



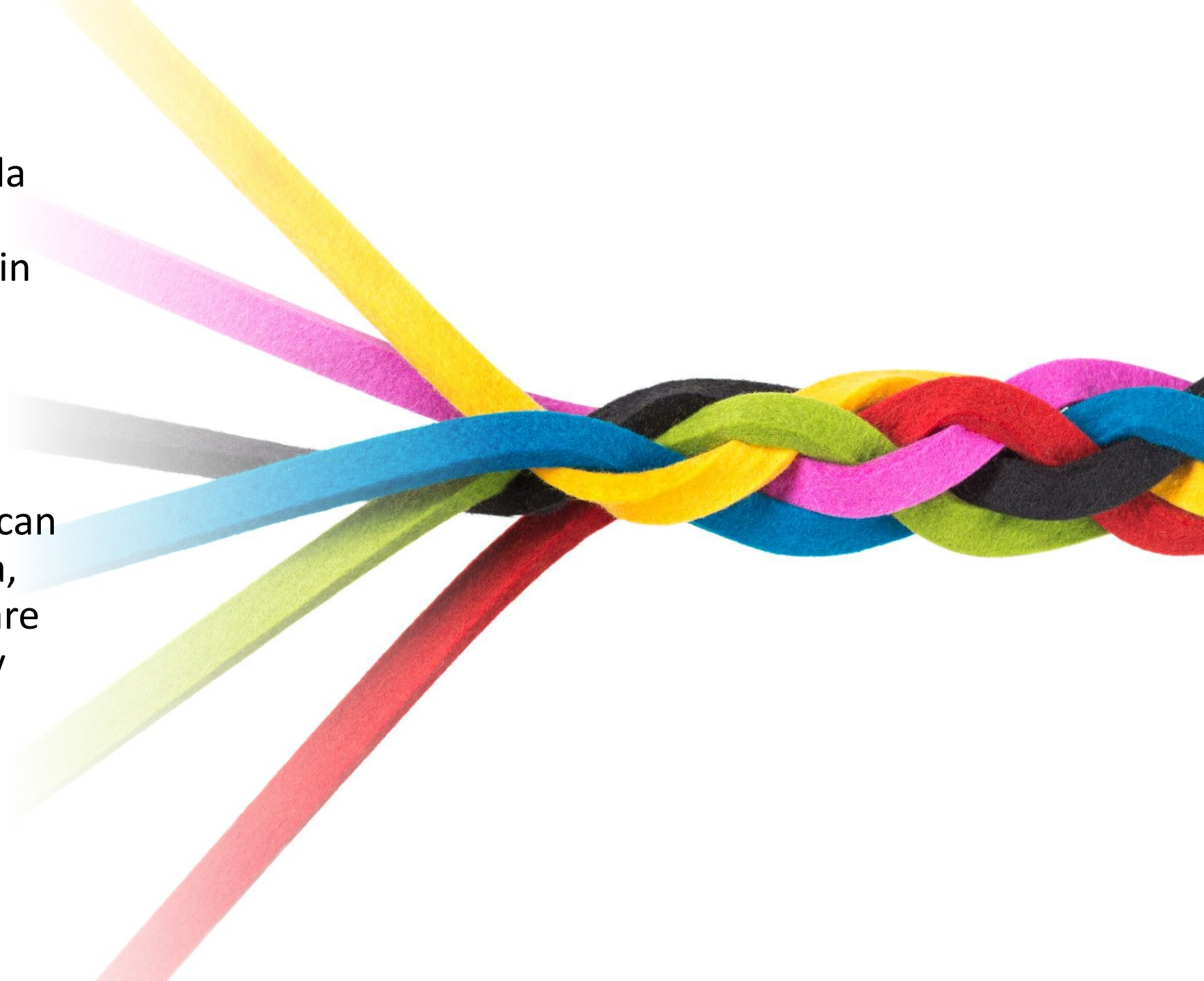
## **LESSONS FROM COMMUNITIES**

Presentation by Vanessa Howard, North Island Regional Specialist, HEMBC



The information and recommendations Amanda has presented echoes my experiences working within rural and remote communities throughout Canada.

I agree with Amanda, we can do better for rural Canada, and in many cases there are professionals who already are.





Over the last several years, I have been humbled to work with communities to build programs that transition the language of emergency management into existing strengths and community capacity. I have carried these lessons with me and now am applying them within a Health Emergency Management context.



