



Southern Chiefs' Organization

Health Transformation Initiative



Health for Anishinaabeg and Dakota Peoples covers the physical, spiritual, mental, economic, environmental, social, and cultural wellness of the individual, family, and community.



For too long, First Nation peoples have suffered worse health outcomes than non-First Nation people. The average life expectancy of First Nation peoples in Manitoba is eleven years shorter than non-First Nation people, and that gap is widening. Clearly, big changes are needed to close the gap.

On June 18, 2020, Grand Chief Jerry Daniels of the Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO), Chair of the Chief's Health Action Table and Pine Creek Chief, Karen Batson, and the Government of Canada signed an historic Memorandum of Understanding, which follows the 2019 Chiefs-in-Summit resolution, "Exercising our Treaty and Inherent Right to Health", and signals the beginning of health transformation for southern First Nations.

What is Health Transformation?

SCO's Health Transformation Initiative is about creating a new and improved First Nation health system, where decisions are made by First Nations, for First Nations! Right now, other governments decide and control health services, which don't work for First Nations.

In a process driven by the communities themselves, the Southern Chiefs' Organization will work with First Nation partners and all orders of government to build a First Nation health system in southern Manitoba, which will include:

- A full basket of community-based health care services, including:
 - Public health, such as preventative medicine and early intervention services
 - Medical services for acute and chronic conditions, such as heart disease, cancer, and diabetes
 - Rehabilitation and medical devices (stroke, dialysis)
 - Allied health (labs, X-ray, diagnostics)
 - Emergency services, such as EMT and medivac flights
 - Home care, Elder care, and care for other complex medical needs
 - Crisis intervention and treatment, including addiction and mental health services
 - Improved infrastructure and increased health human resources
 - A community-based approach where services are more culturally responsive, reflective of regional needs, and provided "closer to home".
 - Strengthened and effective partnerships with the provincial health system to improve health care, including culturally safe health care for First Nation citizens.
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Role of the Community Health Transformation Liaison

The Community Health Transformation Liaisons directly support the work being done in community by:

- Setting up Health Transformation sessions and events in their First Nation community and region.
- Coordinating activities on the Health Transformation Initiative for the community, its members, and its leadership.
- Working with their Health Director on the collection of wisdom, advice, feedback, and guidance from the community.
- Providing assistance and support for events that may be held outside the community as needed.
- With the aid of the SCO Health Team, helping respond to community requests for resources and information on the Health Transformation Initiative and how to get involved.

How can I get involved?

Your opinion and voice matters!

First Nation communities will participate in every step of the process and be responsible for the design and delivery of community-based health care services, including by:

- Engaging in the planning process
- Helping create plans for community wellness with a focus on offering a full range of community-based health care services for community members
- Identifying evaluation, research, data systems, and results
- Helping decide where to allocate resources
- Establishing standards for service
- Training and/or recruiting a wide range of health professionals and support staff
- Helping to identify capital sources for health services

“Equitable access and culturally-appropriate health care for Elders, youth, families, and communities is central to wellness and the success of our Anishinaabeg and Dakota peoples.”

Jerry Daniels,
Grand Chief of Southern Chiefs' Organization



To learn more about how you can get involved and help create this ground-breaking health transformation, contact your Community Health Transformation Liaison or the SCO Health Team at **204-946-1869** or SCO's General Health email at Health@scoinc.mb.ca.

You can also visit SCO's website at scoinc.mb.ca/programs/health.

The Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO) represents 34 First Nations in what is now called southern Manitoba. The SCO Health Unit was established in response to the high rates of disease occurring within the Southern First Nation communities through a resolution on January 13, 1999 by the SCO Chiefs-in-Summit. Since then, the SCO Health Team has provided support as requested by member First Nations in the areas of: advocacy, advisory, facilitation, communication, policy development, and research.

