



RESILIENCE

A YEAR LIKE NO OTHER



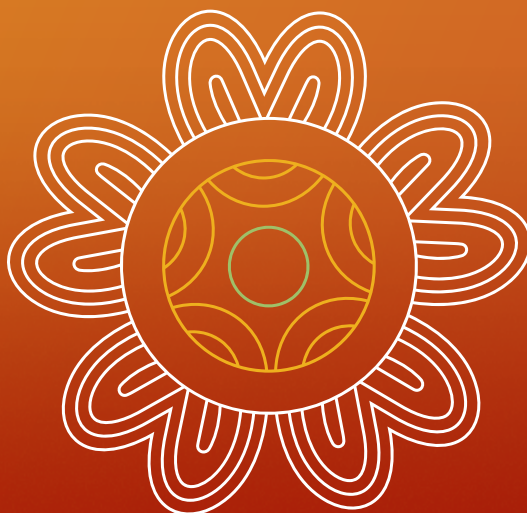
ANNUAL REPORT
2020-21



“ Now is the time to create change, to build bridges between all members of society, and to end longstanding, systemic neglect of First Nations.

This is only possible if we listen to and uplift our member Nations, and I look forward to continuing to amplify the voices of the southern Chiefs and the Anishinaabe and Dakota peoples.”

– GRAND CHIEF JERRY DANIELS





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GRAND CHIEF'S WELCOME

Boozhoo, Aniin, and Wash-Tay

Welcome to the Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO) Annual Report for 2020-2021! I want to acknowledge our Elders, who are the keepers of our knowledge and cultures, and our Ancestors, whose contributions, gifts, and sacrifices enable us to be here today. It is my honour to serve the Anishinaabe and Dakota Chiefs and to represent the 34 Nations and more than 80,500 citizens as your Grand Chief.

I would like to acknowledge the leadership of the Chiefs' Executive Committee and the Chiefs' Finance and Personnel Committee, including Chief Norman Bone, Chief Glenn Hudson, Chief Trevor Prince, Chief Derrick Henderson, Chief Larry Barker, and Chief Cornell McLean. Your wisdom and guidance were more important than ever this past year, as the southern Chiefs came together to support our people through the first year of the global pandemic.

Protecting Our People

The last 365 days have been unprecedented for southern First Nation communities and citizens. In March of 2020, as the world became aware of the health risks of the new coronavirus, Chiefs and Councils took immediate action to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. As part of that response, SCO declared a State of Emergency on behalf of the Chiefs of the 34 member Nations and began to advocate for additional resources to fight the pandemic.

First Nation leaders across southern Manitoba have shown phenomenal leadership throughout this pandemic. Chiefs locked down their communities, installing security check points and distributing much-needed cleaning supplies, protective equipment, and emergency kits. These measures saved lives and kept the deadly virus from reaching our communities for many months.

COME

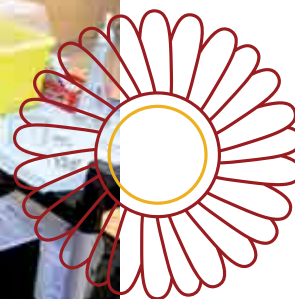


However, after the provincial government launched a campaign to restart the province's economy too soon, a predicted second wave hit. The surge of infections in the fall left Manitoba with the second worst COVID-19 fatality record in all of Canada. We witnessed first-hand the grim reality of what centuries of colonization and systemic racism have done to our people and our communities as the pandemic exposed the inequities that have oppressed First Nations for generations.

Since the pandemic began, SCO has advocated for additional funding for First Nations, and during the first year of the pandemic we provided almost \$2 million directly to southern First Nations and southern First Nation citizens. We also advocated for the prioritization of First Nation people for the vaccine and for a seat at the decision-making table.

In January of 2021, after many months of strong advocacy and stark evidence, the first 5,300 doses of the Moderna vaccine were allocated to First Nations. A month later, Traditional Healers and Knowledge Keepers were prioritized to receive the vaccine, alongside other health professionals. With further advocacy, a 20-year age differential was soon announced.

Sadly, the vaccine did not arrive in time for many. We mourn the loss of First Nation citizens this past year and grieve with their families and loved ones. We honour those lives as well as all the health professionals who risked their lives to try to save them.



Racism – Our Other Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic presents the opportunity to rebuild life for the better in our Territory and to ensure a just recovery for all Canadians, starting with First Nation communities and peoples. The Chiefs do not want a post-pandemic return to normal. Our normal in Canada consists of economic apartheid, infrastructure deficits, increased violence, poverty, systemic racism, and the worst health outcomes. Instead, we are demanding change and a future free from the systemic racism and oppression that create inequities. SCO is calling on all levels of government to commit to closing the gaps faced by First Nation people.

There is no reason that a First Nation person in Manitoba should expect to live 11 years less than all other Manitobans, but that is the reality we face. The gaps between our quality of life, and everyone else's, will only continue to grow until real action is taken to address systemic racism.

This year, SCO has spoken out against racism in Canada in its many forms. I condemned the behaviour of hospital staff in Quebec, who uttered racist and degrading comments as a First Nation woman and mother of seven children, Joyce Echaquan, lay dying in her bed. Ms. Echaquan's courage in livestreaming the video has now shown the whole country, and the whole world, the level of

racism and mistreatment that First Nations face. In response, we added to the national conversations with the release of our Racism in Health Care Survey Report and the launch of our Racism in Policing Survey.

We have added our voices to the #IndigenousLives-Matter movement sparked by the fatal shootings of three First Nation citizens, Eishia Hudson, Jason Collins, and Stewart Kevin Andres, and by other shooting deaths in Canada by the RCMP. I have spoken out against the unjust use of police force and called for more police accountability and for changes to the Independent Investigation Unit (IIU). Police culture is colonial, built on enforcing the displacement of Anishinaabe and Dakota lands and rights, and the over-policing of our bodies and spaces. Together with the Chiefs, we are demanding change.





Fighting for Children and Inherent Rights

We have also raised our voices to fight for children in care and for the more than \$350 million stolen by the Manitoba government. For years, the province has been illegally confiscating Children's Special Allowance (CSA) payments meant for First Nation children in care and has instead put the money into general revenue. Many children age out of the system without any resources to help set them up for success in the future.

In November, the provincial government rammed through legislation that legally ends the ability of current and former children in care to sue the Manitoba government for clawing back their monthly CSA. SCO and the Manitoba Métis Federation joined together with a group of concerned child and family agencies and authorities to file a constitutional legal challenge.

At the same time in Mi'kmaq Territory, the harvesting rights of the Mi'kmaq people were under attack. With our Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak relatives, we organized a Horse Spirit Ride from RCMP headquarters to the Manitoba Legislature in honour of Mi'kmaq lobster fishers. First Nations have sustainably fished and respectfully managed our resources since the first sunrise, unlike colonial management practices. What we were witnessing was violent, domestic terrorism, and overt racism being exhibited by non-Indigenous fishers against First Nation people who have every right to make a living. When it

comes to protecting our lands, water, and Treaty and inherent rights, we will not compromise.

We will never back down from defending what we know is right, and that includes supporting the Interlake Reserves Tribal Council in its dispute with the province over the Lake Manitoba Outlets Channel, speaking out against the federal process for awarding infrastructure projects, calling for Lynn Beyak to be removed from the Senate, advocating for the unsheltered, or asking pointed questions of government about two men from Sagkeeng who died in custody.





Time to Celebrate!

We also took time to celebrate the generosity of our sponsors, following a socially distanced third annual SCO / Southern Chiefs' Economic Development Corporation (SCEDC) golf tournament. Through a partnership with Indspire and the Vickar Automotive Group, more than \$70,000 in annual and endowed scholarships will be awarded to students from SCO-member Nations. Education is a key driver for creating lasting and positive change. The potential of our youth is limitless and helping them achieve their educational dreams is one of the top priorities of the southern Chiefs.

Our program achievements are significant, including signing an historic Memorandum of Understanding on Health Transformation with Canada and launching an awareness and education campaign on billboards throughout the province to honour the lives and legacy of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. Reforming the child welfare system is also a top priority and we made substantive, culturally appropriate changes to the way the system works for First Nation children in our communities, even throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, including issuing directives to end discriminatory Birth

Alerts and to ensure that all parents are aware of their rights when dealing with child welfare agencies through the Parents' Bill of Rights. The highlights of our program achievements are detailed in the pages that follow.

I would like to thank Joy Cramer, our Chief Executive Officer, our management team, and each and every one of our staff for their dedication in serving the southern First Nation Chiefs and communities.

The last year has required all of our collective resilience and determination. We have suffered losses and COVID-19 has taken much from us. But I know we will emerge united and stronger, to build the future our ancestors dreamed of and one that the Treaties intended.

**Miigwetch and Pidamiye,
Ogema-Makwa**

Grand Chief Jerry Daniels





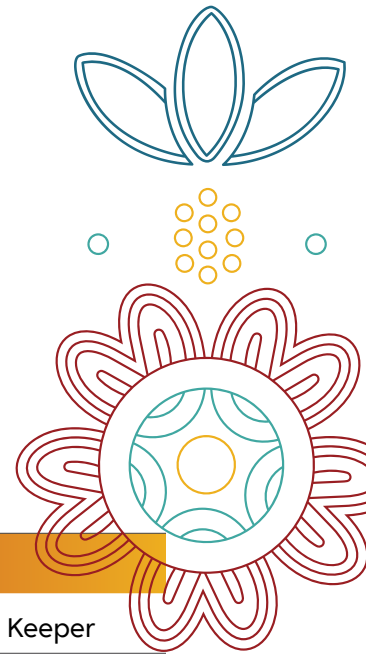


“ In this pandemic year, as in other times when we have been tested throughout our history, we rely on the strength of our Ancestors. Through the knowledge of our Elders and Wisdom Keepers, passed down over the generations, and through prayer and ceremony, we are navigating the global pandemic and the many challenges it brings. The pandemic has exposed gaps in colonial systems and structures that we have endured for generations, and now we renew our resolve to create a new future. By continuing to work together, we build on our strengths, so that our communities and our people can emerge more resilient than ever before.”

– GRAND CHIEF JERRY DANIELS



MEMBER FIRST NATIONS AND CHIEFS



FIRST NATION	CHIEF
Berens River	Hartley Everett
Birdtail Sioux	Ken Chalmers
Black River	Sheldon Kent
Bloodvein	Roland Hamilton
Brokenhead	Deborah Smith
Buffalo Point	Andrea Camp
Canupawakpa	Viola Eastman
Dakota Plains	Orville Smoke
Dakota Tipi	Eric Pashe
Dauphin River	John Stagg
Ebb and Flow	Wayne Desjarlais
Gambler	David Ledoux
Hollow Water	Larry Barker
Keeseekoowenin	Norman Bone
Kinonjeoshtegon	Chief Rod Travers
Lake Manitoba	Cornell McLean
Lake St. Martin	Adrian Sinclair

FIRST NATION	CHIEF
Little Grand Rapids	Raymond Keeper
Little Saskatchewan	Hector Shorting
Long Plain	Dennis Meeches
O-Chi-Chak-Ko-Sipi	Eugene Eastman
Pauingassi	Michael Owens
Peguis	Glenn Hudson
Pinaymootang	Garnet Woodhouse
Pine Creek	Karen Lynn Batson
Poplar River	Vera Mitchell
Rolling River	Wilfred McKay
Roseau River	Craig Alexander
Sagkeeng	Derrick Henderson
Sandy Bay	Trevor Prince
Skownan	Cameron Catcheway
Swan Lake	Francine Meeches
Tootinaowaziibeeng	Barry McKay
Waywayseecappo	Murray Clearsky

CHIEFS' EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND CHIEFS' FINANCE AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

—
Miigwetch and Pidamiye
to the Chiefs for your service!



