



Assemblée des Premières Nations Québec-Labrador

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PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION

Announcement of \$15 Million to Meet Cultural Safety Needs in the Health and Social Services Network

Wendake, November 6, 2020 - The Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador (AFNQL) welcomes the measures announced today by Mr. Ian Lafrenière, Quebec Minister responsible for Indigenous Affairs.

As stated, these investments are intended to close the existing gap in health services provided to First Nations in Quebec institutions. More specifically, they aim to provide services that address a need for cultural safety in health care.

However, the AFNQL would like to insist on the importance that all the concerned actors respond to this opportunity. The health public service must necessarily feel fully engaged to achieve a positive and much-needed outcome. The political will shown by the government today must be translated into concrete action in the delivery of services in all institutions of the Quebec health and social services network.

Moreover, in a spirit of coherence and genuine commitment, "there is an urgent need to regulate these cultural safety practices through legislative measures in order to avoid any deplorable situation," stresses AFNQL Chief Ghislain Picard. This legislative framework will place First Nations cultural safety at the forefront of all services intended for them.

The AFNQL also reminds that this funding, although appreciable, will inevitably have to be revised to match the needs.

In order to ensure a connection with Indigenous values and knowledge, the AFNQL refers the government and its public service to a resolution that will be tabled next December at the Special Assembly of Chiefs of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) called: *Principle for the Elimination of Racism and Discrimination in Services offered to First Nations*. This resolution proposes the adoption of Joyce's Principle, in accordance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC), the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIGW), the Public Inquiry Commission on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Québec – listening, reconciliation and progress and the AFNQL Action Plan on Racism and Discrimination. Joyce's Principle "aims to guarantee to all Indigenous people the right to have access without any discrimination to all health and social services as well as the right to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health."

Following today's announcement and in line with the strategy, the AFNQL Chiefs urge the Government of Quebec to support and adopt Joyce's Principle.

About the AFNQL

The Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador is the regional political organization that brings together 43 First Nations Chiefs in Quebec and Labrador. Follow the AFNQL on Twitter @APNQL.

SOURCE: Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador (AFNQL)

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