

**Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc.**



**ANNUAL REPORT**

**2016/2017**

## **Southern Chiefs' Organization is established:**

- 1.1 to assist members First Nations in the advancement and achievement of their goals as mandated by the Chiefs meeting in Summit;
- 1.2 to provide a common front for initiatives mandated by the Chiefs meeting in Summit;
- 1.3 to promote and assist member First Nations in providing good government for their First Nations;
- 1.4 to assist member First Nations in promoting and defending Treaty and aboriginal rights as mandated by the Chiefs in Summit;
- 1.5 to assist member First Nations in holding the Crown, and holding the Federal and Provincial governments responsible for the fulfillment of their fiduciary duties and other responsibilities and obligations.



# **MISSION STATEMENT**

We, the Chiefs of the Southern First Nations of Manitoba, hereby agree to establish an independent political forum to protect, preserve, promote, and enhance First Nations peoples' inherent rights, languages, customs, and traditions through the application and implementation of the spirit and intent of the Treaty-making process.

# GRAND CHIEF'S MESSAGE



**Aaniin, Tansi, Wash'tay, Hello.** I thank you for electing me and for the privilege to serve you as Grand Chief of Southern Chiefs' Organization.

I came on board with a strong vision and specific priorities on my agenda. The first eight months of my leadership have been challenging. I still have the same strong vision for SCO and our southern communities, however, redressing SCO's financial situation and securing funding for our programs were urgent priorities.

Our internal operations have been recently restructured to better support SCO's mandate – *"to protect, preserve, promote and enhance First Nations peoples' inherent rights, languages, customs, and traditions through the application and implementation of the spirit, and intent of the Treaty-making process."*

I thank the support of our Executive and Finance Committee for the confidence you have bestowed upon me.

I have spent a significant amount of time consulting with our Chiefs, and visiting & participating in community events – including those Winnipeg. This enabled me to hear directly from the Chiefs & citizens about their most critical concerns and issues in the spirit of a southern focus-community driven approach. We also work with grassroots and leadership to support families of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

I continue to participate in numerous events to strengthen the relationship between First Nations and with the different levels of Canadian governments. As a Grand Chief, I emphasize support from the responsible authorities in solving complex issues around poverty, healthcare, Treaty Land Entitlement, infrastructure, education, and economic development should be considered part of the reconciliation process between southern First Nations and Canada.

Many of our SCO communities face significant barriers and restrictions to advance the quality of life of our citizens. Capacity enhancement has been prioritized for growth to accommodate the 33 First Nations of SCO. SCO will continue to offer support and advocacy for effective and successful outcomes throughout the region.

In the pursuit of a self-reliant future for our First Nations, Urban Indigenous Economic Development Zones has to be targeted with the goal of promoting job creation by streamlining economic development opportunities. In the efforts to remove barriers and ensure SCO communities capitalize on all opportunities, SCO is pursuing pilot projects focused on supplying industries with Indigenous general and skilled labour.

We look forward to all the exciting projects ahead us. The overall work accomplished thus far would not have been possible without the support of our leaders working collectively and respectfully. I would like to acknowledge and thank the Chiefs and the staff at SCO for their dedication and commitment. I am honoured to share SCO's vision and future endeavours.

In the pursuit of balance,

Jerry Daniels  
Grand Chief

**Aaniin.** Southern Chiefs' Organization has seen many changes over the past year. The election of the new Grand Chief has brought excitement and opportunities. While there have been many changes to staff we believe this is a positive step forward in providing southern focused advocacy to our member nations.

This annual report will highlight the work that was completed over the past year. As we move forward with the work that we do, we will be mindful of our responsibility to our leadership and our community members in working towards improving quality of life at the community level. We have improved relationships, revived partnerships and created new relationships and partnerships with that goal in mind.

We are confident that the coming year will be one of new ideas, new initiatives and a revitalization of current initiatives. A review is being completed on the SCO resolutions to ensure these resolutions are informing the work that we are undertaking. We will be holding strategic planning sessions for the organization and all our program areas to create a clear path in moving forward.

I look forward to working with our communities in the upcoming year.

Miigwetch!



# DIRECTOR of OPERATIONS

# CHIEFS' COMMITTEES

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chief Norman Bone

Chief Larry Barker

Chief Derrick Henderson

Chief Lance Roulette

Chief Glenn Hudson

## FIRST NATION

Keeseekoowenin Chairperson

Hollow Water

Sagkeeng

Sandy Bay

Peguis

## FINANCE COMMITTEE

Chief Larry Barker

Chief David Traverse

Chief Derrick Henderson

Chief Lance Roulette

Chief Norman Bone

## FIRST NATION

Hollow Water Chairperson

Kinonjeoshtegon

Sagkeeng

Sandy Bay

Keeseekoowenin

## PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Chief Norman Bone

Chief Larry Barker

Chief David Traverse

Chief Lance Roulette

Chief Derrick Henderson

## FIRST NATION

Keeseekoowenin Chairperson

Hollow Water

Kinonjeoshtegon

Sandy Bay

Sagkeeng

<b>COMMUNITY</b>	<b>CHIEF</b>
Berens River	Hartley Everett
Birdtail Sioux	Ken Chalmers
Black River	Sheldon Kent
Bloodvein	Roland Hamilton
Brokenhead	Jim Bear
Buffalo Point	Andrea Camp
Canupawakpa	Viola Eastman
Dakota Tipi	Keith Pashe
Dauphin River	John Stagg
Ebb and Flow	Wayne Desjarlais
Gamblers	David Ledoux
Hollow Water	Larry Barker
Keeseekoowenin	Norman Bone
Kinonjeoshtegon	Dave Traverse
Lake Manitoba	Cornell McLean
Lake St. Martin	Adrian Sinclair
Little Grand Rapids	Roy Dunsford
Little Saskatchewan	Hector Shorting
Long Plain	Dennis Meeches
O-Chi-Chak-Ko-Sipi	Stephanie Blackbird
Pauingassi	Michael Owens
Peguis	Glenn Hudson
Pinaymootang	Barry Anderson
Pine Creek	Karen Lynn Batson
Poplar River	Vera Mitchell
Rolling River	Michael McKay
Roseau River	Craig Alexander
Sagkeeng	Derrick Henderson
Sandy Bay	Lance Roulette
Skownan	Cameron Catcheway
Swan Lake	Francine Meeches
Tootinaowaziibeeng	Barry McKay
Waywayseecappo	Murray Clearsky