2019

In Memoriam

Chief Traverse

A grave loss for Kinonjeoshtegon First Nation and a tremendous loss for us all. Chief Dave Traverse will be remembered as a vocal leader and a powerful advocate for his community. Miigwetch Dave Traverse, you are dearly missed by all of us at SCO.



Chief Norman Bone

Chiefs' Executive and
Finance Committees



Chief Larry Barker

Chiefs' Executive and
Finance Committees



Chief Derrick Henderson

Chiefs' Executive and
Finance Committees



Chief Glenn Hudson

Chiefs' Executive Committee



Chief Trevor Prince

Chiefs' Executive and
Finance Committees



Cornell McLean

Chiefs' Finance Committee

Change will not come if we wait for others.

Fostering unity within ourselves and
with other First Nation communities
is key to our collective success.

Individually we can attain success,
collectively we can achieve greatness.



SCO YOUTH COUNCIL

The SCO Youth Council aims to empower and advocate for southern First Nation youth, having been established in March of 2018 to strengthen and support the voices of youth.

Evan Lilley
Youth Chief,
Dakota Tipi First Nation

Ashley Daniels
Youth Chief,
Swan Lake First Nation

Dakotah Traverse
IRTC Representative,
Kinonjeoshtegon First Nation

Kennedy Anderson
IRTC Representative,
Pinaymootang First Nation

Kiersten Sanderson
DOTC Representative,
Sandy Bay First Nation

Myles Martin
DOTC Representative,
Sandy Bay First Nation

Trystan McAuley
WRTC Representative,
Ebb and Flow First Nation

Jessica Mainville
WRTC Representative,
Keeseekoowenin First Nation

Marissa Mann
SERDC Representative,
Black River First Nation

Jasmin Hall
Independent Representative,
Canupawakpa Dakota Nation

Carson Robinson
Independent Representative,
Sagkeeng First Nation

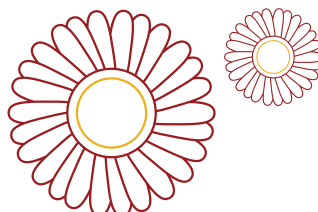
During the first year of the pandemic, the Youth Council had the challenge of trying to organize events and engage other youth virtually due to COVID-19 restrictions. The annual Youth Gathering and bi-annual elections had to be postponed until the summer of 2021.

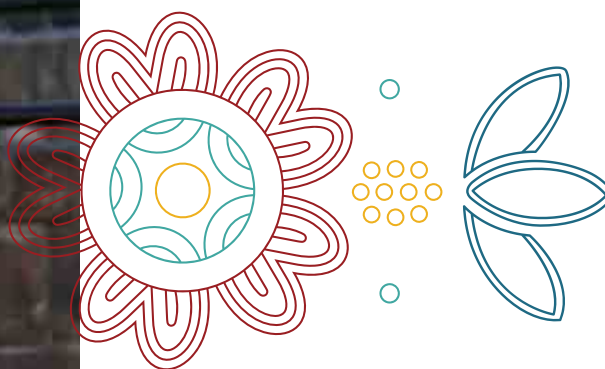
During the lockdown, the SCO Youth Council's #StayHome contests encouraged written, spoken, and artistic submissions around the importance of staying home to protect our communities and loved ones. Prize winners were highlighted on social media and their submissions shared publicly.



ACHIEVEMENTS

- Participated in SCO Chiefs' Summits and committee meetings to ensure the youth voice and perspective were well represented
- Youth leaders Ashley Daniels and Carson Robinson appointed as Assembly of First Nations – Manitoba youth representatives
- Participated in SCO water quality testing and training program
- Contracted Anishinaabemowin instructor Aandeg Muldrew to film "Language Wednesdays" lessons to teach the language remotely. The videos were posted on social media platforms to be accessible to youth
- Partnered with the University of Manitoba Indigenous Students' Association to co-host an online panel focusing on youth mental health





CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

This past year, we faced the challenge of a global pandemic, a life changing moment for all of us. Since then, our focus has been on supporting our First Nations to address COVID-19 by securing funding to assist with immediate and urgent needs in our communities. The Chiefs' Executive Committee acted quickly to support the closure of our office in Winnipeg in mid-March, and again in mid-November, when the worst of the second wave began. Our management team and staff worked together to find innovative ways to deliver programming and services virtually and 30 staff were redeployed within their First Nations, working on the front lines, from perimeter control to packing food hampers, care packages, and so much more.

As the year progressed, in addition to advocating for additional funding to flow directly to southern First Nations, we provided almost \$2 million to our Anishinaabe and Dakota Nations to support off-reserve citizens. We will share much more on our

leadership and contributions to COVID-19 efforts in our report on the following pages.

Despite the pandemic, we continued to grow our community-based programming in the areas of Health Transformation, Child and Family Services, and Justice. Building on the "Exercising our Treaty and Inherent Right to Health" resolution passed at the September 2019 Chiefs-in-Summit, we signed an historic Memorandum of Understanding with Canada to begin to end health inequity in our Territory. Just months later, the Chiefs passed resolutions on the formation and governance model of a southern First Nations health authority, and on the devolution of the Non-Insured Health Benefits program.

The Chiefs-In-Summit also passed resolutions to devolve the Indigenous Court Worker Program from the province, and directed the Southern First Nations Network of Care to establish an alternative foster

parent appeal process. Capacity is growing through the SCO First Nation Family Law Pilot Project, which will help our member communities develop their own First Nation family laws in the spirit of traditional knowledge, parenting, and family life.

SCO continued its partnership with Assiniboine Community College to deliver a Restorative Justice Certificate program virtually to students from SCO-member communities, further strengthening our ability to administer forms of justice rooted in the traditions and worldviews of Anishinaabe and Dakota peoples. The realization of a Water Authority is also an important new initiative for SCO and will greatly help us to exercise jurisdiction and protect our sacred waters.

We are pleased our Non-Insured Health Benefits Navigator and our Child and Family Services System Navigator are helping many southern First Nation families deal with complex systems, whether they are appealing a denial or addressing a child welfare matter. This year we piloted a Jordan's Principle Coordinator position at the Specialized Services for Children and Youth (SSCY) Centre to ensure First Nation children receive the health, educational, and social services and supports they need without delay. I am pleased to report that we are making the position permanent. We are appreciative of the partnership with SSCY Centre and its leadership and staff.

Increasingly, as our reputation for excellence grows, we are being invited to inform policy makers and hold governments to account, including hosting an opportunity for the southern Chiefs to participate in a performance audit on the government of Manitoba's progress in implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action and the provincial Path to Reconciliation Act.

This year, SCO once again saw another significant increase in both financial and human resources. Our staff are now working from even more southern First Nations as well as from our head office at Swan Lake First Nation in Headlingley and our renovated Winnipeg sub-office on Dublin Avenue.

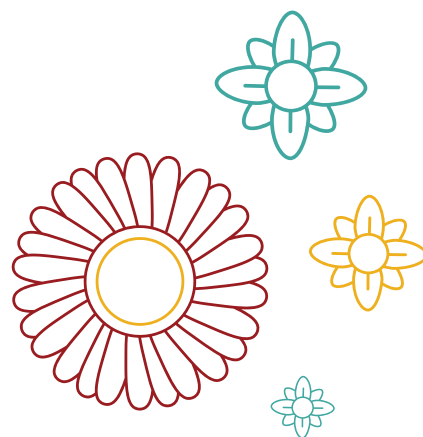
All our achievements can be directly attributed to Grand Chief Jerry Daniel's vision for our shared future, one filled with hope and opportunity. And hope is exactly what we have needed this last

difficult year. I am also deeply thankful for the guidance of the Chiefs' Executive Committee and the Chiefs' Finance and Personnel Committee, whose expert leadership has led SCO to surpass strategic milestones this past year.

As we look ahead to transformative new projects, program growth, including a southern Mobile Crisis Response Team, and responding to the pandemic in inventive ways, we will continue to draw strength from our Ancestors, our culture, our traditions, and from each other. I am confident that the year ahead will be bright, as we work together to serve our Anishinaabe and Dakota Nations and peoples.

Chi-Miigwetch and Pidamiye!

Joy Cramer
Chief Executive Officer



COVID-19 PANDEMIC

PROTECTING OUR PEOPLE



When the COVID-19 pandemic was declared in March of 2020, the world changed for all of us. On March 17, 2020, the Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO) declared a State of Emergency, days before the Province of Manitoba. Since then, Grand Chief Daniels, the Chiefs of the southern First Nations, and SCO have worked around the clock to advocate for resources, including funding and the vaccine, to keep our citizens and communities safe.

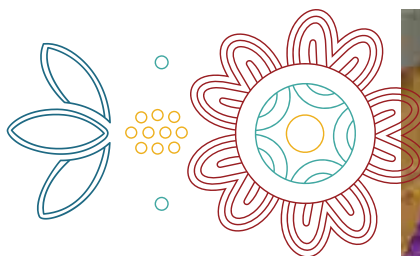
COVID-19 would prove devastating to our people. Due to the ongoing infrastructure crisis, chronic overcrowding, and lack of equitable health care, First Nation citizens have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19. As of March 31, 2021, more than 11,233 First Nations people had been diagnosed with COVID-19 in Manitoba, with First Nation citizens comprising 64 per cent of active cases, 35 per cent of hospitalizations, and 58 per cent of those admitted to the intensive care unit. Many of our Nations are mourning the loss of Elders, Wisdom Keepers, and beloved family members from every generation. Our condolences go out to all those suffering from heart break. We mourn with you.

Throughout 2020, Grand Chief Daniels worked tirelessly to meet with government Ministers and other leaders to make the case for additional COVID support funding to flow directly to southern First Nations for on-reserve members. SCO applied to the federal Indigenous Community Support Fund and received \$1.75 million, which was provided equitably, based on population, to our member First Nations to support off-reserve citizens. In certain cases at the request of a Chief, SCO delivered funds directly to citizens.

In October of 2020, SCO hired three First Nation youth to work as mentored Pathfinders to assist First Nation citizens in accessing COVID-19 benefits. These included requests for information regarding how to access supports, such as the Indigenous Community Support Fund, Employment and Income Assistance Program, Manitoba Child Care Benefit, Child Care Subsidy, Canada Emergency Response Benefit, and the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy. Requests were also made for information pertaining to the Manitoba Bridge Grant, Treaty Annuity, Rental Assistance, Business Supports, Health and Medical Supports, Childcare Supports, Food Supports, and Education Supports.

The Pathfinders also conducted important research into additional supports for off and on reserve community members, which can be found on the SCO webpage: scoinc.mb.ca/get-your-benefits/ as well as research into various student scholarships and bursaries.

