

## Universal Declaration of Health Rights

*A Sacred Covenant with All Life*

### The Four Sacred Rights

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#### Health as Universal Right

**Every being has the inherent right to the conditions that support health and healing, including:**

- **Clean air and pure water** as sacred commons never to be privatized or polluted
- **Nutritious, culturally appropriate food** produced through regenerative relationships with the Earth
- **Safe shelter and stable communities** that nurture rather than exploit human relationships
- **Access to both traditional and contemporary medicine** with freedom to choose healing approaches that honor cultural values and spiritual beliefs
- **Freedom from harm** including protection from toxic environments, exploitative labor, and violence
- **Dignified care** that honors the whole person—body, mind, spirit, and community relationships

*This right recognizes that health emerges from right relationship with ourselves, our communities, and the living systems that sustain us, requiring governance that protects rather than commodifies the foundations of life.*

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#### Community Health Sovereignty

**Communities, especially Indigenous peoples, have the right to control their own health systems, including:**

- **Authority over health governance** in their territories through traditional governance processes and cultural protocols
- **Protection and practice of traditional healing** with recognition of traditional healers as legitimate healthcare practitioners
- **Free, Prior, and Informed Consent** for all health interventions with genuine community authority to modify, reject, or design alternatives
- **Community-controlled health research** with authority over research design, implementation, and benefit distribution
- **Traditional knowledge sovereignty** with protection from appropriation while enabling community-controlled sharing
- **Cultural protocol integration** in all health activities including ceremonial requirements, seasonal timing, and spiritual practices

*This right recognizes that effective health governance emerges from community relationships and traditional knowledge rather than external authority, requiring systems that strengthen rather than undermine community autonomy.*

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#### Intergenerational Health Justice

**Present generations have the responsibility to ensure health decisions serve future generations, including:**

- **Seven-generation impact assessment** for all major health policies and infrastructure decisions
- **Youth authority in health governance** with genuine decision-making power over policies affecting their generation
- **Protection of ecological foundations** that sustain health for children not yet born
- **Traditional knowledge transmission** supported and protected for future generations
- **Climate health adaptation** that addresses rather than exacerbates intergenerational health impacts
- **Health commons protection** ensuring essential resources remain available for future generations

*This right recognizes that current health decisions create the conditions future generations will inherit, requiring governance guided by those who will live longest with the consequences.*

## One Health Integration

**Human health, animal health, and ecosystem health are inseparable, requiring:**

- **Ecosystem health protection** as foundation for all health governance and healing practice
- **Animal welfare integration** recognizing the health and rights of non-human beings
- **Ecological relationship healing** addressing environmental destruction as fundamental health threat
- **Traditional ecological knowledge** guiding health governance through understanding of natural relationships
- **Regenerative healing practices** that enhance rather than degrade natural systems
- **Spiritual relationship recognition** honoring the sacred dimensions of health and healing

*This right recognizes that health emerges from the flourishing of the whole web of life, requiring governance that serves rather than exploits the relationships sustaining all beings.*

## Implementation Principles

### Community-Controlled Implementation

These rights must be implemented through community governance processes that honor traditional knowledge, cultural protocols, and local autonomy rather than imposed through external authority.

### Traditional Knowledge Foundation

All health governance must honor and integrate traditional knowledge as essential rather than supplementary wisdom, recognizing that Indigenous communities have maintained sophisticated health systems for millennia.

### Youth Leadership Integration

Young people must exercise genuine authority in implementing these rights, particularly regarding decisions affecting future generations and long-term health infrastructure.

### Democratic Accountability

All health governance implementing these rights must operate through democratic processes that ensure accountability to affected communities rather than distant authorities.

## Economic Justice Requirements

These rights require economic systems that treat health as commons rather than commodity, ensuring access based on need rather than ability to pay.

## Enforcement and Protection

### Community Authority

Communities retain ultimate authority over health governance in their territories with power to enforce these rights through traditional governance processes and community-controlled accountability mechanisms.

### Legal Standing

These rights provide legal standing for communities, youth, and traditional knowledge keepers to challenge violations through appropriate legal systems while maintaining community sovereignty.

### International Coordination

International bodies may support communities in enforcing these rights but may not override community authority or impose health interventions without genuine community consent.

### Traditional Remedies

Violations of these rights must be addressed through restorative justice approaches that heal relationships and restore health commons rather than punitive measures that perpetuate harm.

## Sacred Commitment

We pledge ourselves to these rights not as abstract principles but as living commitments guiding our daily choices and governance practices. We recognize that health is relationship, and healing our relationships heals us all.

May these rights guide us toward governance that serves the flourishing of all life, healing systems that honor the wisdom of all traditions, and communities that care for each being across the generations.

In the spirit of all our relations, with respect for the sacred, and in service to the children not yet born, we commit to building health governance worthy of our only home.

*Adopted by the Global Health & Pandemic Security Framework as the ethical foundation for all health governance, healing practice, and pandemic security implementation worldwide.*

**For more information:** [Global Health & Pandemic Security Framework](#)

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