

Head Office

Swan Lake First Nation 195-300 Alpine Way, Headingley, MB R4H 0E1

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SCO Set to Host Health Gathering Featuring International Speakers to Share Knowledge

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 29, 2024

ANISHINAABE AND DAKOTA TERRITORY, MB — The Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO) is pleased to announce the "Achieving Reconciliation: First Nations Health Gathering" set to take place at the RBC Convention Centre on Treaty One Territory in Winnipeg, Manitoba from March 19 to 21, 2024. The gathering will feature speakers from Canada, the United States, and as far away as Australia.

"The Southern Chiefs' Organization is transforming the healthcare system by decolonizing the healthcare field and bringing it back into the hands of Dakota and Anishinaabe people, where it belongs. We want to build on our collective learnings by creating space to share best-practices and lessons learned. Our goal is to bring together citizens who are actively working within the healthcare field where speakers from different parts of the world can share emerging trends. This knowledge will help us build a stronger and more holistic system that is ultimately responsive to the distinct needs of the 34 SCO member Nations," said **Grand Chief Jerry Daniels**.

The gathering is geared towards SCO member First Nations Chief and Councils, Elders and Knowledge Keepers, health directors, and other health care professionals. We also encourage leaders in various sectors, organizations, governments, partners, and individuals committed to First Nations' right to health to attend. The event is free for citizens of SCO member Nations who are involved in the health sector. There is a cost for non-SCO members to attend the gathering. Spaces are limited.

Guests and speakers include:

- the Honourable **Uzoma Asagwara**, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health, Seniors and Long-term Care for Manitoba;
- **Dr. Phil Fontaine**, former National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations and a member of Sagkeeng Anicinabe Nation; and,
- SCO Community Ambassador and member of Pine Creek First Nation, **Kevin Chief**.

International speakers include:

- **Stacy A. Bohlen**, a citizen of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the National Indian Health Board;

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- **Mick Gooda**, Ghungalu and Yiman, who has spent the last 30 years advocating for the rights of Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander Australians, including as CEO of the Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal Health and as Co-Chair of the Treaty Advancement Committee; and,
- **Sue-Anne Hunter**, a proud Wurundjeri and Ngu rai Illum Wurrung woman, Deputy Chair and Commissioner of Australia's first truth telling process – the Yoorrook Justice Commission, and a member of the National Centre for Reconciliation, Truth, and Justice Advisory Board.

A broad range of globally acclaimed panelists will cover topics such as:

- colonialism and First Nations health;
- legal liability for colonial consequences;
- decolonizing institutionalized determinants of health;
- cultural reclamation and health;
- structural and transformative change;
- working towards reconciliation on First Nations health;
- transforming First Nations health through a rights-based approach;
- transforming health care through policy and partnerships;
- youth and reconciliation;
- dealing with health crises through decolonization;
- intergenerational trauma and addictions; and
- exploring the concept of “Indigegogy” and gender wellness from First Nations perspectives.

There will also be an evening reception on March 20th, 2024, where participants will have an opportunity to network, meet and greet the various speakers, and enjoy a cultural performance by local artists.

"Through collaborative efforts with our provincial and federal Treaty partners, SCO aims to achieve health reconciliation and ensure health services for our citizens are culturally responsive and reflective of regional differences," shared **Chief Gordon Bluesky**, Chair of the SCO Chiefs' Health Action Table and Chief of Brokenhead Ojibway Nation. "Our health transformation work seeks to reduce the 11-year and growing gap in life expectancy between First Nation citizens and all others living in Manitoba. I encourage First Nations leadership and all healthcare professionals to attend this gathering to learn more about the role reconciliation can play in a transformed health system."

For more information on “SCO's Achieving Reconciliation: First Nations Health Gathering,” and to register please [visit our website](#).

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The Southern Chiefs' Organization represents 34 First Nations and more than 87,000 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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