# COMMUNITIES

# **SCO PROGRAMS**

## **Health Department:**

- **Health Services Integration Fund**
- **Non-Insured Health Benefits Navigator**
- **Disabilities Initiative Program**
- **Health Research & Engagement**

## **Violence Prevention & Safety:**

- **Protecting Our Women Project**
- **Taxicab Concerns & Safety Program**

## **First Nations Justice Strategy**

## **Child and Family Services**

# Non-Insured Health Benefits Navigator

Starting in 2015, Southern Chiefs' Organization has been provided with grant funding through the First Nations Inuit Health Branch to staff a Non-Insured Health Benefits Navigator. The position provides support and advocacy to community members within the Southern Chiefs' Organization catchment area of 32 First Nations.

The objective of the program is to assist eligible First Nations clients who experience difficulty accessing the NIHB Program and related provincial/territorial programs and services. The Navigator also provides support to clients and communities in gaining a better understanding of the NIHB Program, existing health services and jurisdictions. The Navigator also gathers, collates and exchanges information on health access issues and identifies ways of improving health services for First Nations clients.

## **Program activities are as follows:**

- Serve as first point of contact for communities, organizations and individuals for the purpose of facilitating access to the NIHB Program and also provide support to address NIHB denials and appeals
- Collaborate with NIHB regional office on programs/projects/initiatives that would improve awareness and access to the NIHB Program and better integration of health services
- Develop a communication strategy and implement approaches to improve awareness and understanding of the NIHB Program, including the new Jordan's Principle – Child First Initiative
- Maintain a network of contacts in order to strengthen relationships with stakeholders, health care service providers and provincial, federal and territorial partners
- Identify training needs and opportunities for improving access to health services and health outcomes

## **NIHB Navigation Case Work**

With the continuation of the Southern Chiefs' NIHB Navigator position and outreach efforts made, client intakes increased throughout the year. New intakes were received by telephone, email, walk-ins, third-party referrals, and via social media. Of these, client inquiries included (but not limited to):

- Assistance surrounding medical travel, accommodations and meal allowances
- Vision and dental coverage, denials and appeals
- Medical supplies, prescription coverage and process for application for drug exceptions
- Coverage for children's special needs through the NIHB's new Jordan's Principle program
- Information regarding diabetic care (Eg. Foot care, procedure coverage & test strips)
- Mental health services and traditional healing

## **NIHB Navigator – Next Steps**

In the new fiscal year, the NIHB Navigator will:

1. Continue to increasing program awareness through social media and printed publications.
2. Strengthen the gathering of data for statistical and analytic purposes.
3. Attend regional and national NIHB meetings and conferences as required.
4. Increase familiarity with NIHB's new Jordan's Principle – Child First Initiative program & services

# Disabilities Initiative Program

## Project Objectives and Activities

Southern Chiefs' Organization's Disabilities Initiative is a First Nations-focused program designed to engage with the 32 Southern communities, leadership and community health professionals, primarily to assess, evaluate and develop a plan to address disability issues on-reserve. The Coordinator's role is to identify what health and social services are available nationally, regionally and provided by government agencies for First Nations persons living with disabilities, to address the gaps and barriers that exist. The Disability Program's ultimate goal is to gain health equality for First Nations people living with disabilities on-reserve, equitable with the rest of Canada.

Upon the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal ruling in January of 2016, substantiating the Federal Government unlawful discrimination against First Nation children falling under Jordan's Principle, two compliance orders were issued. In response to the ruling, the federal government announced a 3-year funding commitment to address the needs of First Nations children living with disabilities and medical conditions.

With the introduction of funds for the "Jordan's Principle – Child First Initiative" (JP-CFI), Manitoba First Nations took a unique approach to address the needs of their children, by creating community-based JP-CFI programs, while other provinces and territories chose to work on a case-by-case basis.

SCO's Disability Initiative Program assisted the southern First Nation communities from the onset of the program. The Coordinator was active in providing supports to the community health teams in initiating their new JP-CFI programs, engaged with communities to better understand the gaps and barriers faced, and provided access to various disability-related resources that had previously been inaccessible or unutilized.

Community engagements included group discussions on children and adult's disability matters and the work required by all stakeholders to help bridge the gaps identified. Participants included community professionals, leadership, caregivers of children/adults with disabilities, and community members. With prior approval and invitation from the community health teams, each engagement included the introduction of the Rehabilitation Centre for Children, with a full presentation of the new outreach services being offer at the community level through the JP-CFI.

Further resources that the Disabilities Initiative Program provided to the southern communities include (but not limited to):

- Template for the Respite Program
- Assistance with creating JP-CFI job descriptions & interview questions
- Disability Tax Credit information for both adults and children
- JP-CFI federal funding clarity and options, including advocating for children's mental health services
- Identifying specialized equipment funding sources
- Links to Disability/Medical specific organizations, charities and resource material
- Social programing opportunities
- Work experience and life skills programs for youth with disabilities/special needs
- Resources for youth transitioning to adulthood

- Information on Independent Living programs for adults with disabilities
- Research and community presentation on Accessible Housing (Universal Housing Design & Disability Access)
- Unified Referral Intake System (URIS) training workshop (children’s health/emergency care plans & training for caregivers)
- Collaboration with Specialized Services for Children & Youth (SSCY) to develop and offer culturally appropriate JP-related workshops for community/regional staff

Collaborative work and communication was ongoing with organizations & key stakeholders such as:

Assembly of First Nations  
Health Canada – NIHB  
Manitoba Health  
Society for Manitobans with Disabilities  
Southern Tribal Councils  
St. Amant Centre

Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs  
INAC  
Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak  
Southern First Nations of MB  
Special Olympics Manitoba  
TOROWG

Children’s Disability Services  
MFNERC  
Rehabilitation Centre for Children  
Southern First Nations Network of Care  
Specialized Services for Children & Youth  
Variety Club of Manitoba

In addition to the Disabilities program, the Program Coordinator held positions on the Regional Advisory Committee on CFS (RAC), the Southern First Nations Network of Care Board, Technical Advisory Group on CFS/JP (TAG), Terms of Reference Officials Working Group (TOROWG), and the Manitoba First Nations Technology Council (MFNTC). Invitation to be a First Nations representative on the Rehabilitation Centre for Children’s Board was offered and pending the Health Minister’s approval.

Along with maintaining the momentum of working actively on Disabilities Initiatives, it was noted that much more work is still required within the disabilities area. Addressing the needs of First Nation adults with disabilities living on-reserve, who continue to go without proper supports and services from both the federal and provincial governments, should be of high priority. Systemic issues, such as housing, poverty and underfunding of vital programs are also key factors contributing to the need for continued work and advocacy in this area, in order to create equality for First Nations people.

# Health Services Integration Fund

Health Canada granted funding to Southern Chiefs' Organization under the Health Services Integration Fund for the fiscal year of 2016/2017, under the project proposal titled **Anishinabe Mish-Ki-Ki Onak-Ko-Ni-Ga-Win (AMO): Indian Medicine Law.**

The Mandate of the Health Services Integration Fund is to work towards transforming the health system. That is, how it is organized, structured, its partnerships, and how care is delivered. It is about enhancing the coordination, collaboration, communication and integration of existing federally and provincially funded health care services.

In embracing the mandate, the Southern Chiefs' Organization Health Services Integration Program outlined Goals and Objectives to achieve their desired outcomes.

## Goal:

Reinforce equitable First Nations Health Care Services through trilateral partnerships/agreement with existing and emerging Health Care Providers, Organizations and Stakeholders.

## Objectives:

- Identify key/priority health care areas of concerns for First Nations in the SCO Region.
- Directly engage with First Nations Health Directors and Health Service Providers for identification of:
  - Successes in First Nations based health programming.
  - Barriers for First Nations in accessing health care services.
  - Current First Nations capacity for delivering health care services at First Nations community level.
  - Areas of healthcare service delivery that require enhancement at the First Nations community level.
  - Successful incorporation of Regional Health Authority health service delivery for First Nations.
  - Healthcare services funded through Health Canada, which hold success on First Nations.
  - Barriers and concerns related to health care services funded through Health Canada.
- Provision of information and connections to health care resources that could be incorporated into First Nations healthcare service delivery.
- Development of Collaborative Actions Network at tri-governmental level to enhance First Nations Health Care Services, to improve communication and resource management, and incorporate principles and concepts within the Framework for Health Adaptation and Collaborative Strategic Action Plan.
  - Remove the concept of "Working in Silos"
  - Remove activities of redundancy "Identical programming and engagement between organizations for First Nations."
  - Creation of a communication program that focuses on overall goals of: "Improved Health Care Services for First Nations."
- Evaluate the Political Unity Accord on Health agreed upon by Manitoba's Political Tribal Organizations:
  - Southern Chiefs' Organization
  - Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak
  - First Nations Health and Social Secretariat of Manitoba
- Reorientation of Health Services for First Nations with inclusion of following principles:
  - Cultural Appropriateness
  - Meaningful Engagement
  - Communication
  - Accountability
  - Awareness
  - Representative Workforce
  - Mutual Understanding
  - Quality
  - Access
  - Sustainability
  - Relationship Building
  - Collaboration
  - Ownership

## Outcomes:

To achieve anticipated outcomes, the Health Services Integration Program performed several First Nations community visits, with information sharing and representation from fellow Southern Chiefs' Organizations programs. Collaborating SCO programs included:

- Child and Family Services Liaison
- Community Justice Development
- Health Benefits Navigator and Advocate
- Health Research and Engagement Liaison
- Violence Prevention and Safety Coordinator

In conducting community visitations, the Health Services Integration Program identified the diversity, dedication and proactive nature of each First Nations Health Departments. Several communities successfully incorporated services from respective Regional Health Authorities to bring health care services directly to the First Nation. This demonstrates the commitment and perseverance to accessing quality health care services.

Having stated this, several common themes that required additional clarification, assistance and support identified were:

- Palliative care
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Suicide prevention
- Crisis intervention
- Disability services
- Youth engagement and activity promotion
- Medical transportation
- Non-Insured Health Benefits
- Cultural appropriateness of health care services
- Quality of health services from Regional Health Authorities
- Knowledge of available health care services
- Jordan's Principle

The Health Services Integration Program identified resources that could benefit communities and disseminate information as available. The program explored the utilization of Manitoba Telehealth for networking, as well as connection to healthcare service providers.

It was found that networking within the Political Tribal Organizations occasionally held limitations and barriers, however, alternate approaches were explored. Collaborative relationships were worked upon and established with:

- Southeast Resources Development Council
- Interlake Reserve Tribal Council
- Dakota Ojibway Health Services
- Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs' Special Needs Unit

In November of 2016, the Health Services Integration Program hosted a Southern Chiefs' Organization Health Director Gathering. The 3-day gathering consisted of presentations and dialogue surrounding the new federal funding announcement of Health Canada, providing funds nationally to address Jordan's Principle cases within each province. Health Canada representation was present to provide a question/answer period, as well as service providers from the Rehabilitation Centre for Children contracted to perform outreach services, and SCO's Disability Initiative Program Coordinator to help facilitate. Additionally, through the collaboration of SCO's HSIF, southern Health Directors and FNHMA, extensive discussion took place surrounding a unified health system, leading to the proposed creation of a grassroots-level Health Directors' chapter of FNHMA in southern Manitoba. Dialogue and decisions on chapter logistics are still to be determined.