# Anchoring principles

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Respect

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Humility

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Lifting-up Community

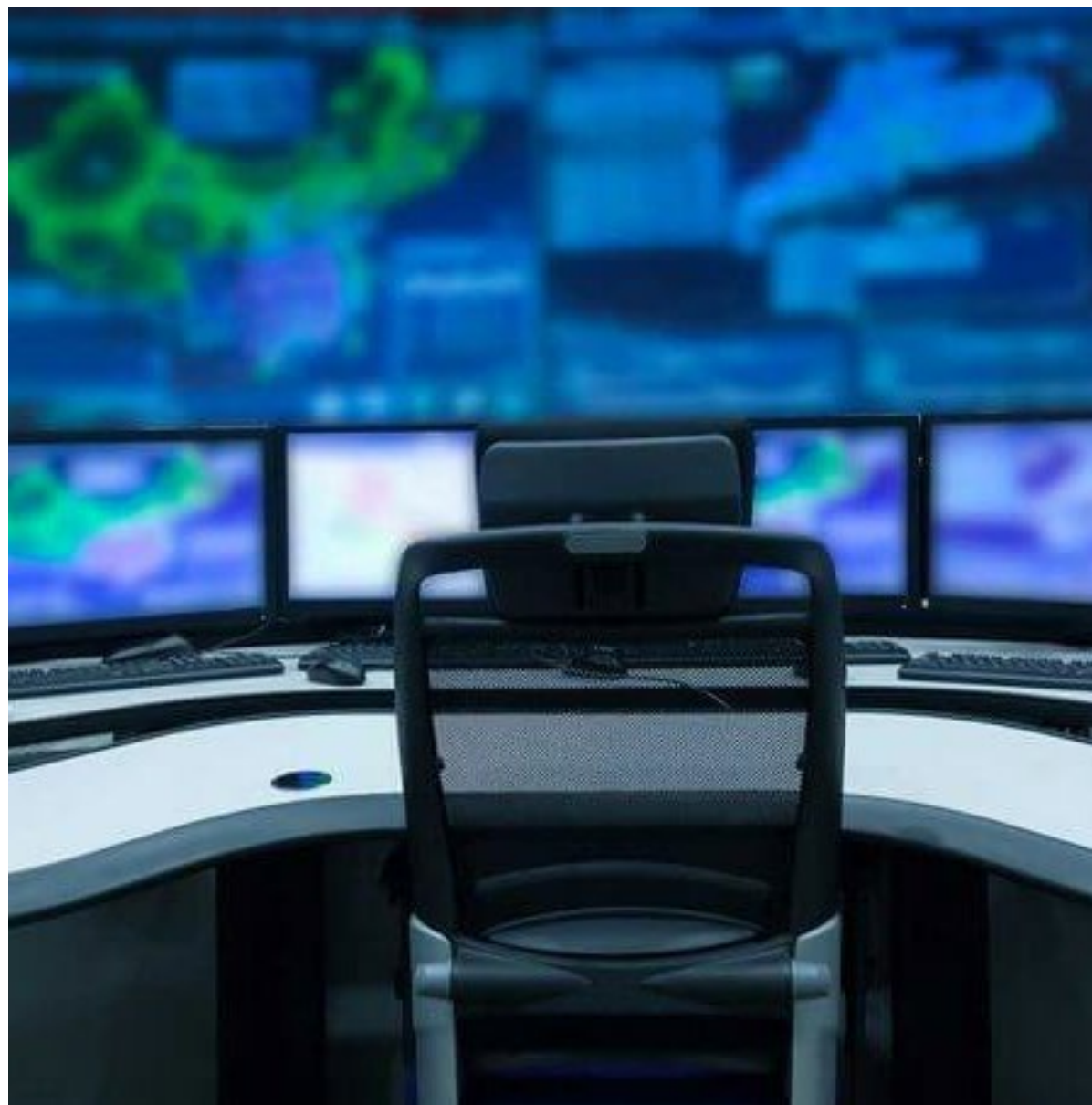
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Understanding historical context influences today's interactions

## Community Led

Emergency management and community resilience in remote communities should be led by the community.







