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The Names of a Healthier Future

Health Transformation News Update: August 11th, 2022

Health Transformation at the Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO) is a community driven initiative that is all about creating a new and improved First Nations Health system for southern First Nations in Manitoba. Community priorities highlighted the need for a separate, independent, and decolonized First Nations Health 'Authority' led by southern First Nations for First Nations that will work with First Nation partners and all orders of government to close the health gap between Manitobans and First Nations citizens. The naming ceremony is part of this decolonization process, as calling this future transformed Health Care System a "Southern First Nations Authority" is colonial, a point strongly iterated by our Elders and Knowledge Keepers who help lead the Health Transformation process. The naming ceremony celebrated Indigenous worldview and the importance of language and culture in Indigenous Health and informs the spirit of the transformed Health System we are working toward. Long Plain First Nation and Dakota Tipi First Nation were the hosts for the event.

Confronting systems that have historically hurt First Nation communities is part of the work of Health Transformation and to this end, the front lawn of a former Residential School building in Long Plains First Nation was a fitting place to announce the names for the future southern First Nations Health System. There, our elders gathered around in a sharing circle along with Long Plain First Nation's Chief Kyra Wilson, SCO Grand Chief Jerry Daniels, various members of the Health Transformation Chiefs' Health Action Table, Community Health Transformation Liaisons, First Nation community members, health experts, and various members of the Health Transformation team for this important step in the Health Transformation journey.

The names of the future Health care system are as follows-

In Dakota:

Wicoznani hduha mani (Walk With Health)

In Anishinaabemowin:

O-Nii-Gah-Neek Mino Ayawin (Leaders In Health)

In 2019, the SCO Chiefs-in-Summit passed a resolution supporting the Health Transformation process called "Exercising our Treaty and Inherent Right to Health". In June 2020, SCO signed a memorandum of understanding with Canada to work together to transform the health care system for southern First Nations. In 2021, the SCO Chiefs-in-Summit passed a resolution to support a Health Transformation Action Plan to fulfill First Nation priorities for an Agreement-in-Principle. In June of 2022, a joint announcement was made bringing the provincial government into the Health Transformation process, with Manitoba committing to developing an Agreement-in-Principle with Canada and SCO. This First Nations led tripartite table will result in the formation of a southern First Nation health system that will launch later in the year. A bigger launch of the name and complete brand will also follow at this time. SCO is deeply grateful to our Knowledge Keepers for guiding this process.

To connect with our Elders and Knowledge Keepers Committee, please email health@scoinc.mb.ca or call 204.946.1869. For more information on SCO's Health Transformation process, please visit our [website](#).

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The Southern Chiefs' Organization represents 34 First Nations and more than 81,500 citizens in what is now called southern Manitoba. SCO is an independent political organization that protects, preserves, promotes, and enhances First Nations peoples' inherent rights, languages, customs, and traditions through the application and implementation of the spirit and intent of the Treaty-making process.