# Health Research & Engagement

The lead priority of this program is to ensure engagement and productivity with communities and respected Health Directors, whether it is in support through advocating for their individual health program needs, or collectively moving forward with new initiatives in the transformation of health care service delivery. The program is designed to let the grassroots take the lead and drive change from within. Developing a communication system and hosting networking meetings for our leadership in health is one means of delivering better opportunities for collaborative action. Advocating for inclusive decision-making, accountability, and transparent processes with Chief and Council, Political Tribal Organizations, provincial and federal governments. This approach helps guide the ethics of a revolutionary transformation for a tripartite relationship in health care for our community members.

In order to implement the Health Research and Engagement project, the Southern Chiefs' Organization Health Research and Engagement Liaison (HREL) carried out activities to achieve the following objectives:

**1. Provide for consultation with our 32 Southern First Nations to obtain input and guidance on First Nations and Inuit health issues:**

- The HREL continued to develop a Network for the Health Directors of SCO communities and Tribal Councils. The purpose of this Network was to share relevant and up to date information with partnering organizations and to engage in strategizing and knowledge exchange with one another;
- The HREL co-hosted a Southern Health Directors' Meeting in November 2016 in order to engage with the grassroots leaders in health. The meeting provided opportunity for networking, knowledge exchange, and strategic planning. It also served to provide up-to-date information on the new federally funded Jordan's Principle – Child First Initiative (JP-CFI) program;
- SCO HREL hosted and attended meetings with Regional Health Authorities and Tribal Councils to ensure SCO HREL provided and received the best available information to our partners, our First Nation communities and First Nation members to create awareness of available health services and access to information regarding changes and updates to the health services.



**2. Develop and foster alliances with organizations that will advance the well-being of our 32 Southern First Nations in the Manitoba Region:**

- This was accomplished by actively seeking out new partnerships and organizations directly involved with service delivery and/or programming aimed at First Nation communities;
- In order to provide our First Nation communities with the best information available, SCO HREL joined various First Nations health initiatives and met with local First Nation Health Directors and the national First Nations Health Managers Association (FNHMA) to discuss the formation of a grassroots level sub-chapter of the FNHMA organization in southern Manitoba;
- SCO HREL provided a First Nations Southern Regional perspective through involvement with our partners, thus ensuring that First Nations health perspectives were considered when developing solution-based models for increasing positive health outcomes for our citizens;
- SCO HREL attended meetings and conferences with the Tribal Council Health Technicians, as well as the Independent First Nations Health Directors and PTO Health Technicians to share information about proposed changes to the present health system and their potential impacts on health outcomes for the SCO First Nation communities;
- SCO HREL attended meeting and conferences with intergovernmental committees to develop and foster alliances with other provincial and federal agencies to increase awareness of health needs of First Nations members in Southern Manitoba.

**3. Develop new forms of consultation on health program delivery that will contribute to the well-being of our 32 First Nations in the Manitoba Region:**

- In an effort to compliment the current development of a collaborative approach on health care system for First Nations in southern Manitoba, the SCO HREL co-organized a Health Directors Meeting and invited the First Nations Health Managers Association to present on leadership in health management;
- SCO HREL created strong partnerships with existing stakeholders such as the Regional Health Authorities and provincial and federal governments, while maintaining traditional forms of consultations with the tribal councils and independent communities. SCO HREL continued to build more partnerships through 2016-17 fiscal year in order to influence stakeholders in systematically addressing health priorities for First Nations;
- The SCO HREL attended regular meetings with Tribal Council health teams to update them on the status of the SCO program and integrate regional perspectives in the overall SCO health research/mandate;
- A letter was extended to all SCO communities in April 2016 offering for the SCO HREL, Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) Navigator and Health Service Integration Fund (HSIF) Coordinator to visit First Nations communities. The SCO HREL travelled to communities to participate in health fairs and other health related events as requested.

**4. Provide public education on First Nation and Inuit health issues:**

- This was accomplished by actively seeking input from First Nations and non-First Nation partners and organizations within the city of Winnipeg and rural communities directly involved with health service delivery and/or programming aimed;
- Worked in collaboration with fellow health programs within SCO to engage with the First Nation communities and provide information on the programs and services offered;
- SCO HREL took advantage of existing meetings and conferences to provide non-First Nation partners and organizations with up-to-date information regarding the realities of First Nations' access to care and health services;
  - SCO HREL took advantage of every opportunity available to provide their input into how any new health structures or systems might impact the health needs of our First Nation communities and benefit all communities and partners involved with the delivery of health services for our First Nation members.
- SCO HREL made itself available to attend community health meetings, gatherings and conferences.

# Health Research & Engagement **cont.**

## **5. Provide co-ordination and support to raise the level of health awareness and services in the communities:**

- This was accomplished by actively seeking input from First Nation health directors and health service providers in-person, via conference and teleconference;
- SCO HREL took advantage of the knowledge base that exists in our First Nation communities to increase awareness of available health services and resources to individuals in our First Nation communities;
- SCO HREL provided opportunities for Chiefs and Councils of our First Nation communities to provide their input into what the health service needs of their communities are and what may be needed;
  - This was accomplished by participating in SCO chiefs' summits and executive committee meetings, and attending various meetings in association with our partnering First Nations organizations and tribal councils.

## **6. Consult with the southern communities/organizations and actively promote and assist in the delivery of optimal health services:**

- This was accomplished by actively seeking input from First Nation health directors and health services providers regarding their health program delivery;
- SCO HREL took advantage of the knowledge base that exists in our First Nation communities to increase awareness of available health services and resources to individuals in our First Nation communities by attending health conferences and health fairs in various First Nation communities;
- SCO HREL took advantage of existing meetings and workshops to provide up-to-date information regarding how any new health structures or systems might affect or alter the health services available to First Nation communities.

