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NEWS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Signing of a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding on health and social services governance for Quebec First Nations

Wendake, August 30, 2019 – Although some First Nations health indicators have improved in recent years, a number of indicators remain a significant concern. Representatives of the departments and organizations concerned have agreed to work together towards a common goal. They want to strengthen the strategic alliance between First Nations and governments in the organization and delivery of health care and services and social services.

Today, the Honourable Seamus O'Regan, Minister of Indigenous Services; Sylvie D'Amours, Quebec Minister Responsible for Indigenous Affairs; Danielle McCann, Quebec Minister of Health and Social Services; Lionel Carmant, Quebec Deputy Minister of Health and Social Services; Marguerite Blais, Quebec Minister Responsible for Seniors and Informal Caregivers; Sonia LeBel, Quebec Minister Responsible for Canadian Intergovernmental Affairs and the Canadian Francophonie; and Ghislain Picard, Chief of the Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador (AFNQL) signed a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding as part of the AFNQL health and social services governance process.

The Memorandum of Understanding paves the way for better access to health and social services and better delivery of those services. It confirms the commitment made by all parties to address the challenges resulting from the multiple levels of jurisdiction. The Memorandum of Understanding will also support the search for various governance models tailored to the realities and needs of Quebec First Nations.

The chosen model will give First Nations the chance to develop and manage programs and provide health care and services for the benefit of their communities, according to various priorities. These services include services for seniors, children and youth;

preventive services; mental health services; addiction services; psychosocial services; and other services. In 2018–2019, federal funding of \$3 million over three years was allocated to Quebec First Nations to support the governance process in health and social services.

Quotes

“Today’s signing of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador and the Government of Quebec represents an important step in the transformation led by the First Nations in matters of health and governance. This agreement will make it possible to achieve better outcomes in the delivery of health services tailored to Quebec First Nations.”

*The Honourable Seamus O’Regan, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Indigenous Services*

“The implementation of this Memorandum of Understanding with the AFNQL, the Government of Canada and the Government of Quebec is a significant step towards self determination for Quebec First Nations. It will facilitate the development of programs and services designed by and for First Nations and according to the specific realities of each community. We look forward to continuing this collaborative effort to ensure the delivery of health and social services that meet their needs, for the benefit of communities and future generations.”

*Sylvie D’Amours
Quebec Minister Responsible for Indigenous Affairs*

“I am delighted by the signing of this memorandum of understanding, which confirms that the health and well-being of the Aboriginal communities is a priority for our government. It stems from close collaboration with the Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador, which has participated in this process that bodes well for the future of our communities. The signing of the memorandum of understanding marks a significant step in the governance process aimed at enhancing the availability of and access to services at the local and regional levels through the implementation of a model adapted to the situation and needs of Québec’s First Nations.”

*Danielle McCann
Minister of Health and Social Services*

“Today marks a decisive moment for our right to self determination. It is the start of a long awaited and extensive joint project that will give our nations the opportunity to implement and manage health and social services. Our own communities will have determined the priorities for these services. Ultimately, First Nations must be at the centre of decisions concerning the health of their children, brothers, sisters and peoples, and the improvement of their living conditions.”

*Ghislain Picard
Chief of the Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador*

Highlights

- This process has been funded by the Government of Canada through the Health Services Integration Fund since 2011–2012.
- The next step in this process will focus on the definition of structures for adoption by the chiefs of the Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador. The purpose of this step is also to hold discussions with the Government of Canada and the Government of Quebec to develop a new plan for a transition towards the desired model.
- The Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador is made up of chiefs of 43 First Nations communities in Quebec and Labrador and represents a total of 10 nations: the Abenakis, the Algonquins, the Atikamekw, the Crees, the Huron Wendat, the Maliseet, the Mi'gmaq, the Mohawks, the Innu and the Naskapi.

Related links

- [Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador](#)
- [First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission](#)
- [Budget 2018 Highlights: Indigenous and Northern Investments](#)

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INFORMATION

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