

## Past Winners

The inaugural 2024 Novartis Health Equity Initiative drew over 130 applications from across the country. Incredible projects were reviewed by an internal committee and three projects were selected to receive funding from Novartis Canada.

The winners were unveiled during a closing ceremony at Novartis' Montréal head office, recognizing their commitment to advancing health equity.

Their journey didn't end there. Since then, Novartis Canada has been staying in touch with the 2024 winners to share their stories since receiving the funding.

### Fort Severn First Nation



*From left to right: Rosa D'Acunti (Novartis, Head of Communications & Patient Advocacy), Connie Thomas (Fort Severn First Nation, Health Director), Mark Vineis (Novartis, Country President)*

Fort Severn First Nation is the most northern community in Ontario. Located five miles from the Hudson Bay, it is only accessible year-round by air.

#### The need

Because community members fly out for health care, diagnosis, treatment and preventative care are often not received in a timely manner. This results in children's health and disabilities not being addressed, chronic problems developing, and sometimes the premature loss of lives.

#### Bridging the gap

The funds from the Novartis Health Equity Initiative are being used to establish a group of Meno ya win coordinators or health coordinators, who will bridge the gap between families and medical teams to address health care needs more promptly. These coordinators are being vetted and trained by the [Learn and Uplift Foundation](#) with the goal of improving health outcomes for the community.

## Foundations for Social Change

*"One of the other really important pieces of the Novartis grant has been that being connected to an organization like Novartis has given us a lot of legitimacy and has given us a lot of opportunity to tell our story in a different way." – Amber Dyce, CEO*



[Foundations for Social Change](#) is a non-profit organization that develops innovative programs to help vulnerable populations based in Vancouver, British Columbia.

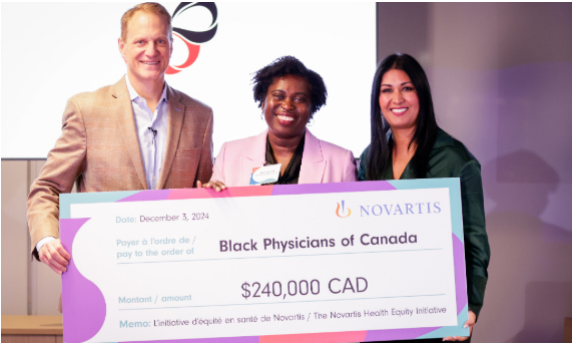
#### The need

Individuals experiencing homelessness and poverty disproportionately suffer from poor health outcomes due to systemic barriers in health care.

#### Restoring stability

The funding from the Novartis Health Equity Initiative is being used to support the New Leaf Project. This evidence-based solution, in partnership with the University of British Columbia, reduces disparities in health outcomes by giving marginalized populations the resources they need to promote long-term stability

# Black Physicians of Canada



From left to right - Mark Vineis (Novartis, Country President), Julie Sobowale (Black Physicians of Canada, Executive Director), Sophia Kajla (Novartis, CSO & VP Scientific Affairs)

Black Physicians of Canada is an organization dedicated to uniting, supporting, amplifying and empowering Black physicians, physicians in training, patients and the Black community across Canada.

## The need

Racial discrimination, underrepresentation and cultural differences all impact the experiences of Black physicians and medical trainees, which in turn affects patient health outcomes.

## Connecting the community

Through the Novartis Health Equity Initiative, Black Physicians of Canada is creating the first national black physician database in Canada. This will provide access to culturally sensitive care, empowering patients and healthcare professionals in the Black community to achieve better health outcomes.

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4. <https://blackphysicians.ca/>