## **In the 2017/18 fiscal year, the SCO Health Research and Engagement Liaison plans to further program objectives by engaging in the following activities:**

- Collaborate with community and regional health directors and perform an environmental scan of health service delivery;
  - Subsequently, SCO HREL will work with the communities on improving service delivery based on existing resources.
  - Include engagement with the new Jordan's Principle Coordinators and provide support and advocacy as identified.
- Develop stronger relationships with Regional Health Authorities to begin negotiating plans to deliver provincial services in First Nations communities;
- Improve relationship with Nanaandawewigamig, the First Nations Health & Social Secretariat of Manitoba (FNHSSM);
- Advocate to the SCO Chiefs to appoint a lead chief to hold a health portfolio for the organization;
- Continue to work with health directors and support their initiatives to improve access to health services for community members.

# Violence Prevention and Safety Program

The Violence Prevention and Safety Planning program, managed by Pamela Davis, works in partnership with member First Nations and key stakeholders to identify and address root causes of violence. This program addresses all issues affecting Indigenous women with an emphasis on empowerment. The goals of the program include, influencing systemic change, ending violence, education on safety, supporting women in conflict with the law, public health concerns and social determinants of health.

## Highlights

- Program Coordinator has supported and encouraged academic institutions to have practicum students work on violence prevention. From April to August 2016, Tessa Jourdain Masters of Public Health Candidate of the University of Toronto worked with the Protecting our Women project to develop a Needs Assessment. Quinn Saretsky Masters of Indigenous Governance Candidate of the University of Victoria worked on the development of the incarceration component of the Safety Planning Toolkit.
- Pamela Davis worked on the general component of the toolkit and Chloe Courchene has worked hard to create the youth component of the toolkit.
- Media has captured many of the issues of violence and women's issues, including issues of safety in public transportation.
- Just TV and SCO Administrative Assistant Chloe Courchene completed awareness campaign and video on MMIWG in fall 2016.
- Suicide and family violence awareness video produced by Just TV, SCO and Indian City was nominated for the North American Music awards, with award ceremony being held in September 2016.
- Program Coordinator is a part of the MMIWG Coalition and the Sexually Exploited Youth Community Coalition (SEYCC), which provides SCO with an opportunity to affect change for marginalized women and girls.



## PROJECTS

### Protecting Our Women

Through SCO's commitment to ending violence and promoting safety of all community members, the Violence Prevention and Safety Program was granted funding for a 3-year term beginning June 29, 2015 based on a Funding Proposal submitted earlier in the year. The project, *Protecting Our Women*, is funded under Status of Women Canada's theme "Working in Partnership to End Violence against Women and Girls".

This project's goal is to develop a community based safety plan and toolkit for Indigenous women and girls moving to, travelling to, or residing in Winnipeg. Currently, Indigenous women and girls relocate from their First Nation for various reasons

# PROTECTING *Our* women

including temporary travel, seeking access to education, health care and employment. In some cases, women are returning to or moving to Winnipeg as they transition out of incarceration.

Since July 2015, project coordinator has secured partnerships with several key stakeholders within Winnipeg including Elizabeth Fry Society, West Central Women's Resource Centre, Ka Ni Kani Chihk, Southeast Collegiate and Winnipeg Police Services. Community visits and ongoing commitment has been secured with the engaged with the following First Nations: Birdtail Sioux First Nation, Bloodvein First Nation, Brokenhead Ojibway Nation, Dakota Tipi First Nation, Ebb & Flow First Nation, Hollow Water First Nation, Little Black River, Long Plain First Nation, O-Chi-Chak-Ko-Sipi First Nation, Peguis First Nation, Rolling River First Nation, Roseau River First Nation, Sandy Bay Ojibway Nation, Skownan First Nation and Swan Lake First Nation.

Consultations, key informant interviews, and sharing circles contributed to the Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan which guides the project's goals and objectives. The Toolkit and Safety Plan is currently in the development stage based on the community engagement. It will be available to communities and stakeholders over the next few months.



## **Taxicab Concerns and Safety**

Indigenous women have expressed concerns over their safety while utilizing taxicabs in Manitoba. In the fall 2016, the Violence Prevention and Safety Coordinator began to address these issues. Community consultations and personal stories uncovered the issues of safety for all Indigenous peoples and specifically women, as they are more vulnerable to violence and discrimination.

Some concerns include, customers being asked to pay upfront based on race or gender, drivers making sexual advances towards women and in some instances assaulting women, Elders being refused service, physical violence, verbal abuse, financial abuse, and many instances of racism. Through investigations, SCO has determined that all safety measures in taxicabs are in place for the safety of driver only. As passengers in cab are in a vulnerable position where the driver has more power, SCO determined that policies in place must be modified to ensure the Taxicab Board is held responsible for ensuring safety of all peoples. Media became aware of SCO's involvement on this issue which ensured the Taxicab Board was listening.

# Violence Prevention & Safety Program cont.

In the fall of 2016, SCO secured funding through the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg to hire a Taxicab Community Complaint Advocate (TCCA). The TCCA was available to the community to assist in the navigation of the complaint process with the Taxicab Board, as well as deliver presentations about responsibilities and safety while utilizing taxi services in Winnipeg.

SCO has developed tools to aid individuals in promoting their own safety. Educational material has been shared widely and presentations at various service providers in Winnipeg aid women in ensuring they know their rights while taking a taxicab. Status of Women Manitoba has translated printed education material into several languages including Cree and Ojibway.

## UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

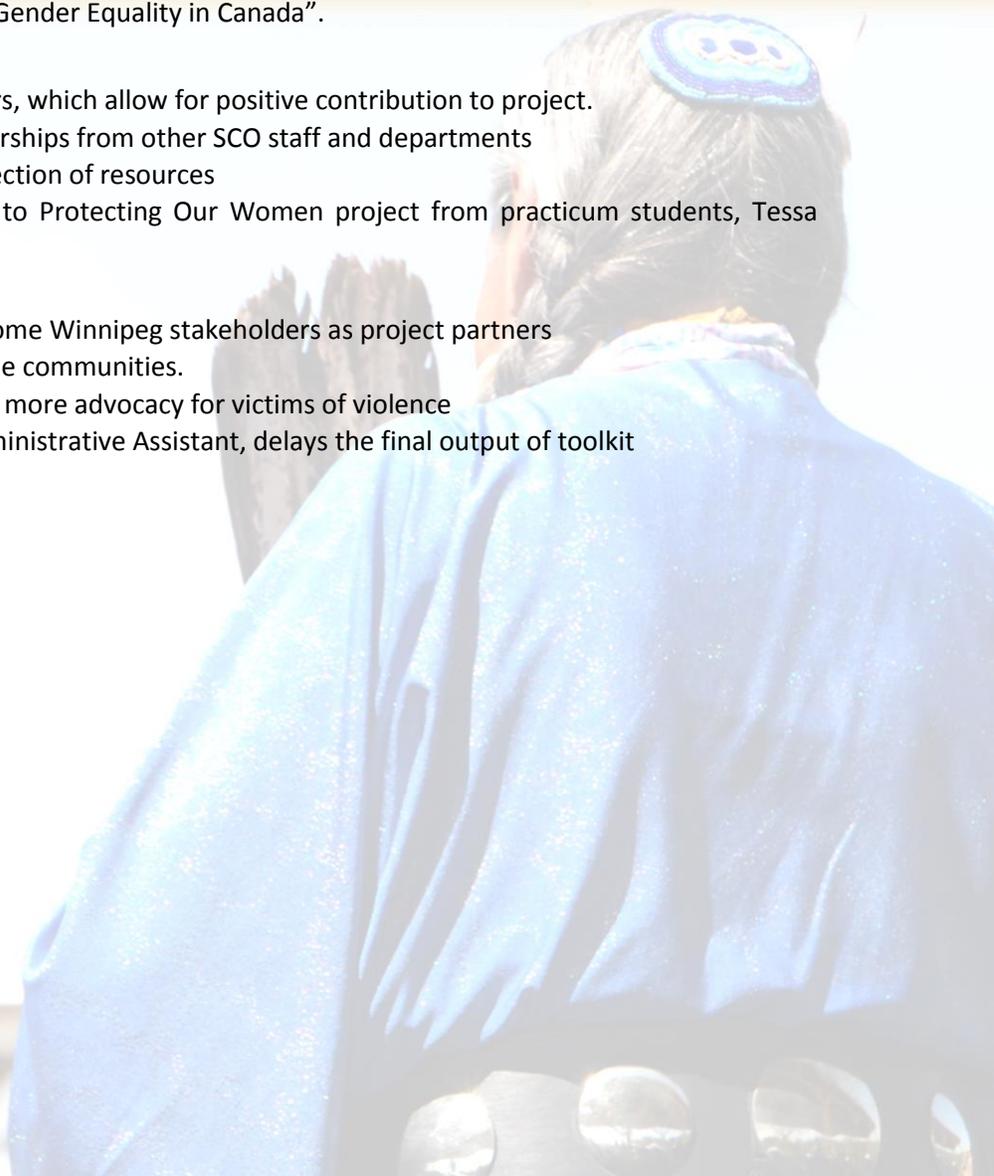
- Safety Plan and Toolkit will be finalized and approved by the oversight committee and be sent off to the printers.
- Safety Plan and Toolkit will be delivered alongside a workshop to communities and stakeholders
- SCO will continue to support and work with MMIWG Coalition, MKO, AMC and the province for a Manitoba Sub-commission, which will then feed into the National Inquiry.
- As a continuation of the positive work that has been done with SCO's Protecting Our Women Project, The Violence Prevention & Safety Program was granted funding for the 3-year project beginning April 3, 2017. The Mino-Pimatisiwin project is funded under Status of Women Canada's theme "Funding to advance Gender Equality in Canada".

## STRENGTHS

- Networking with stakeholders, which allow for positive contribution to project.
- Excellent support and partnerships from other SCO staff and departments
- Continued research and collection of resources
- Research and contributions to Protecting Our Women project from practicum students, Tessa Jourdain and Quinn Saretsky

## CHALLENGES

- Gaining commitment from some Winnipeg stakeholders as project partners
- Inability to connect with some communities.
- Accessing funding to provide more advocacy for victims of violence
- Accessing funding for an Administrative Assistant, delays the final output of toolkit



# First Nations Justice Strategy

The First Nations Justice Strategy (FNJS) is a community based program that provides quality, confidential restorative justice, and mediation services with professionalism, respect, and dedication to the wellness of our community.

Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO) seeks to reclaim some resemblance of traditional Indigenous practices of justice for our clients. Our mandate is to reduce the number of individuals in contact with the criminal justice system, while acknowledging and recognition that our justice strategy is confined within that same justice system. Our goal is to provide our community members with an alternative experience by means of repairing the harm done, healing, and restoring relationships. It is one small step towards reclaiming jurisdiction over justice for our communities.

A Community Justice Development Coordinator oversees five (5) Community Justice Workers positioned within the following First Nations:

- Long Plain First Nation, Lisa Assiniboine
- Pinaymootang First Nation, Bonnie Woodhouse
- Pine Creek First Nation, Crystal Nepinak
- Sagkeeng First Nation, Andrea Swampy
- Waywayseecappo First Nation- Lisa Makwebak
- Community Justice Development Coordinator, Chantell Barker

The First Nation Justice Strategy incorporates the seven traditional values: wisdom, love, respect, bravery, honesty, humility, and truth. In order to ensure holistic healing and traditional worldviews, the Medicine Wheel will be used as the new Case Management Tool.