In December of 2020, as the life-saving vaccine was being approved, Grand Chief Daniels advocated strongly for vaccine prioritization and held the





Pallister government to account. That same month, SCO named Cindy Garson, a nurse with 27 years of experience and the IRTC Health Director, to the Provincial Vaccine Implementation Task Force to inform, plan, and execute the rollout of COVID-19 vaccinations across the province. Thank you, Cindy, for your dedication, expertise, and warm heart as you accepted this significant responsibility on behalf of southern First Nations!

In January of 2021, as health care professionals were prioritized for the first doses of the vaccines, and supply was extremely limited, SCO helped to identify Traditional Healers and Knowledge Keepers to ensure they received some of the precious first doses. Senior SCO staff also participated as active members of the many federal and provincial national and local COVID-19 tables throughout 2021, to inform southern First Nation leadership and health care staff as needed.



"Together, we will get through this. We are strong and resilient and we know in difficult times that we can rely on each other for support as we have always done."

– GRAND CHIEF JERRY DANIELS

ANTI-RACISM SURVEY

Racism is our other Pandemic



Shortly after the tragic death of Joyce Echaquan, the Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO) heard from many southern First Nation citizens. Their outrage, their grief – and their shared experiences. We still remember the death of Brian Sinclair, ignored by staff until he died in the emergency room of Winnipeg's biggest hospital after waiting 34 hours for medical care.

To give voice to First Nation citizens, SCO conducted a survey on racism in Manitoba's health care system. The survey was open to all First Nation citizens who have accessed health care in Manitoba and the results paint an overwhelming and consistent pattern of discrimination, neglect, and even abuse.

Seventy-two per cent of respondents reported experiencing racism when accessing services and programs in the Manitoba health care system, and nearly 80 per cent reported witnessing a family member or loved one being discriminated against or treated badly due to their race. More than 65 per cent of respondents reported receiving negative comments from health care workers, ranging from verbal threats and insults to being scolded or mocked. An overwhelming majority, 92 per cent, of survey respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that "racism is a problem in Manitoba's health care system."

Nearly 65 per cent of participants agreed or strongly agreed that their health was impacted because of racism in Manitoba's health care system. One respondent actually reported being "surprised"

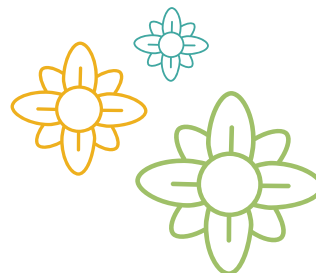
when they or their family members were "treated well" when seeking health care. More than half of respondents indicated that they have avoided seeking health care due to the effects of racism.

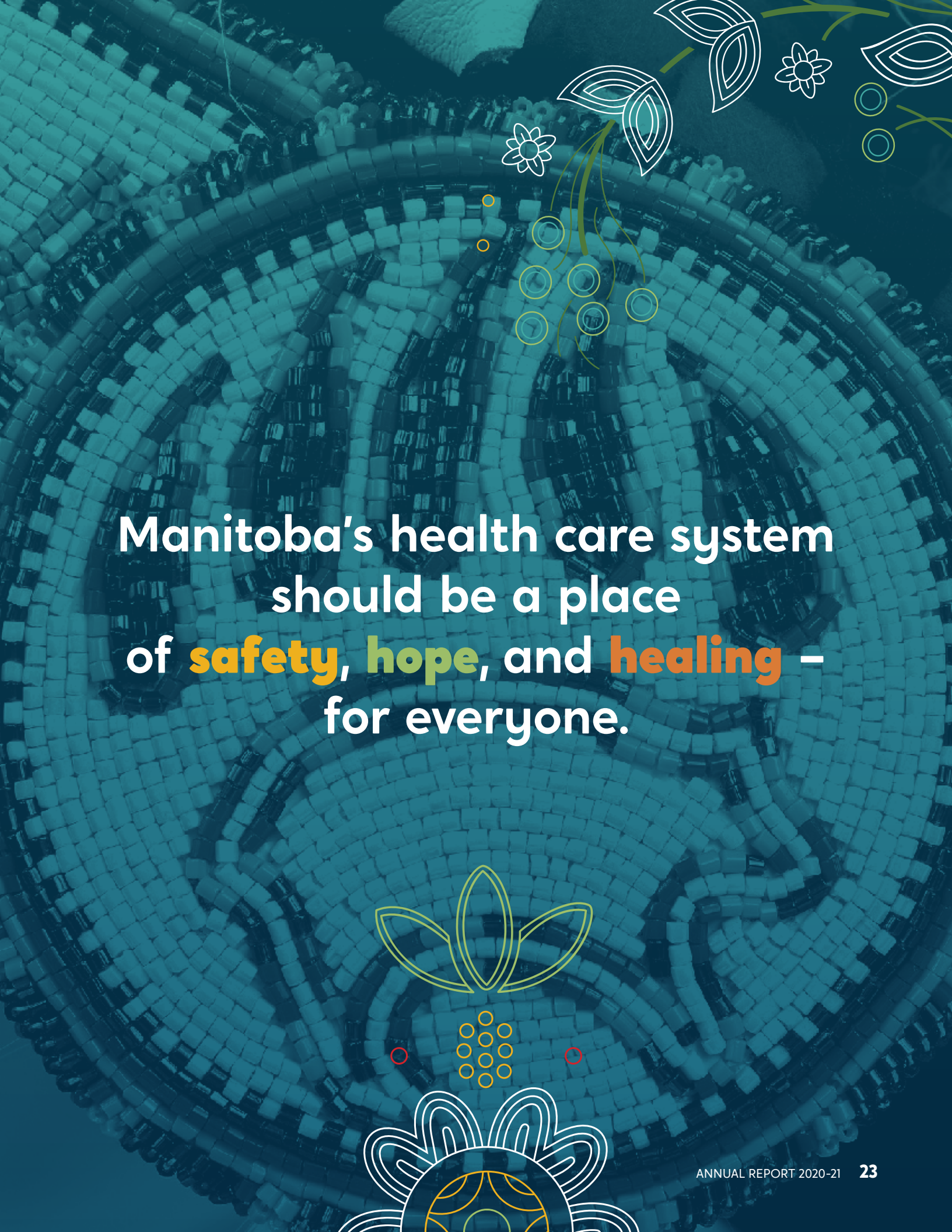
Racism has real world outcomes. First Nation people in Manitoba have a life expectancy that is on average eleven years shorter than non-First Nation people and that gap is growing.

When First Nation people are judged and treated unfairly or differently simply because they are First Nations that is racism. Racism is built on incorrect beliefs that one race or group of people is better or worse than another. Systemic racism refers to the ways that white supremacy is reflected and upheld by the systems in our society. All these systems are built with an already ingrained bias, a racist and discriminatory lens that doesn't provide or allow for equal or fair opportunities for racialized peoples to succeed.

In a settler colonial state like Canada, the systems that were put in place at the creation of the country benefited colonists and disadvantaged First Nation peoples. Much of our society today continues to reinforce this power dynamic.

It is time for change.





Manitoba's health care system
should be a place
of **safety**, **hope**, and **healing** –
for everyone.

THIRD ANNUAL SCO / SCEDC FUNDRAISING GOLF TOURNAMENT FOR SCHOLARSHIPS

More than
\$70,000 raised
for students!

“ Education is a key driver for creating lasting and positive change within our First Nation communities. The potential of our youth is limitless and helping them achieve their educational dreams is one of the top priorities of the southern Chiefs.”

– GRAND CHIEF JERRY DANIELS



Thanks to our Sponsors

Gold – Assembly of First Nations, Manitoba Region
Silver – Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre
Silver – Valard Construction
Bronze – Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology
Hole-in-One – Vickar Automotive Group





SPIRIT RIDE IN SUPPORT OF MI'KMAQ FISHERS

The background image is a photograph of a Spirit Ride. On the left, several Indigenous men are seen from the side, wearing traditional feathered headdresses and playing large, round drums. On the right, a police officer in a dark uniform and cap is visible, looking towards the drummers. The entire image has a warm, orange-red color overlay. Decorative line art elements, including stylized flowers and leaves, are scattered across the page.

“ First Nations have sustainably and respectfully managed our resources since the first sunrise, unlike colonial management practices. We stand in solidarity with Mi'kmaq fishers and with First Peoples throughout Turtle Island as we defend our inherent rights.”

– GRAND CHIEF JERRY DANIELS





Miigwech & Pidamiye
For your service and sacrifice



Donald R.
Catcheway



Corporal Melvin Swan



Elliott Ratt



Felix Ambrose Fontaine



Rufus Prince



Lionel Shannacappo



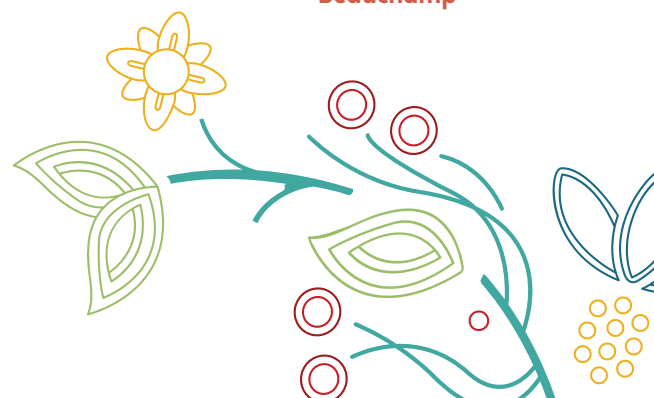
Norman Thomas
Beauchamp



William George Mann



Lionel Daniels



Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO) recognizes First Nation Veterans from southern Manitoba for their valiant bravery, sacrifice, and achievements. We thank these courageous and hard-working individuals for their service.

Lest We Forget.



Oswald McCorrister (front left), his brother William McCorrister (centre back), and Charles Stewart (back left).



Thomas George Prince



Mervin Clarke



James W. Eagle



Michael Pashe



Leon Xavier Fontaine

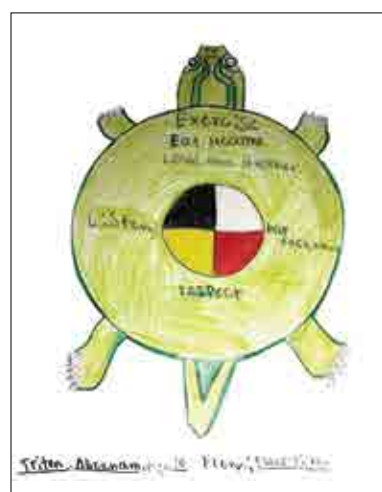
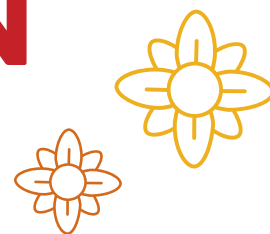


Donald Vernon Houle



Alfred Chartrand

HEALTH TRANSFORMATION



Triton Abraham, Black River

Amplifying Community Voices

Since Spring 2020, the Health Transformation team has been working with southern First Nations to increase their active involvement in the Health Transformation process. Through a series of engagement opportunities, community members have identified their priorities, providing integral community involvement in the design and planning of a healthcare system that will meet the needs of all SCO members. Active participation has been sought across a range of age groups, including children and youth, genders, and diversities, via a series of creative opportunities.

SCO's Community Health Transformation Liaisons have been able to offer several engagement opportunities throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Amplifying the voices of Elders, women, men, and gender-diverse people, including 2SLGBTQIA+ people, has occurred via community information sessions and engagements such as surveys, contests, focus groups, and community programming.

