

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Fraser Health and First Nations Health Authority commit two million dollars to improve health and wellness for Aboriginal people

Surrey, BC – Two million dollars – one million each from Fraser Health and the First Nations Health Authority - has been committed to help support better health outcomes for First Nations and Aboriginal people in the Fraser Health-Fraser Salish region. This money will fund initiatives and services to address the largest unmet needs identified through available population health data and by working with First Nation communities, Metis and Aboriginal people living in the Fraser Salish region.

“Our work with the First Nations Health Authority is further strengthened through Fraser Health’s support,” said Health Minister Terry Lake. “The FNHA are leaders, trail blazers in promoting the cultural safety and health of B.C. First Nations and Aboriginal people.”

“We are building trust, reciprocity and inclusion in our health system so that Aboriginal people can become genuine partners in their health care. This partnership with First Nations Health Authority is an important step to improving the overall health and quality of life for Aboriginal people in our region and this investment will make it a reality now and for future generations,” said Fraser Health President and CEO Michael Marchbank.

“The First Nations Health Authority is pleased to match Fraser Health’s contribution of one million to invest in Fraser Salish Regional Health and Wellness Plan priorities as outlined by communities,” said First Nations Health Authority CEO Joe Gallagher.

Additionally working alongside the First Nations Health Authority, Fraser Health is taking steps to incorporate Fraser Salish First Nations and Aboriginal culture within the health care it provides and address the unique experiences and issues encountered by Aboriginal people. These steps will assist health care providers in collaborating with Aboriginal individuals, families and communities to ensure equitable access to high quality health care services that honour and respect the traditional beliefs and unique position of Aboriginal people.

“Transformative change requires partners to come together, to listen to each other and innovate to improve care and systems for First Nations communities on-the-ground. We are pleased to support the good work of Fraser Health and the First Nations Health Authority and to follow through on what we have heard from First Nations in the Fraser Salish,” said First Nations Health Council Chair Grand Chief Doug Kelly.

A video and poster campaign articulates the shared vision of a cultural safety framework, developed to help every staff member in Fraser Health understand their role in improving care and services for the Aboriginal population. In addition, Fraser Health benefits from additional seats in the Provincial Health Services Authority Indigenous Cultural Safety

training, an online, eight hour course designed to increase Aboriginal- specific knowledge, enhance individual self- awareness and strengthen skills.

This partnership is a positive step that will empower communities and strengthen the overall health of our population. Working together, Fraser Health, the First Nations Health Authority and Aboriginal people will address gaps within the health care system that will improve the overall health of Aboriginal people.

In July 2015, all BC Health Authority CEOs signed a Declaration of Commitment to advancing cultural humility and cultural safety within their health service organizations. Find out more about Cultural Humility and the First Nations Health Authority, including educational materials and how to pledge your support at: www.fnha.ca/culturalhumility

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For media inquiries, please contact:

Fraser Health Media Pager: 604- 450- 7881
media@fraserhealth.ca

First Nations Health Authority Media: 604- 831- 4898
media@fnha.ca