## **MENTAL**

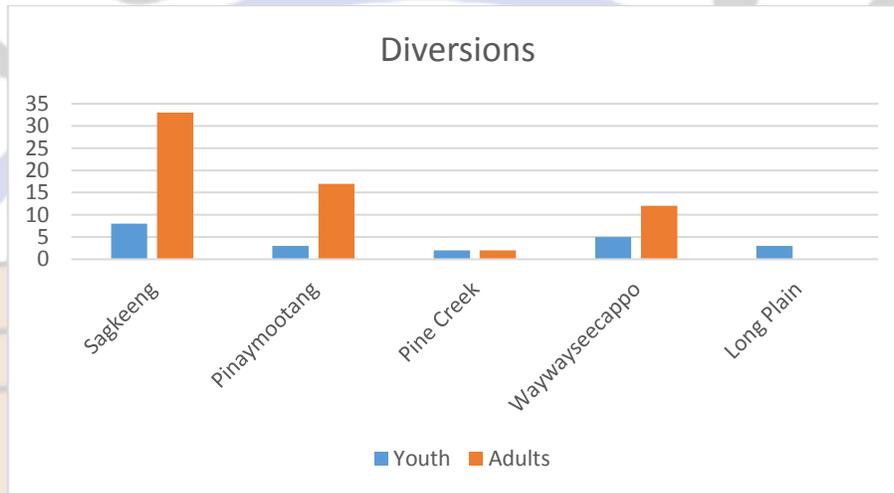
The Community Justice Workers received training with the John Howard Society in Dauphin in September, which included The Youth Criminal Justice Act and the Criminal Code of Canada. The Community Justice Workers attended the Restorative Justice Gathering in Winnipeg October. The gathering consisted on various workshops relating to Domestic Violence, Sexual Exploitation, Addictions, Promoting Self-Care and Healthy Living. The Community Justice Workers attended the Use of Force Workshop in Winnipeg delivered by the Winnipeg Police Services. The workshop reviewed the Winnipeg Police Service Policy and training provided to recruits and recertification training.

## **EMOTIONAL**

The Community Justice Worker's provide ongoing counselling with the clients they serve. Depending on availability, the Community Justice Worker's provide referrals for their clients to access Elders, addictions counselling, trauma counselling, etc. The Community Justice Workers continue to establish and maintain their relationships with partners such as court clerks, Judges, Crown Attorneys, Counsel, RCMP, and Probation Officers, etc. These relationships are viewed as very positive and important as it the foundation of collaborative Restorative Justice Practices.

## PHYSICAL

Below are the Community Justice Worker's annual number of diversions.



## SPIRITUAL

The Community Justice Workers plan, participate, and carry out of cultural activities and events thus promoting and continuing the strength of culture and traditions. Community Justice Workers make connections with Elders and Cultural workers to establish resources the clients can participate in as means of beginning their search for identity and healing.

### Budget:

SCO Justice Budget consists of contributions from the Manitoba in the amount of \$243,000.00 and \$180,000.00 in federal funding. These financial resources go to support the program, a Coordinator, five (5) Community Justice Workers' salaries, and travel.



### Moving Forward

With new energy and direction, the original spirit and intent of the First Nation Justice Strategy is ready to evolve and implement traditional methodologies that will represent Indigenous Restorative Justice practices. This includes the implementation of a Medicine Wheel social needs assessment, holistic healing case plan, and programming that will address colonization, residential school, intergenerational impacts, lateral violence, poverty, addictions, and healing.

# Child & Family Services

The Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO) had commenced the Leadership and Responsibility of Southern First Nation Network of Care from the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs' (AMC) which came into effect on January 28, 2009 through the Certified Resolution process (JAN-09.23). On November 8, 2015, SCO became the official designated organization to identify and appoint board members to the Southern First Nation Network of Care and Section, as a result, *section 6(3) of the **Manitoba Child and Family Services Authorities Act*** had been amended to assert that "The board of directors of the Southern Authority is to be appointed by the Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc."

In the 2016-17 fiscal year, collaboration with stakeholders AMC, MKO, AFN, SFNNC, and FNCFS agency directors helped to ensure positive relationship building. Communication and community engagement with southern FNCFS agencies, First Nation leadership and all relevant levels of government on issues that covered southern FNCFS, education, MMIW, Jordan's Principle was carried out to help ensure that First Nation children, youth, and families involved with the FNCFS (both on and off reserve) receive the help and support that is needed.



## Child and Family Services objectives:

1. Liaison: Work with all relevant government departments, First Nations organizations and northern First Nations to research, analyze, monitor and propose strategies for development and implementation with respect to child and family services matters;  
Work with and between the department and First Nation agencies to facilitate resolutions and problem solving at the regional and provincial levels on CFS issues;
2. Communications: provide internal communications and recommendations to SCO Grand Chief and southern First Nations Chiefs and Councils on First Nation CFS matters;  
Build relationship with representatives having a broad range of knowledge around First Nation child and family issues and policy initiatives;
3. Project Activities: Participate in Project, cross ministry and multi-stake holder teams and committees. Work with southern First Nations about traditional child and family codes, standards and laws related to family life;
4. Advocacy: Work with families to support and help address barriers respecting child and family service matters at the community, agency and government levels.

## Looking Ahead

2017-2018

- SCO to select and appoint any vacant Board member positions for the SFNNC
- Assist parent/s, guardians, other family members on plans to return children home as recommended from the “Bringing Our Children Home” (BOCH, 2014) report as well as the “Manitoba First Nations Child and Family Services Regional Engagement interim Report” that was put together by AMC and the First Nations Family Advocate Office on June 7, 2017.
- Provide advocacy on any safety and policy concerns regarding children and youth
- Create a public awareness campaign to inform the public about expanded mandate and role of CFS Liaison for children, youth, and families
- Provide supports for families transitioning from First Nation communities to urban centres
- Ensure that child welfare agencies accommodate reasonable requests by parents or other caregivers and children and youth for participation of an individual they identify as a support in their dealings with the child welfare system as well as Identifying barriers that may be preventing children and families from achieving positive life outcomes
- Develop awareness workshops sessions for parent/s, guardians, extended family of their rights regarding CFS

# SPECIAL PROJECTS & EVENTS

## Grand Chief Election

Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc. held an Election Summit on January 11 & 12, 2017. Southern Chiefs' Organization would like to take the time to congratulate newly elected Grand Chief Jerry Daniels.

