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## BACKGROUND

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Office of the Premier  
Ministry of Health  
First Nations Leadership Council

### FIRST NATIONS HEALTH PLAN

In March 2005, the Province and the First Nations Leadership Council entered into a New Relationship based on the principles of mutual respect, recognition and reconciliation. As part of this work the parties have been working together to find solutions to close the gaps in the quality of life that exist between First Nations and other British Columbians.

The First Nations Health Plan is based on the B.C. First Nations Health Blueprint and the Transformative Change Accord, and contains 29 actions in four areas where First Nations and the Province will collaborate to close the health status gap.

Examples of actions are:

#### **1. Governance, Relationships and Accountability**

- The parties will establish a Provincial First Nation Health Advisory Committee to review and monitor health authorities' Aboriginal health plans and recommend actions.
- The Provincial Health Officer will appoint an Aboriginal physician who will advise on Aboriginal health issues and report on the health of Aboriginal people in B.C.
- The First Nations Leadership Council will establish a First Nations Health Council to represent health priorities and provide leadership and accountability.
- A provincewide Health Partners Group will be established to include First Nations, federal and provincial governments, colleges, universities and health practitioners/ professional groups to share information and make recommendations on closing the gap in health.

**By 2015, First Nations will have greater input to, and be involved in decision-making for, health planning and service delivery for First Nations.**

#### **2. Health Promotion / Disease and Injury Prevention**

- The Minister of State for ActNow BC, Gordon Hogg, will work with First Nations communities, the National Collaborating Centre on Aboriginal Health, and health authorities to develop an ActNow BC program specifically focused on Aboriginal people.
- Aboriginal people will have access to healing circles, cultural camps and counselling programs to address adult mental health, substance abuse and young adult suicide.
- First Nations and the Province will work to develop new culturally appropriate addictions beds/units for Aboriginal people.
- All Aboriginal children under age six (on and off-reserve) will receive hearing, dental and vision screening.

**By 2015, First Nations communities will deliver improved health promotion, and disease and injury prevention services to address key preventable diseases.**

### **3. Health Services: equitable access to quality, culturally appropriate health services.**

- The Province will build a health centre in Lytton, which will help integrate a number of services and better meet the needs of First Nations and other area residents.
- Support will be provided to First Nations people living with chronic health conditions such as diabetes and hepatitis C by introducing integrated primary health services programs and patient self-management programs.
- First Nations and the Province want to create a fully integrated clinical telehealth network that will link remote First Nations' health centres to a comprehensive health authority telehealth network.
- Access to primary health care services in Aboriginal health and healing centres will be improved by further developing the role of the Nurse Practitioner and enabling greater physician participation.
- Each regional health authority will increase the number of First Nations people they hire in health professions.
- The Province will improve maternal health services for First Nations women by expanding the maternity care available in rural and remote communities.

**By 2015, health services will be more culturally sensitive, better tailored to the specific needs of First Nations communities and more often delivered by First Nations health professionals.**

### **4. Performance Tracking**

- The First Nations Leadership Council and the provincial government will improve data collection to help First Nations communities and health providers plan health services and monitor changes in health status.
- The Provincial Health Officer will issue Aboriginal Health status reports every five years with interim updates every two years.

**By 2015, British Columbia and First Nations will have improved health status and health care information for all Aboriginal people.**

Media contact: Dale Steeves  
Communications Director  
Office of the Premier  
250 361-7783

Marisa Adair  
Communications Director  
Ministry of Health  
250 920-8500 (cell)

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