Chiefs' Health Action Table

The Chiefs' Health Action Table (CHAT), including Chief Karen Batson (Chair), Chief Eugene Eastman, Chief Sheldon Kent, Chief Cornell McLean, Chief Eric Pashe, and Chief Lance Roulette, has guided the Health Transformation process by providing direction, identifying arising issues, and working with leadership to build support for the Health Transformation process. The CHAT has expanded its membership, provided guidance on provincial relationships during the pandemic response, and elevated the issue of pediatric health in the Health Transformation process. The Chiefs have committed through a resolution to develop an action plan that will guide the Health Transformation process toward an Agreement in Principle with Canada.

Community Health Transformation Liaisons

In 2020-21, SCO expanded the number of Community Health Transformation Liaisons working directly in communities, hiring Liaisons to lead community information gathering and increase the communications efforts within First Nations. Since their hiring, the Liaisons have gone through an orientation training and a variety of professional development opportunities, including with the University of Alberta and CancerCare Manitoba.

Health Director Leadership

Over the past year, the Health Transformation department has continued to work with the Health Directors of the 34 Anishinaabe and Dakota Nations, engaging at various levels to receive valuable information and guidance. One priority area identified by the Health Directors is a need for their own Association. They have also led community involvement in Health Transformation through the management of Liaisons during the pandemic, while also managing the COVID-19 response at the community-level. Through this work, they have been building best practices and lessons learned that will inform future healthcare system design.

Guidance and Direction

As Health Transformation moves forward through the community-led engagement process, guidance is required in specific areas. Three tables were established to assist and provide direction on Health Transformation:

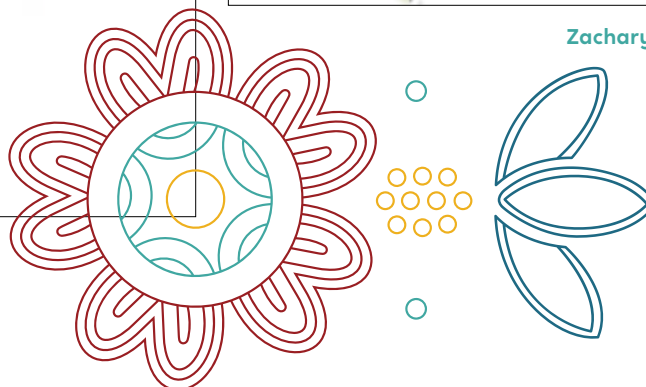
- **Elder Voices:** Elders/Knowledge Keepers Committee includes Elders and Knowledge Keepers who guide and share ancestral and traditional knowledge to ensure it is reflected in the Health Transformation process. The Elders/Knowledge Keepers guide the health system design through their ancestral and traditional knowledge of plants, medicines, traditional healing, Indigenous health laws, and protocols.
- **Health Experts:** Health Transformation Advisory Circle consists of individuals with years of experience in the health sector to provide guidance in the planning, design, and implementation of a southern First Nation healthcare system. An initial meeting was held in February of 2021 with the Advisory Circle.
- **Gender-Based Lens Advisory Circle** – work started on the development of an Advisory Circle in gender-based violence and 2SLGBTQIA+, which will include experts in this field, persons with lived experience, and Elders/Knowledge Keepers. The goal of the Advisory Circle is to build healthier individuals, families, and communities through a First Nation-based network of community capacity to respond to gender violence and the creation of safe space for 2SLGBTQIA+ people, victims, and their families. As part of this work, the National Inquiry's Calls for Justice will be included as it relates to healthcare system design. Health Transformation was successful in receiving a three-year grant from Manitoba Justice to support work in this area.



Treena Bird, Black River



Zachary Marion, Skownan





Gabriella Tavares, Skownan

Data Governance

With the addition of Information Governance, the central work of a data governance program for our communities came into focus during the last quarter of 2020-21. This work included team expansion and professional development for the Community Health Transformation Liaisons in the areas of community research and information gathering.

An important foundational step in information literacy was taken for our Liaisons, Health Transformation staff, Health Directors, and Leadership in the Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession (OCAP) principles developed by the First Nations Information Governance Centre (FNIGC). With this certificate course completed and a baseline

achieved, work began on procedures aimed to ensure that data collected during every phase of Health Transformation will belong to the communities from where it came.

The last quarter of 2020-21 also included an evaluation program to ensure that SCO is collecting quality data that effectively measures the impacts of our Health Transformation journey, allowing for adjustments to be made as needed. There will also be touchpoints for participants and staff to offer essential feedback. Staff skills were strengthened in this area by attending the Canadian Evaluation Society virtual conference in March 2021.





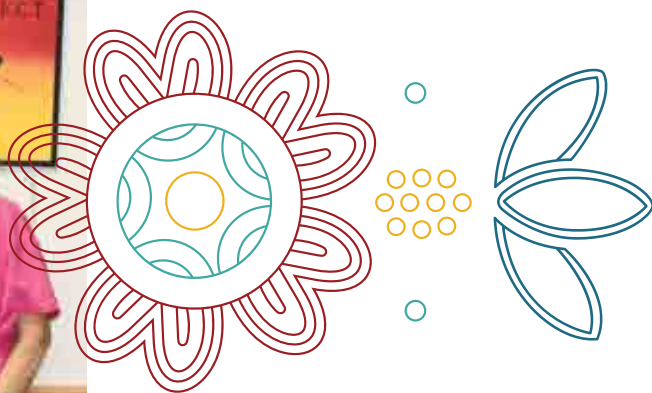
COVID-19 Response

With First Nation health centres locked down and community engagement work largely prohibited, our Liaisons pivoted into emergency roles and ensured their communities had the support they needed to care for their members during the COVID-19 pandemic. By allowing for the re-deployment during times of peak need, 17 Liaisons helped with vaccine delivery, food provision, public education, safe land-based training, and quarantine support. The Liaisons demonstrated their importance throughout the pandemic and created virtual engagement methods, allowing them to receive feedback from community around healthcare system inequities and needs, which strengthened the impact of their contributions.

Winnipeg-based staff coordinated information sessions with key provincial and federal stakeholders aimed at providing needed information for Health Directors and their staff as well as creating a space where pressing community questions could be answered. The Health Transformation team became a space for receiving trusted information during the pandemic and a key reference source for communities, elevating their concerns when necessary, acting as wayfinders, and finding or supplying answers to their questions.

Next Steps for Health Transformation

We are now in the stage of moving community priorities forward into the development of a Southern First Nation Health Authority Action Plan. The Action Plan will feature a roadmap of the formative work to be undertaken for an Agreement in Principle between the Southern Chiefs' Organization and the Government of Canada in the coming months. In the meantime, please stay tuned for our reporting, promotional materials, and other opportunities to become actively involved in Health Transformation work!



NON-INSURED HEALTH BENEFITS NAVIGATOR



SCO's Non-Insured Health Benefits Navigator (NIHB) helps southern First Nation citizens access their health benefits by.

1. Improving awareness of the NIHB program and providing information to clients and service providers on the eligible benefit areas.
2. Providing support and advocacy to clients and service providers on how to address denials, appeals, and billing irregularities.
3. Advocating with the federal government and health professionals on behalf of First Nation clients to resolve NIHB issues.
4. Working to strengthen relationships between health care providers and provincial and federal partners.
5. Supporting leadership to advocate for policy change within NIHB.

The SCO NIHB Navigator is a member of the National NIHB Navigators Table. Currently, the Table speaks weekly and discusses changes within the NIHB program. Navigators across Canada collaborate and share ideas to solve unique client issues.

The Navigator is also a member of the Northwest and East Collaboration boards, which meet quarterly with the region's First Nation health directors, nurses, tribal councils, regional health authority directors, First Nations and Inuit Health Branch, and emergency medical services directors. The boards discuss current issues and possible solutions as well as pilot projects being implemented in the health regions.

Key Issues and Challenges

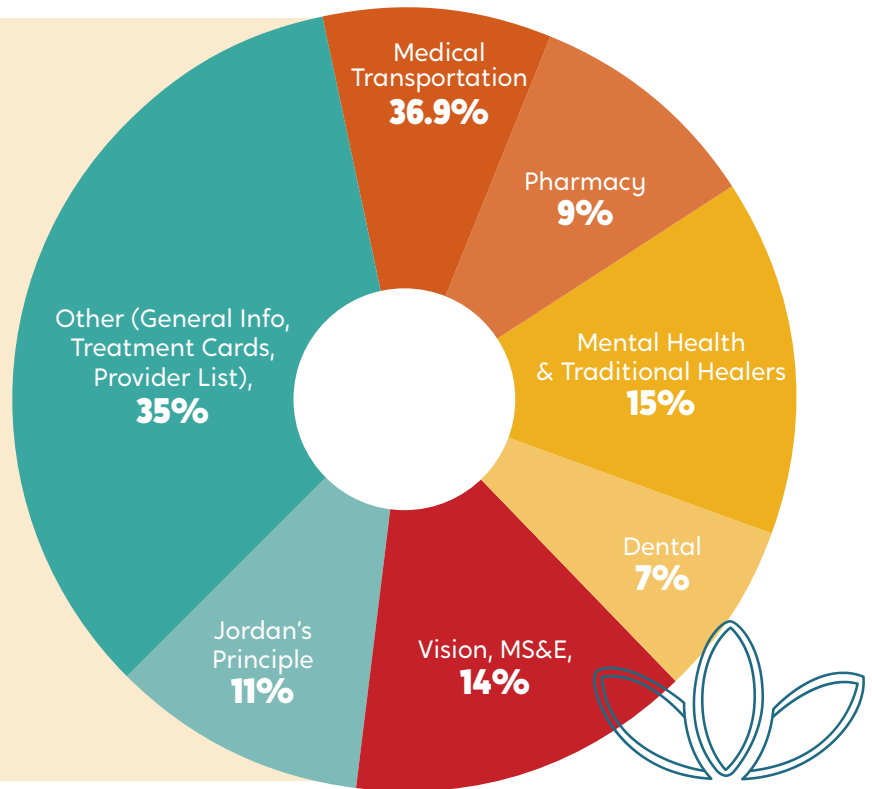
New intakes are received by telephone, email, third-party referrals, and via social media. Client inquiries included, but were not limited to:

- Billing irregularities between provincial health benefits and non-insured health benefits
- Procedural deficiencies with providers resulting in overpayment by SCO members or approved benefits not being covered for eligible recipients
- SCO community members unaware of the appeal process
- Sharing resources and collaborating with existing agencies

Inquiry Distribution 2020-2021 Total: 385

The SCO NIHB Navigator received a total of 385 inquiries from April 1, 2020, to March 31, 2021, from 29 communities and countless organizations that reached out to the NIHB Navigator.

The pandemic limited in-person community interactions, however, several took place virtually and through emailing community health teams. The Navigator presented to southern health directors at an October conference, expanding urban connections, and presented virtually to the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, Specialized Services for Children and Youth, Mount Carmel Mothering Project, CancerCare Manitoba, RAY, and others.