Jerry Daniels is a proud member of Long Plain First Nation, and a father to eight-year-old son, Angelo Daniels. His grandparents Isabel and Donald Daniels, along with his aunts, uncles, and community members, raised him.

He graduated from the University of Manitoba in economics and independent business owner of Innovative Educational Business. In addition, he had served on numerous boards and councils at the local, regional, and national levels. In 2012, Grand Chief Daniels became a key organizer of Idle No More, a movement developed in response to the attack on our waters.

Grand Chief Daniels is focused on the improvement of our quality of life and a solutions driven leader. "It is important our knowledge base continues to grow but equally important is our relationships with one another."



# SPECIAL PROJECTS & EVENTS CONT.



On March 16, 2017, Grand Chief Daniels community of Long Plain First Nation held a Headdress Ceremony and Feast in honour of being the first Grand Chief from his community.

## Headdress Ceremony



Kitchi Makwa was a campaign that travelled through Winnipeg. He arrived at around 10 destinations. A donation based campaign, where all proceeds went to the children of our communities.

## Kitchi Makwa – SCO's Travelling Bear



SCO created the first Indigenous Float in the Winnipeg Santa Clause Parade the winter of 2016. SCO had youth from the communities, schools, and various youth program in Winnipeg, paint and decorate large feathers for a giant Traditional Headdress.

## First Indigenous Float Santa Clause Parade



# SPECIAL PROJECTS & EVENTS CONT.

Having partnered with the Canadian Red Cross to build capacity regarding flood mitigation for First Nations in Manitoba, both for Southern Chief Organization communities and MKO communities chronically affected by flooding. While we have been lucky with the levels this year, it looked to be a bad year for flooding when we started as ground saturation, lake levels and Manitoba Hydro reservoir levels were all at or near record highs.

## Flood Mitigation

In order to address this, we held a Flood Forum in Ashern on February 14<sup>th</sup> to bring all the affected communities and related support agencies to the same table to go over what services they offer. It also allowed FN communities to let the relevant groups know what was required, what past grievances were and make the connections to begin to address them.

To follow up on the Flood Forum, we then visited every community identified as at risk to speak to each Chief and Council as to their individual level of risk, what emergency plans were in place and what they needed from us to help. Thankfully the flood levels were not as severe as originally anticipated and the communities are now on their way to returning home, we will now be moving to addressing the mold and restoration issues caused by the flooding that did occur.

## Housing Authority

In conjunction with the Assembly of First Nations, we held a Housing Conference in Brandon to begin to address the housing crisis faced by SCO member nations. To accomplish this, we brought Red River College to speak on capacity building in relation to housing, from trades to admin and management of related industries. We brought Fisher River to speak on their successes with Castle to address the supply side capacity issues related to home building. We brought the Canadian Red Cross in to speak on the emergency management related to housing. We also brought various community members to speak on different housing projects they have on the go in order to show options that are already working. From SCO we spoke on disability access and a cost benefit analysis of a variety of housing models as well as mold mitigation in order to allow our member nations to have a full, holistic picture of the options they have in regards to housing.

To build on this work, we have begun to build a Housing Authority which will continue to facilitate a solution to the housing crisis faced by our member nations. Pending approval it will employ 5 full time positions with an aim to build a five and ten year plan to address housing, to create pilot programs for innovative housing styles, to reduce maintenance costs and mold mitigation and to begin to create the capacity for disaster and emergency management through a partnership with the red cross. This will be done with full consultation with all SCO members to address the housing and related funding shortfalls.

# Hunting Association

Traditional practices such as hunting, fishing and trapping are essential to First Nations and guaranteed in treaty rights. In order to foster these industries, SCO aims to help protect the environment so the habitat required allows these industries to grow. We will also look to expand access to both regional and international markets related to these fields by reaching out to industry at home and abroad to find the best prices for our members products.

We with partner with accredited first and weapons safety groups to ensure the safest possible practices. With calls from the province to begin to regulate certain aspects of hunting, Grand Chief Jerry Daniels feels it best to put mechanisms in place to ensure that treaty rights are respected and First Nations communities manage all regulations related to themselves.

The structure of this Hunting Association will initially be two full time staff who would work to build a network of traditional practitioners from SCO nations, to build connections with industry and to act as liaison with Manitobans to ensure that any concerns they have regarding these traditional practices are addressed. They will work with elders to build a governance structure and work with industry to minimize costs and maximize returns. They will look into innovative ways to use any waste products, such as scraps for pet food, fish emulsion for fertilizers and top dressing for landscaping. They will work with groups like Ducks Unlimited to restore marshland which provides habitat for hunting, fishing, traditional medicines and foods like wild rice. This will also begin to address long term flood mitigation as marshlands can hold significant amounts of water and disperse them slowly. As they are also massive carbon sinks, funding should be available to move this forward once the new carbon tax is in.

## Mold Mitigation

Mold is a serious problem facing First Nations. With traditional restoration being both expensive and time consuming, we are exploring cheaper, easier and faster methods of removing mold in homes.

In partnership with the Canadian Red Cross, we have begun to treat mold infected homes with sulphur evaporators. Much like an industrial sized incense burner filled with sulphur pellets rather than incense, they are allowed to run and fill the affected areas with sulphur smoke.

The sulphur smoke alters the Ph of the surfaces that mold grows on rendering the surfaces inhospitable to mold, killing the mold and their spores on contact. While this is a toxic substance that should not be inhaled by humans, similar to fumigating a home for bugs the residents should not be present while this process is ongoing. However as many affected homes get that way due to flooding, it should be easy enough to schedule the sulphur burning to happen before evacuees are returned home or to remove the inhabitants for the short duration required.



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