privacy)



COMMUNICATIONS

- Public face of organization reflects the population groups you serve
- Actively updating language
- Amplify the work of partners, PWLEs, BIPOC
- Make communication tools accessible to a wide audience



ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Have spaces and resources for staff to come together and learn about diversity, inclusion, and equity
- Training on core competencies related to stigma and discrimination free services
- Expectation of staff understanding of historic and systemic contributions to stigmatized identities and experience
- Staff build personal awareness about their own attitudes, values, and beliefs
- Addressing implicit bias through self-reflection
- Skills building to ensure service provider behaviours are anti-stigmatizing



ONGOING EVALUATION AND MONITORING

- Opportunity for people to provide feedback in a culturally safe way
- Track results as part of regular quality improvement, not an 'extra' process
- Look at who does not access the organization and why – is organization accessible for stigmatized groups? Look at whether they feel welcome but also if they do not have access
- Ongoing evaluation, data collection and knowledge generation should focus on equity, having the ability to look at disaggregated data (understanding how people with characteristics engage with or experience services at an organization – i.e. Disaggregate data by gender, race, age...)
- Develop and implement an improvement plan (allocate appropriate time and resources)
- Include impacted communities in evaluation and research planning and implementation
- Anti-stigma interventions should include evaluation and/or research plans and collected data or lessons learned should be used to support improvements
- Share successes and challenges with others to build a community culture of learning

GLOSSARY OF Terms

CULTURAL SAFETY:	An environment that is respectful, safe, anti-racist, anti-stigmatizing, understands intersectional identities and allows for open communication. This value must be modeled from leadership and approached with an ongoing and intentional commitment that works to create systems and spaces where people feel respected and physically, emotionally, socially and spiritually safe to access services and supports.
DISCRIMINATION:	Unjust or unequal treatment
DISCRIMINATORY STRUCTURES:	Social, political, and economic laws, policies, and values that favour certain populations over others.
EQUITY:	Recognizing and addressing barriers to provide opportunity for all individuals and communities to thrive.
FRAMEWORK:	Outline of a system or structure.
INEQUALITIES:	Different treatment access based on social determinants of health
INTERSECTIONALITY:	How characteristics of a person can result in multi-faceted systemic and systematic stigma and discrimination.
MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT:	Inclusion and decision making by and for people with lived and living experience that is part of a full circle of questioning, data gathering, action, and report back to community
PEOPLE-CENTERED APPROACH:	A people-centered approach positions people as whole and capable decision-makers about their own health and wellbeing
ORGANIZATION:	Community group of people with stated purpose and services.
STIGMA:	Negative treatment and/or bias against a person because of certain characteristics or identities