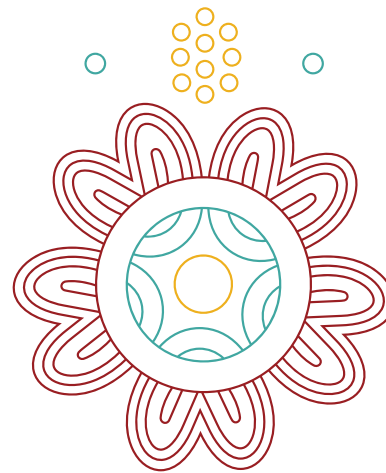
Non-Insured Health Benefits Navigator

There was a significant increase in demand for mental health providers and instruction on how to utilize this benefit both on and off reserve. There was also an increase in the "Other" category, in particular a number of people seeking alternative ways to register children for status and those seeking information on parenting groups, addictions counselling, and detox sites.

The Navigator revised printed materials to be more inclusive of the urban population, including Brandon and Winnipeg. She also created questions and answers for the most common non-insured health benefit concerns for social media. The website was made more user friendly and now also includes common questions and answers, mental health and dental provider lists, and links to common forms for non-insured health benefits.

Moving Forward

The NIHB Navigator will continue to improve public education and awareness of the program through virtual and in person meetings with SCO-member First Nations, citizens, and service providers as well as through social media and printed materials. She will continue work at the national NIHB Navigators Table to ensure southern First Nations are represented and will also advocate for more provider lists to be made public and accessible for all citizens seeking benefits through NIHB.



CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

■ ■ *We are all responsible and we all have a role in improving the future outcomes of our children, youth, and families."*

Wa-ka-bit Program

The southern First Nation Chiefs have long been concerned with over-representation of our children in the Manitoba child welfare system and have sought solutions to maintain control and decision-making for community members. More than 4,500 southern First Nation children and youth were in the child welfare system at March 31, 2021.

First Nations have exercised jurisdiction over our children and families from time immemorial. We have our own laws and principles that have survived the onslaught of colonialism, including impacts from the residential schools, day schools, and the Sixties Scoop.

Guided by community-identified wisdom keepers and with project oversight by the Southern Chiefs' Organization Chiefs Standing Committee on Child Welfare, the Southern Chiefs' Organization has started the process of developing a framework for communities seeking to reclaim jurisdiction over child welfare since the passing of federal legislation, *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit, and Metis children youth and families*. The Chiefs' Standing Committee is co-chaired by Chief Deborah Smith and Chief Cornell McLean, and includes Chief Viola Eastman, Chief Cameron Catcheway, Chief Karen Batson, Chief Garnet Woodhouse, and Acting Chief Don Smoke.

Nine southern First Nations have joined the Wa-ka-bit Pilot program initiative. Wa-ka-bit means: working within the circle to make good decisions for our children, families, and communities. Through this initiative, the SCO Child and Family Services Department is assisting communities to develop their own First Nation Family Laws and focus on gathering knowledge about traditional and historical ways of parenting and family life.

SCO Community Engagement Liaisons are located in Lake St. Martin, Lake Manitoba, Brokenhead Ojibway Nation, Dakota Plains Wahpeton Oyate, Kinonjeoshtegon, Pinaymootang, Long Plain, Pine Creek, Roseau River Anishinaabe, and Dakota Tipi First Nations. These dedicated staff were invited by leadership to work in the community to gather information about the skills, knowledge, and resources available to help develop and implement First Nation child family laws. Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, these staff have continued their work in innovative ways, in addition to assisting with community lockdown protocols as requested by their leadership.

Wa-ka-bit Community Engagement Liaisons (March 31, 2021)

LAKE ST. MARTIN FIRST NATION
Patricia Murdock,
Senior Community
Engagement Liaison

LAKE MANITOBA FIRST NATION
Delma McLean,
Senior Community
Engagement Liaison

BROKENHEAD OJIBWAY NATION
Tina Kent

**DAKOTA PLAINS
WAHPETON OYATE**
Audrey Pratt

**KINONJEOSHTEGON
FIRST NATION**
Vacant

PINAYMOOTANG FIRST NATION
Selena Linski

LONG PLAIN FIRST NATION
Vacant

PINE CREEK FIRST NATION
Reg Nepinak

**ROSEAU RIVER
ANISHINAABE NATION**
Glenice Smith-Mini

DAKOTA TIPI FIRST NATION
Diane Smoke

After hundreds of interviews, focus groups and advisory committee meetings, most of the communities listed above have gathered a wealth of information that will inform a report for southern leadership regarding community priorities. This information will be used to assist leadership to identify the way forward in the process of creating community family laws.

Families think that CFS can do better – here is how:

Community-informed, community-based services **27%**

Educated/trained/sympathetic workers/no judgement **24%**

Build awareness (education, meetings) **24%**

Positive communication **23%**

Work with families, include families in planning **17%**

Elder participation **12%**

Addictions treatment **10%**

Community members' for successful prevention services:

Traditional activities **32 %**

Working with families **10%**

Identify community needs **10%**

Healthy communities **7%**

Education and programs **7%**

Addictions services **5%**

Elders teachings **5%**

Strengths-based, support parents, no judgement **5%**

Community members' for First Nation Family Laws

Traditional activities **20%**

Involve parents, Elders, keep families together **17%**

Community-based **5%**

Balance old and new ways **2%**

Anishinaabe & Dakota Children's Rights

Individuals in five communities were surveyed about what they believe to be the rights of Indigenous children.

Overall, community members want children to be safe, loved, have their basic needs met, and to have a connection to their culture as well as an understanding of the history of their family and community.

What are the rights of Indigenous children?

Language **50%**

Culture **38%**

Family **31%**

Education **25%**

What are the customary cultural practices we should be teaching our children?

Traditional teachings **100%**

Including Elders roles and values, Ceremony and protocol

Relationships with all things

Language **63%**

Traditional food **75%**

Gathering and preparing

Medicines **31%**

Family lines and history **31%**

Top Ten Rights and Best Interests of Children

- Safety
- Meeting basic necessities
- Food, clothing, shelter
- Education
- Family
- Feeling of belonging
- Culture
- To be loved and happy
- To practice their beliefs
- Treaty rights
- To be included in discussion and decisions about issues that will impact them

CFS System Navigator Activities

54%

Individual Capacity Building

15%

Networking

11%

Professional Development

10%

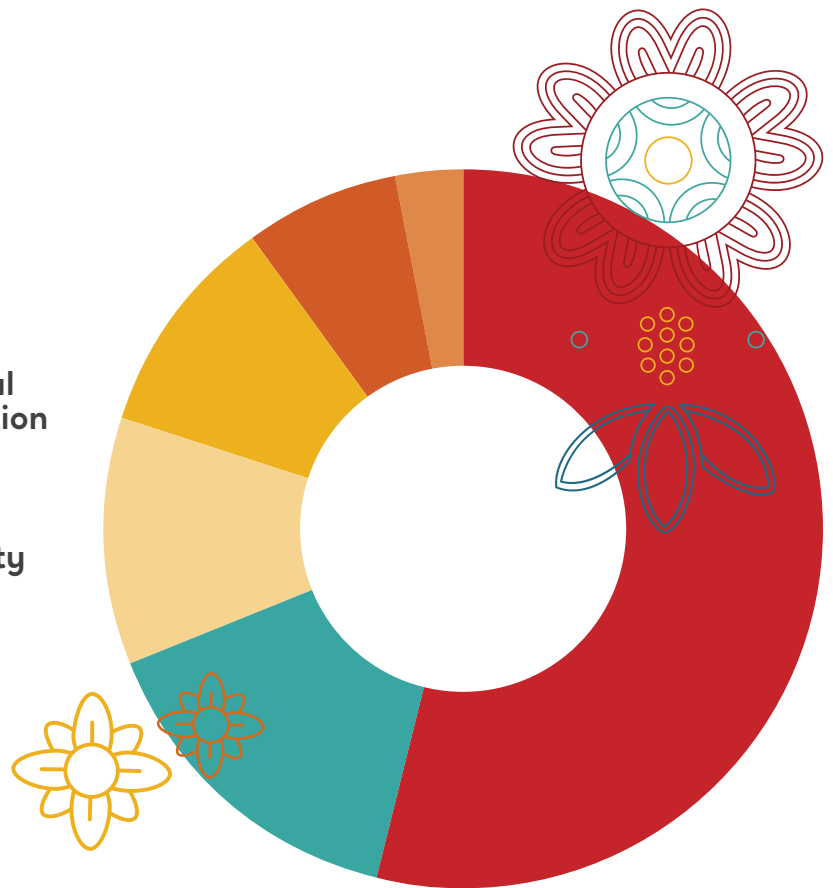
Cultural/Traditional participation

7%

Cultural/Traditional participation

3%

Community Support



What are the current gaps identified that limiting our communities' capacity in CFS?

- Current foster home licensing standards prevent First Nations from fostering within the community
- Communities do not have enough addictions services and supports for parents and youth locally
- Communities may not have the capacity to write a First Nation family law that reflects their values and traditions

What else is happening with CFS at SCO?

- Working with MacDonald Youth Services in knowledge exchange and community capacity development
- Urban consultations for communities in the Wa-ka-bit Pilot Program
- Developing resources in Lake St. Martin for youth transitioning out of care, emergency placement, and reunification, as well as building employment capacity
- Consultations with leadership and communities to access funds for healing or recreational centres in the south
- Offering support to leadership in the area of CFS and the new federal legislation via Indigenous Governing Body agreements

CFS SYSTEM NAVIGATOR

The SCO CFS System Navigator serves Indigenous families in southern Manitoba and provides information, guidance, and direction, intervention and awareness, and ongoing support. The Navigator also provides support to all 34 southern First Nations, including networking, relationship-building, and conflict resolution. While the pandemic has caused obstacles and challenges in child welfare, our office continues to find new ways of helping and reaching out to our people while still following public and safety health orders.

DUTIES PERFORMED:

Individual Capacity Building

- Information Gathering or intakes
- Guidance and Direction
- Educate individuals, families, communities on child welfare laws and policies, children's/parent's/grandparent's rights, CFS programs and services, the provincial welfare system, the justice system, education and housing, including additional outside resources
- Educate families on how to navigate the system requires ongoing communication, research, and networking
- Guide/direct families to proper resources in their surrounding areas

Intervention and Advocacy

- Assist families with identifying short and long-term goals
- Guide/direct families with counselling and life skills and/or provide minimal one-on-one counselling
- Establish positive working relationships with families, their respective agencies, and other organizations
- Conduct and organize agency engagement meetings

- Follow up with clients on a regular basis
- Coaching involves working closely with parents and families to develop the skills they need to speak up and advocate for themselves
- Empower and support First Nation families
- Build trust, encourage, and motivate clients to keep up with the good work they are doing

Community Support

- Assist communities in child welfare issues

Networking

- Establish positive working relationships with agencies and other organizations
- Participate in conferences and meetings

Professional Development

- Conflict Resolution
- OCAP training
- University of Alberta Indigenous Canada course

Cultural/Traditional Participation

- Virtual Water ceremony
- Virtual Language Lessons
- Self-care ceremony

Internal/External office support

- Youth Chief and Council coordinator

“ With the Parents’ Bill of Rights Directive, we are confident that fewer children will be apprehended and that family placements will be prioritized so that children will remain closer to their cultural and community ties. This will ensure that southern First Nation children have better outcomes.”

– GRAND CHIEF JERRY DANIELS

Parents, you have these and other rights in relation to CFS:

- To identify a safe person to care for your child(ren)
- To bring in your own supports when meeting with CFS
- To receive help and resources to support family preservation as long as there are no immediate risks to the safety of your child(ren)
- To attend court proceedings regarding your children and to provide input to the Judge
- To receive culturally appropriate services and resources
- To provide input into your case plan and receive notification prior to significant actions

Each situation is different. Stay calm and remember everything that happens. Remember your rights.



