



First Nations Health Authority  
Health through wellness

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**April 6, 2018**

## **Colleen Erickson assumes role of FNHA Board Chair**

**SQUAMISH TERRITORY – WEST VANCOUVER, BC**

After six years of dedicated service, Lydia Hwitsum has moved on from her position as Board Chair for the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA). Effective April 1, 2018, former Vice - Chair Colleen Erickson has been appointed chair.

Hwitsum, the former Chief of Cowichan Tribes and was one of the founding members of the First Nations Health Society in March 2009. She was subsequently appointed to the FNHA board in January 2012 and became the Board Chair later in April of 2012.

Among her accomplishments, Lydia played a key role in the negotiation of the key agreements leading to the transfer of health services from the Government of Canada to First Nations control including the Canada Funding Agreement and related sub-agreements.

More recently, Lydia provided leadership during the IAS (Internal Audit Services) Board Governance Assessment and was integral to the work under the 2017 Corporate Policy Framework.

Throughout her six years of service, Lydia led with culture, and ensured that the FNHA Board of Directors incorporated an Indigenous lens in all of their work. This truly enabled good decision making and a strong foundation for the FNHA and the customer owners they serve.

Lydia will continue in her leadership journey, assuming responsibilities closer to home—she was recently appointed by the provincial government to Royal Roads University's board of governors. She has also recently taken on the role of co-chair for the Environmental Assessment Advisory Council—an independent forum that will review and make recommendations on BC's current environmental process.

"I raise my hands to our former chair, Lydia Hwitsum, for her authentic leadership and dedication over the past six years. Lydia made many significant contributions to our first-of-its-kind, Indigenous health organization and kept culture at the heart of her hard work," said Colleen Erickson, FNHA Board Chair.



First Nations Health Authority  
Health through wellness

Colleen (Marion) Erickson is a recognized community leader and veteran member of the RCMP. She holds a Master's degree in Education focused on traditional philosophies of Carrier teachings. She is a former two-term Chief of Saik'uz First Nation and brings a wealth of negotiation, financial administration, mediation and leadership skills to the FNHA board. A Dakelh grandmother (Ut'soo) from the Nak'azdli community and member of the Lasilyu (Frog) Clan, Colleen is an active community member who participates in the balhats (potlatch) system, and she believes that cultural identity is the foundation of health and wellness.

Effective April 1, 2018, Dr Liz Whynot assumed the Vice-Chair position.

**Media CONTACT:**

FNHA Media  
[media@fnha.ca](mailto:media@fnha.ca)  
604-831-4898