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Office of the Premier
Health Canada
First Nations Leadership Council

COMMITMENT TO IMPROVE FIRST NATIONS HEALTH & WELLNESS

VANCOUVER – An agreement signed today between the Government of British Columbia, the First Nations Leadership Council, and the Government of Canada renews a commitment to improve the health of First Nations people and their communities in B.C.

The memorandum of understanding supports the First Nations Health Plan also released today. The MOU was signed by Premier Campbell, the First Nations Leadership Council and federal Health Minister Tony Clement. The First Nations Leadership Council is composed of the BC Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Summit and Union of BC Indian Chiefs.

“The agreement signed today signals the beginning of an important partnership to significantly improve the health of First Nations people in B.C.,” said Campbell. “Signing the agreement is part of the Province’s commitment to closing the social and economic gaps between First Nations and other British Columbians by 2015.”

“The memorandum of understanding signals the start of a new era in improving the health of First Nations people in areas such as mental health, suicide and chronic health diseases,” said BC Assembly of First Nations Regional Chief Shawn Atleo. “First Nations’ leaders and communities are committed to working with all levels of government towards closing the health gap.”

The partners will use the bilateral First Nations Health Plan as a framework for developing a tripartite 10-year health implementation strategy to close the gap in health outcomes between First Nations people and other British Columbians.

“The tripartite agreement establishes and defines a collaborative and coordinated partnership for improving the health of First Nations people and their communities in British Columbia,” said Clement. “Only by working together, can we achieve real, meaningful improvements to health programs and services.”

The memorandum of understanding outlines four areas for collaboration:

- Governance, Relationships and Accountability;
- Health Promotion / Disease and Injury Prevention;
- Health Services; and,
- Performance Tracking

The three parties will next enter into negotiations to develop the tripartite implementation strategy for the health component by May 2007.

A copy of the memorandum of understanding is available on the B.C. Ministry of Health website at http://www.healthservices.gov.bc.ca/cpa/publications/first_nations_mou.pdf.

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