Issues and Concerns

While there has been increased awareness, education, and justice when it comes to First Nation families, there are still many challenges that our families encounter on a personal level and in general. There are issues regarding the application and understanding of An Act Respecting First Nation, Inuit, Métis children, youth and families that was designed to help Indigenous families with family preservation and reunification, reduce the number of children in care, and help communities that want to exercise their jurisdiction of child and family services.

The pandemic continues to have a negative impact on the child welfare system. For example, visitations have either stopped or been reduced, reunification processes have been delayed, services and programs have been cut, including the way we communicate, our personal and work life have been strained, and mental health has been negatively impacted.

Overall, the issues and concerns identified in this work are:

Clients:

- Loss of identity and belonging
- Language barriers
- Disconnection to family, community, and culture
- Lack of education and knowledge
- Not understanding the circumstances surrounding apprehension or what brought the family into contact with CFS
- Abuse
- Unrealistic demands made on the parent(s) to get their child(ren) back home
- Communication breakdown
 - Within the family structure
 - Within the CFS agency
- Lack of family/agency supports
- Lack of rural and community supports and resources
- Lack of traditional programs, counselling/therapy
- Lack of intervention and prevention programs
- Increased drug abuse and addictions due past and present hurts and trauma including mental health
- Mental health issues rising

Social workers:

- Lack of understanding on Indigenous history, such as family and community dynamics and structure
- Lack of empathy and compassion
- Shaming and blaming
- Communication and relationship breakdown i.e., belittling, bullying, etc.
- Personal biases
- Lack of understanding the application of *An Act Respecting First Nation Inuit, Métis Children, Youth and Families*
- Lack of traditional/cultural awareness

Creating and maintaining an open dialogue, building positive working relationships, networking, understanding First Nations history, family and community dynamics, empowering and encouraging while demonstrating kindness and empathy goes a long way. It creates momentum and a sense of security for our families so they see that CFS is not always a bad thing but rather another supportive entity that is committed to the wellbeing of children and families.

Accomplishments

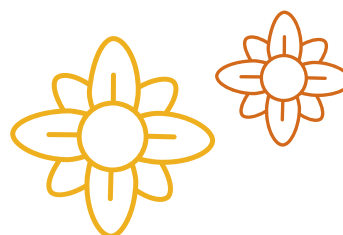
- Being creative and innovative when working with our families during a pandemic, teaching clients how to use zoom and other means of communicating and connecting
- Creating the CFS checklist tool for our parents/grandparents to use to determine if they are on the right path with their agency
- Increased our Individual Capacity Building Program services
- Networking with other organizations in order for our families to have additional and continued support
- Increased training and learning to better help our families

Goals and upcoming projects

Our goal is to have all of our parents and families educated on their rights and the law by continuing to provide support that will increase and enhance our parents' self-esteem, helping them learn the tools they need to advocate for themselves and providing ongoing support to all 34 southern First Nation communities with child welfare issues and concerns.

Upcoming projects:

- SCO resource guide
- Information videos on child welfare matters
- Applying First Nation Family laws



JUSTICE AND RIGHTS

The Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO) strives to support justice through traditional systems of governance and law. Our mandate is to reduce the overrepresentation of First Nation citizens within the Canadian and provincial criminal justice systems. Our justice team works every day to provide our community members with alternative measures for care that revolve around accountability and personal growth, rather than the current punitive measures of the colonial state. SCO's First Nations Justice Strategy is a community-based program that provides restorative justice and mediation services with professionalism, respect, and dedication to the wellbeing of our communities. As First Nation people, we carry the responsibility to care for our communities and view justice as a way to restore balance within our communities.

Part of our Restorative Justice Program involves directly serving six First Nations through Community Justice Workers (CJWs). The CJWs are in Brokenhead, Pinaymootang, Pine Creek, Sandy Bay, Sagkeeng, and Waywayseecappo, and they also serve Lake Manitoba, Lake St. Martin, Little Saskatchewan, Dauphin River, Skownan, O-Chi-Chak-Ko-Sipi, Black River, Long Plain, Ebb and Flow, and beyond.

The program receives pre- and post-diversions from the Crown Attorney, RCMP, First Nations Police Services, Winnipeg Police Services, Chief and Council, and self-referrals. Our goal is to assist First Nations in assuming greater responsibility for the administration of justice within their communities, creating justice services based on healing and the restoration of relationships.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The CJWs started the Restorative Justice Certificate Program in partnership with Assiniboine Community College in January 2020 and our team was able to complete the certificate program even though the COVID-19 pandemic shut down the program in March 2020 by continuing with the courses through a combination of virtual and in-person classes.
- The CJW's also successfully completed the Fundamentals of OCAP in December 2020 at Algonquin College.
- Throughout this pandemic year, the CJWs have been assisting their communities with numerous initiatives such as hamper preparation and delivery, Community Safety Committee, MMIWG Walk, virtual sharing circles, small gatherings of medicine picking and ceremony, and they have also been involved in providing prevention services related to mental health and addictions for those who have been struggling with the pandemic's effects.

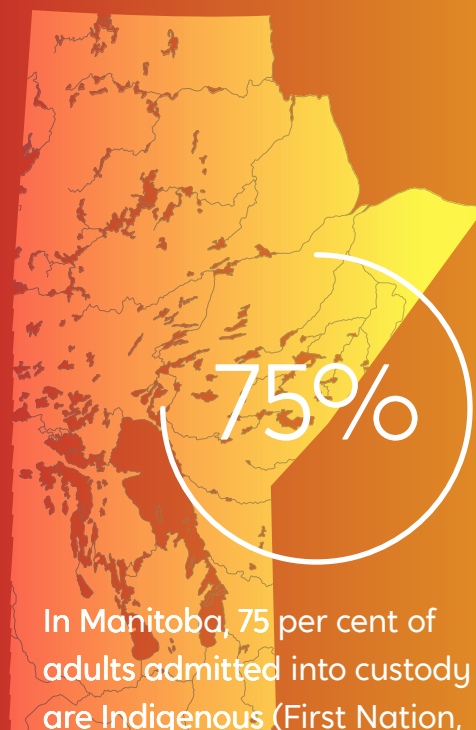


Anticipated highlights

It is anticipated that the 2021/2022 year is going to be an important time for the SCO Justice team. The ways in which we move forward and improve our programs and services will continue to put the health and safety of all staff and communities at the forefront.

The circuit courts in Manitoba have been responsive to the pandemic, ensuring the safety of communities but they have not been able to fully open. Once the courts can safely open, the CJWs will continue to advocate for their community members.

A new diversion program through the SCO Youth Empowerment Program is anticipated and the CJWs will be trained to facilitate this program for young people.



In Manitoba, 75 per cent of adults admitted into custody are Indigenous (First Nation, Métis, and Inuit). Over the last ten years, there has been a 60 per cent increase in the incarceration of Indigenous men and a 139 per cent increase in the incarceration of Indigenous women. Manitoba has the highest number of incarcerated Indigenous women and the highest youth incarceration rates in Canada (19 youth per 10,000 population).

THIS MUST CHANGE.

PROTECTING OUR SACRED WATERS AND ENVIRONMENT



Development of a First Nation Owned and Operated Water Authority

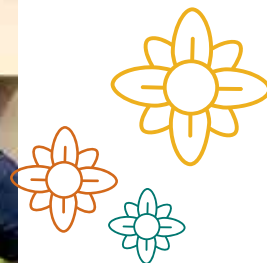
Through the leadership and instruction of the Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO) Chiefs' Water Committee, SCO is pursuing the development of a First Nation owned and operated water utility that will ultimately deliver drinking water and wastewater treatment services to SCO-member communities. The Environment Department is in the process of engaging SCO-member First Nations, Chiefs and Councils, Elders, and plant operators who will collectively advise and inform SCO on Water Authority development. The goal of the Water Authority is to develop a strong and robust Authority that will allow for member communities to plan, build, operate, and maintain their water treatment facilities and incorporate First Nation cultures at a foundational level.



Water Database to Protect Natural Water Sources

As part of the larger Water Authority initiative, SCO has continued to lead a project to monitor surface water to ensure its cleanliness and potability. To assist in the research and data collection, SCO and the Lake Winnipeg Indigenous Collective created a Water Working Group to provide a database of water-testing results from SCO-member First Nations that will be owned, controlled, and accessible to those communities. In 2020, the SCO team travelled to 25 communities to collect samples.

SCO-member First Nations will be able to use the results in the database to inform the decision-making process around water and its usage in their



“ If we want to see lasting and positive changes, then First Nations must have control over our own infrastructure, especially when it comes to high quality clean water.”

– GRAND CHIEF JERRY DANIELS



own region. Not having full information on water quality, combined with the exclusion of First Nations from the decision-making process, has led to harmful nutrient increases, creating unhealthy ecosystems that affect our drinking water and resulted in algae bloom growth, reduced oxygen, and toxicity that is harmful to aquatic life.

SCO is now testing over 100 water quality parameters using a combination of water sampling for lab analysis and in-situ water testing. We are expanding our capacity to build comprehensive Water Quality Monitoring Programs designed to meet the specific needs of individual communities.

All data is collected under OCAP principles and belongs to the Anishinaabe and Dakota Nations where it originated and they will have access to their own data in a protected database that will be wholly owned by them. The long-term goal of this project is to improve quality of southern First Nation water sources by informing leaders, strengthening partnerships, and promoting collaborative water governance in the region.

Two Path Management

SCO, Grand Council Treaty 3, and the International Institute for Sustainable Development continue to partner with local communities on a community-driven research project that focuses on watershed management planning in the Lake Winnipeg River Basin. The Two Path Management project aims to understand how First Nations view watershed management in the region and explore how Traditional Knowledge can work together with western knowledge to inform management practices.



The background of the page features a large, textured feathered headdress in shades of orange and red. In the top right corner, there are stylized white line drawings of flowers and leaves. The overall color scheme is warm, with various tones of orange and red.

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM

The Youth Empowerment Program (YEP) aims to address the over-incarceration of Indigenous youth in southern Manitoba. In late 2018, in partnership Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO), in partnership with the Winnipeg Foundation and the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg, came together to create YEP, a First Nation designed and delivered diversion program for youth who are involved with SCO's Restorative Justice Program. It will also serve as a crime prevention tool for urban and First Nation schools, organizations, and communities by providing healthy alternative spaces and programming for youth as well as opportunities that uplift our young people.



YEP will be used as an alternative measures condition to assist youth in initiating their healing journey and becoming healthy, self-empowered individuals. Traditional knowledge, such as the medicine wheel, will be utilized as a teaching tool to assist in holistic healing that will empower youth to become positive, self-determining individuals and role models within their peer groups.

YEP includes the Youth Empowerment Video series, which will help guide Indigenous youth on a personalized healing journey. It is designed to address root causes and build a plan towards self-identified goals. YEP will help identify those goals and provide a network of support to help youth take steps towards achieving meaningful success in their lives and keep them away from the criminal justice system.

