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First Nations Health Authority  
Health through wellness

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Oct. 1, 2013

Respected Chiefs and Health Leaders,

**Re: Achieving Transfer of First Nations & Inuit Health Branch - BC Region to the First Nations Health Authority**

It is with great pleasure that we announce the achievement of a significant milestone in the Implementation of the Tripartite First Nations Health Plan. Effective October 1, 2013, BC First Nations, through the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA), assume responsibility for the programs, people and resources of the First Nations Inuit Health office in the Pacific Region. This includes programs for primary care, public health benefits (NIHB), management and protection of personal information, environmental and community health, as well as funding agreements with communities. Most of Health Canada's regional staff are transferring to the FNHA.

The success of this historic transfer signals a new era for First Nations' health in BC. As we move beyond transition, the ongoing partnership between BC First Nations, the province of BC and the Government of Canada will be instrumental in achieving health system transformation. As committed to in the Health Partnership Accord, the Partners will continue to work to improve the health status of First Nations in BC and build a responsive and more integrated health system that will provide better health services to First Nations and will benefit all British Columbians. Upholding this commitment necessitates an enduring, adaptable and responsive relationship, one that will mobilize and maximize the contributions, authorities and assets of each partner to work to common goals.

Recognizing that BC First Nations are best positioned to make decisions about the health and wellness of their people, Health Canada will continue to support BC First Nations and the FNHA in achieving their health goals as a governance partner and funder. Canada will continue to be involved in the Tripartite process with ongoing meetings of the Tripartite Committee on First Nations Health and active involvement of senior staff within Health Canada in support of the success of this work.

Learn more about our journey to get to this milestone and the steps ahead at our health forum, Gathering Wisdom for a Shared Journey VI on October 22-24 on Coast Salish Territory in downtown Vancouver. Here, you'll join Chiefs, health leaders, front-line health workers, federal and provincial partners, and other key decision-makers in BC First Nations health for a one-of-a-kind dialogue in which BC First Nations provide wisdom for building and transforming a more effective health system from the ground up.

Health system transformation is more than the reorientation of federal programs and services; this historic transfer has fundamentally transformed the relationship between B.C First Nations, the Government of Canada and the Province of B.C. and represents a momentous milestone in the achieving First Nations ambitions to bring decision-making closer to home.

Sincerely,

Joe Gallagher  
Chief Executive Officer,  
First Nations Health Authority

Michel Roy, Senior Assistant Deputy Minister  
First Nations and Inuit Health Branch  
Health Canada