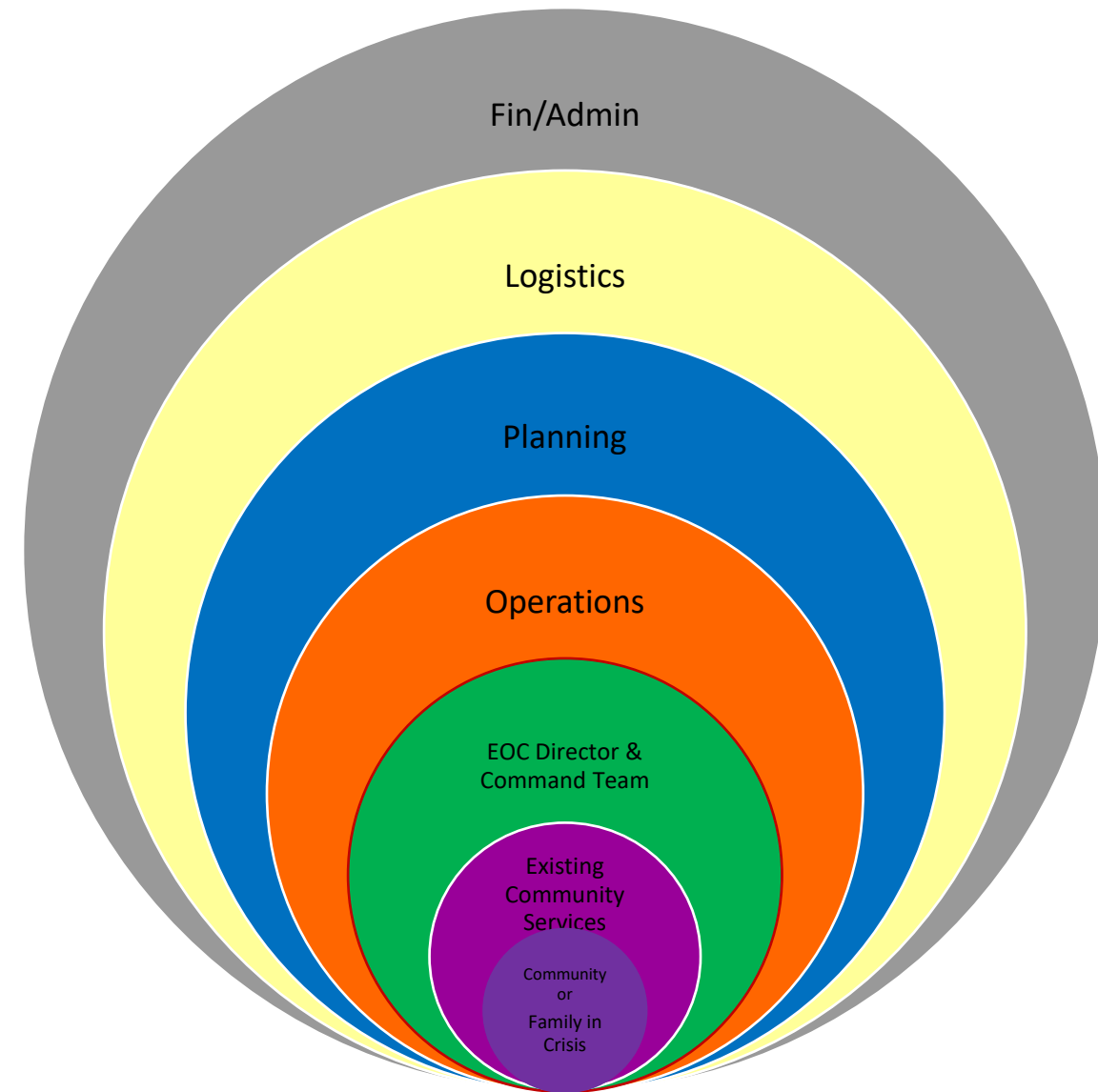
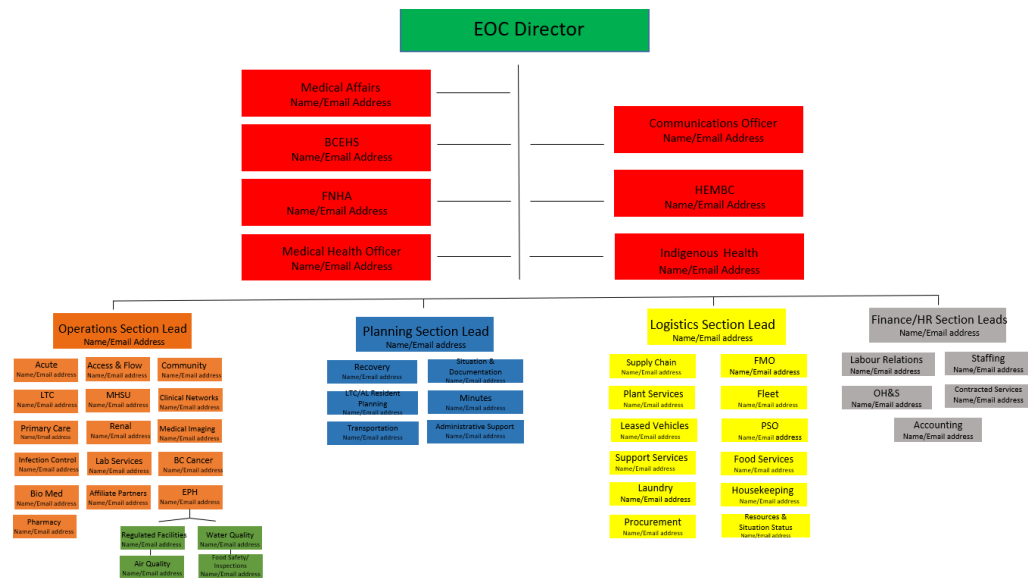
The community should be considered as the definitive expert on themselves.