The YEP committee consists of community members, students, and experts from different organizations across Manitoba, including the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg, Manitoba First Nations Police Services, Restorative Justice Association of Manitoba, University of Manitoba, University of Winnipeg, SCO Youth Council, Just TV, RCMP – Indigenous Policing Unit, and the Winnipeg Police Service – Indigenous Policing Unit. The YEP committee is charged with creating the terms of reference, overseeing the program content, providing resources, and promoting the program.

The Youth Programming and Engagement department is also looking into creating an SCO Youth Empowerment Awards evening where we will celebrate and reward the resiliency and brilliance of young people from the Anishinaabe and Dakota Nations.

SCO Community Justice Workers will deliver the diversion program in the SCO member communities in which they serve to help guide youth on their healing path. CJWs and SCO staff will facilitate workshops and development sessions on-reserve and in urban centres to provide healthy alternative spaces for youth to learn and engage with. YEP will also contract Anishinaabe and Dakota leadership, experts and community members to film content segments for the video series that will be produced for the diversion program.





Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc.

Consolidated Financial Statements

March 31, 2021

MNP

Management's Responsibility

To the Members of Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc.:

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the accompanying consolidated financial statements, including responsibility for significant accounting judgments and estimates in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations. This responsibility includes selecting appropriate accounting policies and methods, and making decisions affecting the measurement of transactions in which objective judgment is required.

In discharging its responsibilities for the integrity and fairness of the consolidated financial statements, management designs and maintains the necessary accounting systems and related internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that transactions are authorized, assets are safeguarded and financial records are properly maintained to provide reliable information for the preparation of consolidated financial statements.

The Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc. Finance Committee is responsible for overseeing management in the performance of its financial reporting responsibilities, and for approving the financial information included in the annual report. The Finance Committee fulfils these responsibilities by reviewing the financial information prepared by management and discussing relevant matters with management and external auditors. The Finance Committee is also responsible for recommending the appointment of the external auditors.

MNP LLP is appointed by the Finance Committee, on behalf of the Members, to audit the consolidated financial statements and report directly to them; their report follows. The external auditors have full and free access to, and meet periodically and separately with, both the Finance Committee and management to discuss their audit findings.



Brian Brown, Senior Financial Advisor



Joy Cramer, Chief Executive Officer



To the Members of Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc.:

We have audited the consolidated financial statements of Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc. (the "Organization"), which comprise the consolidated statement of financial position as at March 31, 2021 and March 31, 2020, and the consolidated statements of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the years then ended, and notes to the consolidated financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

Opinion

In our opinion, the accompanying consolidated financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the consolidated financial position of the Organization as at March 31, 2021 and March 31, 2020, and the results of its consolidated operations and its consolidated cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Other Matter

The Organization prepares two sets of financial statements. One is prepared on a consolidated basis and the other is prepared on a non-consolidated basis, as explained in the accompanying notes in each set of financial statements. This Independent Auditor's Report refers only to the consolidated financial statements as explained in the *Opinion* paragraph above.

Other Information

Management is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, but does not include the consolidated financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The annual report is expected to be made available to us after the date of the auditor's report.

Our opinion on the consolidated financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance or conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the consolidated financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information identified above when it becomes available and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the consolidated financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

When we read the annual report, if we conclude that there is material misstatement therein, we are required to communicate the matter to those charged with governance.

Responsibilities of Management for the Consolidated Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the consolidated financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of consolidated financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the consolidated financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Organization or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.



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Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Consolidated Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the consolidated financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these consolidated financial statements.

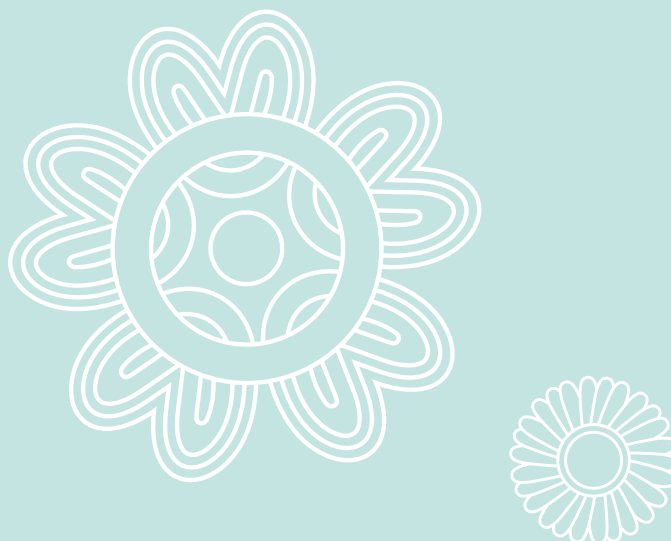
As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the consolidated financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Organization's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the consolidated financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Organization to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the consolidated financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the consolidated financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.
- Obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the financial information of the entities or business activities within the Organization to express an opinion on the consolidated financial statements. We are responsible for the direction, supervision and performance of the group audit. We remain solely responsible for our audit opinion.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Winnipeg, Manitoba

July 21, 2021



MNP
LLP


Chartered Professional Accountants

Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc.
Consolidated Statement of Financial Position

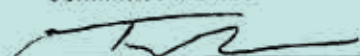
As at March 31, 2021

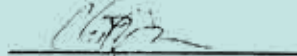
	2021	2020
Assets		
Current		
Cash	7,678,075	2,913,858
Accounts receivable (Note 3)	1,437,458	2,432,341
Prepaid expenses and deposits	56,504	149,671
	9,172,037	5,495,870
Capital assets (Note 4)	143,030	1,171,687
Due from Agencies (Note 5)	4,999,590	5,717,026
	14,314,657	12,384,583
Liabilities		
Current		
Accounts payable and accruals (Note 6)	799,956	1,903,591
Deferred contributions (Note 7)	6,863,880	4,076,827
Due to Government of Canada (Note 8)	110,789	110,789
Capital lease obligations	-	77,583
	7,774,625	6,168,790
Due to Province of Manitoba (Note 5)	5,717,026	5,717,026
	13,491,651	11,885,816
Contingencies (Note 9)		
Net Assets (Deficit)		
Unrestricted	679,976	(672,920)
Invested in capital assets	143,030	1,171,687
	823,006	498,767
	14,314,657	12,384,583

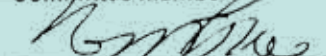
Approved on behalf of the Finance Committee



 Committee member


 Committee member


 Committee member


 Committee member


 Committee member


 Committee member

Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc.

Consolidated Statement of Operations

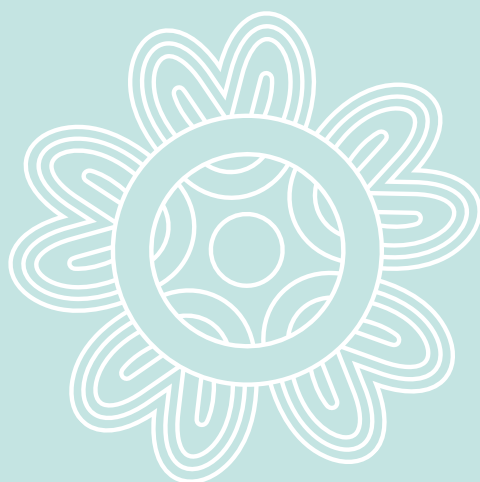
For the year ended March 31, 2021

	2021	2020
Revenue		
Province of Manitoba (Note 10)	167,555,541	94,263,813
Government of Canada (Note 11)	7,420,309	5,665,950
Other (Note 12)	1,745,123	2,206,373
	176,720,973	102,136,136
Expenses		
Community programming and support services (Note 13)	5,155,540	4,391,257
Payments to Member First Nations (Note 14)	2,551,096	1,790,000
Family services administration	3,527,269	4,966,285
Family services education and training	665,179	312,943
Family services agency funding	162,183,373	88,740,252
Family services programming	1,176,637	2,098,447
Amortization	46,675	358,250
	175,305,769	102,657,434
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses before other items	1,415,204	(521,298)
Other items		
Loss on disposal of capital assets (Note 15)	(1,090,965)	-
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	324,239	(521,298)



Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc.
Consolidated Statement of Changes in Net Assets
For the year ended March 31, 2021

	<i>Unrestricted</i>	<i>Invested in capital assets</i>	<i>2021</i>	<i>2020</i>
Net assets (deficit), beginning of year	(672,920)	1,171,687	498,767	1,020,065
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	370,914	(46,675)	324,239	(521,298)
Purchase of capital assets	(108,983)	108,983	-	-
Loss on disposal of assets	1,090,965	(1,090,965)	-	-
Net assets, end of year	679,976	143,030	823,006	498,767



Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc.

Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended March 31, 2021

	2021	2020
Cash provided by (used for) the following activities		
Operating		
Excess of revenue over expenses	324,239	(521,298)
Amortization	46,675	358,250
Loss on disposal of assets	1,090,965	-
	1,461,879	(163,048)
Changes in working capital accounts		
Due from agencies	717,436	-
Accounts receivable	994,883	(739,609)
Prepaid expenses and deposits	93,167	129,377
Accounts payable and accruals	(1,103,636)	(1,400)
Deferred contributions	2,787,053	838,712
	4,950,782	64,032
Investing		
Purchase of tangible capital assets	(108,982)	(92,454)
Draw of restricted cash	-	50,000
	(108,982)	(42,454)
Financing		
Repayment of capital lease	(77,583)	(82,118)
Increase (decrease) in cash resources	4,764,217	(60,540)
Cash resources, beginning of year	2,913,858	3,121,601
Cash resources, end of year	7,678,075	2,913,858



1. Incorporation and nature of the organization

Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc. (the "Organization") was established in March 1999, is located in the Province of Manitoba, and provides various services to its 34 Members (34 southern First Nations) which are represented by the Chiefs of those 34 First Nations. The Organization is a not-for-profit organization incorporated without share capital. The Organization is exempt from income taxes under Section 149 of The Income Tax Act. In order to maintain its status as a registered not for profit organization under The Income Tax Act, the Organization must meet certain requirements specified within The Income Tax Act. It is the opinion of management that these requirements have been met.

2. Significant accounting policies

These consolidated financial statements are the representations of management, prepared in accordance with Canadian not for profit accounting standards and include the following significant accounting policies:

Basis of accounting

The Organization controls Southern First Nations Network of Care ("SFNNC") by virtue of the Executive Committee's ability to appoint the Board of Directors of SFNNC. These consolidated financial statements include the balances and transactions of SFNNC.

The First Nations of Southern Manitoba Child and Family Services Authority was incorporated on November 24, 2003 under the Province of Manitoba through The Child and Family Services Authority Act, S.M. 2002, c. 35 excerpt section 20; the Act came into force by proclamation on November 24, 2003. On November 15, 2015, the legal name was changed to Southern First Nations Network of Care ("SFNNC"). SFNNC was established as a not-for-profit organization with the responsibility for administering and providing for the delivery of a system of child and family services to First Nations people who are members of the southern First Nations and other persons who are identified with those southern First Nations. SFNNC is a non-profit organization and as such is exempt from income taxes under The Income Tax Act.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include balances with banks and short-term investments with maturities of three months or less. Cash subject to restrictions that prevent its use for current purposes is included in restricted cash.

Capital assets

Purchased capital assets are recorded at cost. Contributed capital assets are recorded at fair value at the date of contribution if fair value can be reasonably determined.

Amortization is provided using the straight-line method at the following rates intended to amortize the cost of assets over their estimated useful lives:

Computers		3 years
Furniture		3 years
Leasehold improvements	over the term of the lease	3 years

Long-lived assets

Long-lived assets consist of capital assets. Long-lived assets held for use are measured and amortized as described in the applicable accounting policies.

