

Northern First Nations Health Partnership Committee Communique

September 13, 2013

September 2013 marked a full year of the Northern First Nations Health Partnership Committee (NFNHPC) working together; much has been accomplished in the past year. We have learned more about each other and each other's health care realities, approved our terms of reference, identified priorities, and most recently officially adopted the draft *Northern First Nations Health and Wellness Plan*!

The overall purpose of the NFNHPC is to collaborate in the planning, implementation and evaluation of health services designed to improve health outcomes for First Nations peoples residing in the North. With the committee approving the draft *Health and Wellness Plan* as an "evergreen" document, the initial planning is now complete. A copy of this document will be presented to the Tripartite Committee on First Nations Health on September 26, 2013. Support of the document will be sought from the Northern Chiefs at the Gathering Wisdom for a Shared Journey VI, October 22-24, 2013 in Vancouver and from the Northern Health Board of Directors at their October 24, 2013 Board Meeting. Once their approval has been gained, we can move forward with implementation.

The *Health and Wellness Plan* identifies four broad themes containing 12 goals along with associated objectives and implementation activities. These goals align with the Health Actions identified in the Tripartite First Nations Health Plan and, at times overlap and support each other. Consideration is also given to four cross-cutting themes: urban – away from home; regional rural and remoteness factors; social determinants of health; and traditional approaches and practices. At September's meeting the committee prioritized the goals identifying: cultural competency, primary health care, public and population health, and mental wellness and substance use as their working priorities for the upcoming year.

Mark Matthew, First Nations Health Authority's (FNHA) Acting Director Community Engagement, presented the "*2013 Guidebook: Building Blocks for Transformation*" and discussed how the FNHA, First Nations Health Council and the First Nations Health Directors Association are working out the next steps in transformation. He also shared the document "*A Year in Transition: 2013-2014 Interim Health Plan Overview*" and provided information on how the planning process will be rolled out over the next five years in order to create a common understanding of how best to support BC First Nations' health goals and priorities amongst all the regions. In addition, Mark shared the FNHA Functional Organizational chart noting the names of the people who fill senior positions and their areas of responsibility.

Northern Health tabled a draft *Issues Management Procedure* as a guide for service improvement which includes steps to follow to address client/patient issues or concerns.

The committee welcomed Therese Hagen as Northwest Technical Representative to the committee and acknowledged the valuable contributions of Freddie Louie who has completed her term. Also welcomed to the technical team is Bonnie Greer replacing Joan Greenlees who is retiring. Joan was thanked and given many well wishes for her retirement.

In closing, Warner Adam reminded everyone that "wellness is the responsibility of all."