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ON AUGUST 10th LET'S WALK TOGETHER FOR OUR HEALTH

SCO TO HOST COMMUNITY HEALTH WALKS AS MEMBER NATIONS MOVE TOWARD A NEW SOUTHERN FIRST NATION HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 3, 2022

ANISHINAABE AND DAKOTA TERRITORY, MB – The Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO) Health Transformation process is launching a community health campaign and walk aimed at promoting unity in health care across southern First Nations.

“This public education strategy is focused on providing Anishinaabe and Dakota Nations with the opportunity to share information about what adequate and culturally-informed health care looks like,” said SCO Grand Chief Jerry Daniels. “It is also a chance to have the voices and knowledge of our communities drive the development of a southern First Nations Health care system.”

The goal of the community-based 5 kilometre walk is to demonstrate alignment on the building of a new Anishinaabe and Dakota health care system that will address system inequities. This new health care system is being built on a foundation of culture that follows ancestral ways in balance with Western medicine, ensuring optimal health. Walks will be held on August 10th in the following communities:

- Dakota Tipi First Nation
- Ebb and Flow First Nation (**August 9th*)
- Lake Manitoba First Nation
- O-Chi-Chak-Ko-Sipi First Nation
- Pinaymootang First Nation
- Roseau River Anishinabe First Nation
- Sagkeeng Anicinabe First Nation
- Skownan First Nation
- Waywayseecappo First Nation

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The theme of the multiple community walks focus on First Nation teachings of land-based healing such as:

- We Walk to Honour Our Lands: our lands feed, nourishes, and heals our bodies, spirits, and minds.
- We Walk for Our Ancestors: sacred teachings passed down to us by our Ancestors provide us with everything we need for a full, healthy, and balanced life.
- We Walk for Family: healthy families are the foundation of thriving, connected communities.

There is currently a documented 11 year and growing gap in life expectancy between First Nation citizens and all others living in Manitoba. In June of 2022, SCO announced an historic Agreement-in-Principle with Manitoba joining Canada and SCO to create a tripartite table that will result in the formation of a southern First Nation health authority to launch in the next year.

“The community health walk campaign is centered on First Nations values of healthy relationships with our lands, our people, our ancestral knowledge, and our familial responsibilities,” added Grand Chief Daniels. “We encourage all citizens to join us for these walks or to create their own, and to remember to take time for themselves to get out and be active.”

“The health of our people, families and land is what drives our work in Health Transformation,” says Chief Derek Cook, Chair of the Chiefs Health Action Table. “Join us by getting out to a walk to show your support for strengthening our health through an Anishinaabe and Dakota healthcare system that is made by our people.”

To connect with one of the community walk organizers, 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.

For Media Inquiries:

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