The emergency managers task is to ask the pertinent questions and listen to the experts speak.



# Applying this in healthcare







### Holding up community is powerful

- Authentic vs inauthentic support is recognized
- Support was meaningful and community led because we truly listened to the community, even when we didn't agree with their approach
- This was noticed and had powerful impacts including improved working and personal relationships that have lasted beyond the response

### Patience is necessary

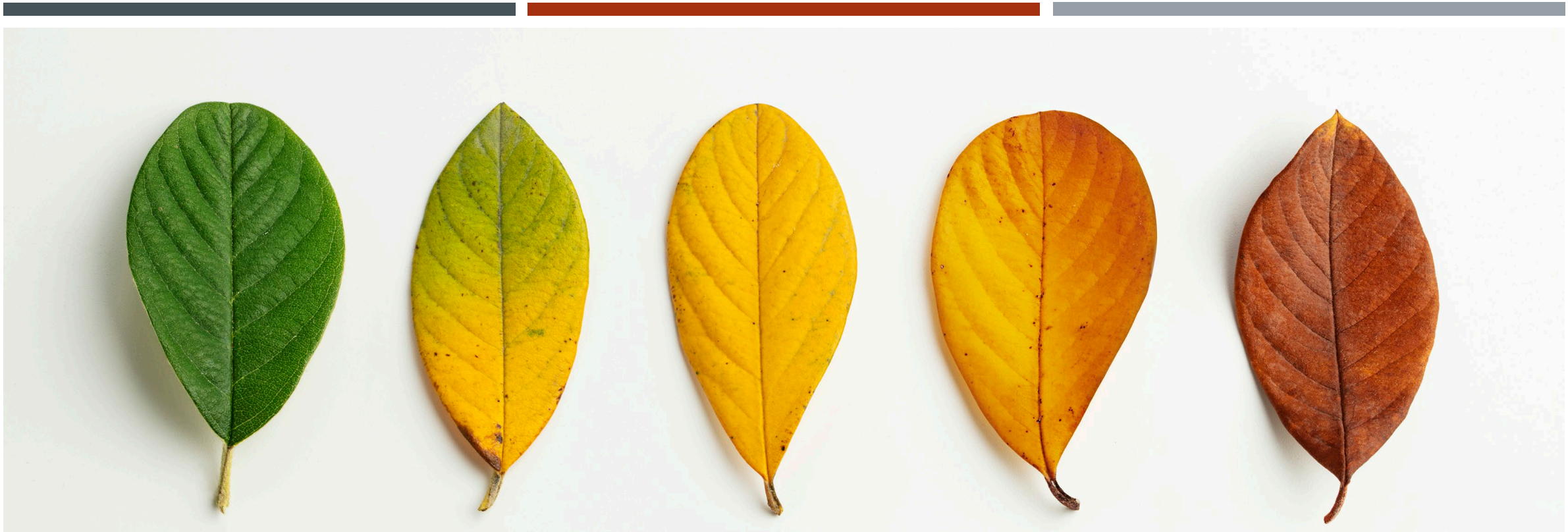
- Community decision makers may be grieving
- Community led decisions needs to allow for that process – timelines are not as you would normally expect them to be
- We can support this by managing expectations of other agencies we interface with

### Language and protocol must be respected

- Response may be influenced by how communities interact with their leadership
- Sometimes there will be differing views and stigma related to harm reduction and mental health may be realities you must work within
- The way you address these challenges should be informed by local community and health subject matter experts

### Psychological support is essential

- During all responses, care for all impacted people is critical
- These are often high consequence events that result in significant disruptions
- When we consider the rural context, there may be significant interconnectedness; responders are often directly experiencing loss as well



**THANK YOU!**

Questions?