



First Nations Health Authority  
Health through wellness

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**Communique**

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## **First Nations Health Authority Statement on Highway 16 Transportation Symposium**

**Wet'suwet'en Territory – Smithers, BC** - The First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) is pleased to be supporting First Nations communities along the Highway 16 corridor to attend the Highway 16 Transportation Symposium in Smithers today. A total of 30 First Nations community and support organizations will be represented at the event to share their vision and service requirements for better transportation infrastructure in the area.

An elected Chief and Health Director from each of the 26 First Nations communities within 75 km of Highway 16 were invited and funded to attend the event. First Nations leaders will be joined by representatives from local municipalities, Northern Health, Regional Districts, and other provincial ministerial representatives.

Together with our partners the Ministry of Transportation, FNHA is focused on working with northern First Nations to address their transportation challenges. Transportation solutions are focused on increasing safety for First Nations and Aboriginal girls and women and creating efficiencies for medical transportation programs. We look forward to finding practical, affordable and sustainable transportation solutions to address both medical and non-medical travel and support healthy communities.

“This forum provides the opportunity to explore new possibilities and models for transportation in a transparent manner,” said First Nations Health Authority Chief Operating Officer Richard Jock. “We look forward to learning more about the transportation options available to First Nations and partners and seeing how these can be provided for in the future. The forum aligns well with our mandate to increase access to medical services.”

The all-day event will consider the results from a recent transportation survey and will include dialogue with community leadership about issues and challenges along the Highway 16 corridor. Discussions will also take into account previous community engagement and reports including the 2006 Highway 16 Transportation Symposium Report and the 2012 Missing Women Commission of Inquiry recommendations. The 2015 Symposium is intended to build upon those recommendations and will include additional First Nations communities and our government partners for a focused discussion on transportation.

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