When the Organization determines that a long-lived asset no longer has any long-term service potential to the Organization, the excess of its net carrying amount over any residual value is recognized as an expense in the consolidated statement of operations. Write-downs are not reversed.



2. Significant accounting policies *(Continued from previous page)*

Revenue recognition

The Organization follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions. Externally restricted contributions are recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured.

Restricted investment income is recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. Unrestricted investment income is recognized as revenue when earned.

Other revenue is recognized when services have been provided and collectability is reasonably assured.

Measurement uncertainty (use of estimates)

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the consolidated financial statements, and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period.

Accounts receivable and due from agencies are stated after evaluation as to their collectability and an appropriate allowance for doubtful accounts is provided where considered necessary. Amortization is based on the estimated useful lives of capital assets. Deferred revenue is based on management's analysis of the extent to which qualifying expenses have been incurred with respect to restricted contributions.

These estimates and assumptions are reviewed periodically and, as adjustments become necessary they are reported in excess of revenues and expenses in the periods in which they become known.

Financial instruments

The Organization recognizes its financial instruments when the Organization becomes party to the contractual provisions of the financial instrument. All financial instruments are initially recorded at their fair value, including financial assets and liabilities originated and issued in a related party transaction with management. Financial assets and liabilities originated and issued in all other related party transactions are initially measured at their carrying or exchange amount in accordance with Section 3840 *Related Party Transactions* (See Note 16).

At initial recognition, the Organization may irrevocably elect to subsequently measure any financial instrument at fair value. The Organization has not made the election during the year. All financial assets and liabilities are subsequently measured at amortized cost.

Transaction costs and financing fees directly attributable to the origination, acquisition, issuance or assumption of financial instruments subsequently measured at fair value are immediately recognized in the statement of operations for the current period. Conversely, transaction costs and financing fees are added to the carrying amount for those financial instruments subsequently measured at cost or amortized cost.

Employee future benefits

The Organization's employee future benefit programs consist of defined contribution pension plan. The Organization contributions to the defined contribution plan are expensed as incurred. Employer expense for the year is \$470,325 (2020 - \$280,138).

2. Significant accounting policies *(Continued from previous page)*

Contributed materials

Contributions of materials and services are recognized both as contributions and expenses in the consolidated statement of operations when a fair value can be reasonably estimated and when the materials are used in the normal course of the Organization's operations and would otherwise have been purchased.

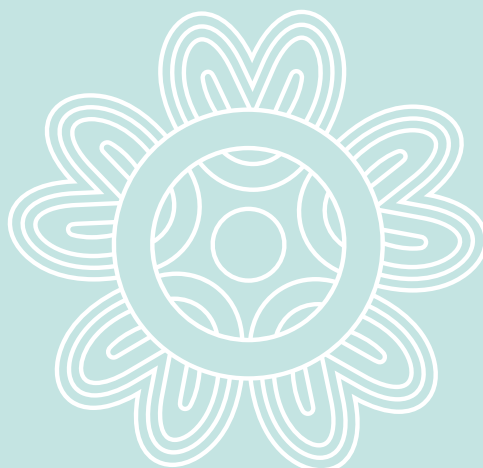
Leases

A lease that transfers substantially all of the benefits and risks of ownership is classified as a capital lease. At the inception of a capital lease, an asset and a payment obligation are recorded at an amount equal to the lesser of the present value of the minimum lease payments and the property's fair market value. All other leases are accounted for as operating leases and rental payments are expensed as incurred.

3. Accounts receivable

	2021	2020
Accounts receivable	1,221,003	2,178,800
GST receivable	20,199	45,818
Due from Southern Chiefs Economic Development Corporation	220,675	232,142
	1,461,877	2,456,760
Allowance for doubtful accounts	(24,419)	(24,419)
	1,437,458	2,432,341

The Organization is related to the Southern Chiefs Economic Development Corporation as disclosed in Note 16.



Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc.
Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements
For the year ended March 31, 2021

4. Capital assets

	Cost	Accumulated amortization	2021 Net book value
Computers	347,696	239,972	107,724
Furniture	323,925	297,312	26,613
Leasehold improvements	48,955	40,262	8,693
	720,576	577,546	143,030

	Cost	Accumulated amortization	2020 Net book value
Computers	4,428,633	3,738,636	689,997
Furniture	323,924	284,006	39,918
Leasehold improvements	894,882	453,110	441,772
	5,647,439	4,475,752	1,171,687

5. Due from Agencies and Due to Province of Manitoba

The Province of Manitoba advanced the Organization a working capital advance in the amount of \$5,717,026 (2020 - \$5,717,026), which in turn was advanced by the Organization to the agencies. The advances are repayable by the Organization if the Organization's operations cease. Due to the single envelope funding, some agencies have started paying off their advances. The amounts due from the agencies and due to the Province of Manitoba have no fixed terms of repayment and are non-interest bearing. Included in cash is \$717,436 received from two Agencies which is to be held as restricted cash.

	2021	2020
Animikii-Ozoon Child and Family Services	1,204,000	1,204,000
Child and Family All Nations Coordinated Response Network	-	55,400
Dakota Ojibway Child and Family Services	689,610	689,610
Intertribal Child and Family Services	121,030	121,030
Peguis Child and Family Services	221,820	221,820
Sandy Bay Child and Family Services	158,700	158,700
Sagkeeng Child and Family Services	-	662,036
Southeast Child and Family Services	1,368,830	1,368,830
West Region Child and Family Services	1,235,600	1,235,600
	4,999,590	5,717,026

6. Accounts payable and accruals

	2021	2020
Trade payables	450,230	1,219,850
Accruals	302,733	610,372
Government remittances payable	46,993	73,369
	799,956	1,903,591

Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc.
Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements
For the year ended March 31, 2021

7. Deferred contributions

	2021	2020
Government of Canada	5,078,509	2,421,053
Province of Manitoba	1,653,732	1,581,148
Other	131,639	74,626
	6,863,880	4,076,827

8. Due to Government of Canada

The Organization has recorded an amount repayable to the Government of Canada because the Government of Canada has required repayment of restricted contributions.

In each case, the Government of Canada has either:

- Deemed certain expenses of the Organization to be ineligible uses of funding provided, or
- Has recognized particular restricted contributions as unspent during a particular allowable time period.

The amounts due to the Government of Canada are non-interest bearing and terms of repayment have not been established.

9. Contingencies

The Organization is subject to funding recoveries according to their agreements with federal and provincial government departments. At year-end, it was not yet determined to what extent any funding amounts related to the year ending March 31, 2021 might be recovered by these departments.

The Organization has been named as a defendant in five claims. These claims remain at an early stage, and as litigation is subject to many uncertainties, it is not possible to predict the ultimate outcome of these lawsuits or to estimate the loss, if any, which may result. No accrual has been made related to these claims.

10. Province of Manitoba

	2021	2020
Revenue recognized in accordance with funding agreements		
Revenue as per Province of Manitoba confirmation	167,347,591	93,197,756
Department of Indigenous and Northern Relations	70,000	70,000
Department of Justice	249,000	268,000
	167,666,591	93,535,756
Add:		
CSA withheld from operating grants	1,199,994	899,996
Deferred revenue recognized during the year	74,917	101,942
	1,274,911	1,001,938
Deduct:		
Funding of prior year accounts receivable	-	(198,964)
Revenue deferred during the year	(185,967)	(74,917)
CSA withheld from operating grants	(1,199,994)	-
	(1,385,961)	(273,881)
	167,555,541	94,263,813

Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc.
Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended March 31, 2021

11. Government of Canada

	2021	2020
Revenue recognized in accordance with funding agreements		
Health Canada	2,326,000	2,027,565
Indigenous Services Canada	7,408,466	2,987,456
Justice Canada	244,545	433,708
Environment Canada	2,428	417,588
Status of Women Canada	-	150,000
	9,981,439	6,016,317
Revenue deferred in prior year		
Natural Resources Canada	-	5,902
Indigenous Services Canada	1,251,671	543,319
Status of Women Canada	124,562	91,747
Health Canada	880,727	1,429,718
Environmental Assessment	164,093	-
	2,421,053	2,070,686
Revenue deferred to subsequent year		
Health Canada	(898,801)	(880,727)
Indigenous Services Canada	(4,016,757)	(1,251,671)
Status of Women Canada	-	(124,562)
Environmental Assessment	(66,625)	(164,093)
	(4,982,183)	(2,421,053)
	7,420,309	5,665,950

12. Other revenue

	2021	2020
Funding provided during the year	1,798,085	1,958,959
Revenue deferred in prior year	74,626	322,040
Revenue deferred in subsequent year	(127,588)	(74,626)
	1,745,123	2,206,373

13. Community programming and support services

	2021	2020
Promotion	318,606	18,578
Professional fees	628,906	426,809
Travel, meetings and honoraria	468,268	1,096,906
Salaries and benefits	3,113,860	2,070,044
Other	625,900	778,920
	5,155,540	4,391,257



Southern Chiefs' Organization Inc.
Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements
For the year ended March 31, 2021

14. Payments to Member First Nations

	2021	2020
Health Transformation Initiative	891,959	1,150,000
Community engagement survey on Child and Family Services law development	85,000	400,000
COVID-19	1,574,137	240,000
	2,551,096	1,790,000

15. Loss on disposal of capital assets

During the year, the Organization recognized impairment on capital assets that no longer had long-term service potential to the Organization.

16. Related party transactions

The Southern Chiefs Economic Development Corporation (SCEDC) is considered to be a related party due to similar composition of senior management and governance. Included in other revenue is \$nil (2020 - \$140,000) received from SCEDC. Included in community programming and support services expenses is an amount of \$nil (2020 - \$290,000) paid to SCEDC for the purpose of initiating economic development opportunities on behalf of Member First Nations. These transactions were recorded at the exchange amount which is the amount established and agreed to by the related parties.

17. Commitments

The Organization has entered into various lease agreements with estimated minimum annual payments as follows:

2022	338,932
2023	80,540
2024	8,884
2025	3,237
	431,593

18. Economic dependence

The Organization receives a significant portion of its revenue from the Government of Canada and the Province of Manitoba. The Organization's ability to continue viable operations is dependent upon the continued financial commitments of the Government of Canada and the Province of Manitoba.

19. Financial instruments

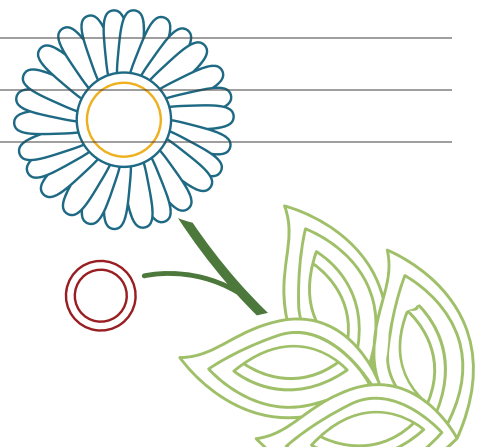

The Organization, as part of its operations, carries a number of financial instruments. It is management's opinion that the Organization is not exposed to significant interest, currency, credit, liquidity or other price risks arising from these financial instruments except as otherwise disclosed.



NOTES

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NOTES





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