
News Release

Tripartite Partners Signify New Path Forward with Historic Transfer of Health Services for BC First Nations

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For immediate release

VANCOUVER – COAST SALISH TERRITORY – Grand Chief Doug Kelly, Chair of the First Nations Health Council was joined today by the Honourable Rona Ambrose, Federal Minister of Health and B.C. Minister of Health Terry Lake to celebrate the historic transfer of all health programs and services for B.C. First Nations previously administered by Health Canada to the new First Nations Health Authority (FNHA).

“The support of our Chiefs and leadership has been essential to moving forward with this historic decision to transform our health care - the First Nations Health Authority was built by B.C. First Nations for B.C. First Nations. Now is the time for B.C. First Nations to take our rightful place, determining our own health outcomes and what wellness means to us,” said Grand Chief Doug Kelly. “I would like to commend our federal, provincial, health authority, and other partners on the collaborative work to date and we look forward to our service delivery role, bringing to life our vision of healthy, self-determining and vibrant BC First Nations children, families and communities.”

Through the Tripartite B.C. First Nations Health Plan, partners are taking a new path forward in their relationship with the ultimate goal of elevating the health status of B.C. First Nations community members.

“Today marks the beginning of a new era in health care for B.C. First Nations,” said Minister Ambrose. “The transfer of responsibilities empowers First Nations while promoting a better, more responsive, integrated and innovative model of health service delivery. This Agreement will contribute to the development of healthier and more sustainable B.C. First Nations communities.”

This transfer of services has been several years in the making and was outlined in a number of guiding documents and agreements including the 2011 British Columbia Tripartite Framework Agreement on First Nation Health Governance. The

Framework Agreement paved the way for the federal government to transfer the planning, design, management, and delivery of First Nations health programs to the new FNHA. The new approach enables the FNHA to incorporate First Nations' cultural knowledge, beliefs, values, and models of healing into the design and delivery of health programs that better meet the needs of First Nations communities.

“We have achieved a historic milestone,” said British Columbia Health Minister Terry Lake. “We are empowering First Nations all across the province with the goal of improving the health status of all British Columbians. This is a first in Canada and a made-in-B.C. program of which we can all be proud.”

The work of the FNHA does not replace or duplicate the role or services of the B.C. Ministry of Health and Regional Health Authorities but collaborates, coordinates and integrates respective health programs and services to achieve better health outcomes for B.C. First Nations addressing services gaps through new partnerships, closer collaboration, and health systems innovation.

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Media Inquiries:

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Michael Bolkenius
Office of the Honourable Rona Ambrose
Federal Minister of Health
(613) 957-0200

Health Canada
Media Relations
(613) 957-2983

Trevor Kehoe
Communications Officer and Media Relations
First Nations Health Authority
604-831-4898 (Mobile)

Ryan Jabs
Media Relations Manager
Ministry of Health, British Columbia
250 952-1887 (media line)

Public Inquiries:

(613) 957-2991
1-866 225-0709

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