



News Release

For immediate release

Mi'kmaq Chiefs, Government of Canada, and Nova Scotia sign trilateral Memorandum of Understanding to advance Mi'kmaq health and wellness

April 21, 2023 — Millbrook First Nation, Traditional unceded Mi'kma'ki territory, Nova Scotia — Indigenous Services Canada

Today, thirteen Mi'kmaq First Nation Chiefs, Federal Minister of Indigenous Services Patty Hajdu, and Nova Scotia Minister of Health and Wellness Michelle Thompson signed a trilateral Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on the next steps to help transform the design and delivery of health services for Mi'kmaq throughout the province of Nova Scotia.

This agreement has been in development since spring 2022 and defines a set of priorities and outlines the process required to transfer the design and delivery of federal health services to the Mi'kmaq through Tajikeyimik. Working on behalf of the Mi'kmaq in Nova Scotia, Tajikeyimik is a Mi'kmaq health and wellness organization that is guided by the 13 Chiefs and Health Directors in the province and the Mi'kmaq Grand Council.

Health Transformation is about redesigning health care delivery models to meet First Nations communities' specific needs. This MOU will improve access to high-quality and culturally-safe health care services, led by First Nations for First Nations, and create a roadmap to close the gap in health outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians.

Following the signing of this agreement, Mi'kmaq Chiefs, the Government of Canada and the Government of Nova Scotia will work towards the negotiation of a Framework Agreement. This will set out the necessary actions to complete the Health Transformation process over the next several years.

Today's agreement captures a shared vision to improve health outcomes and the well-being of Mi'kmaq in Nova Scotia.

Quotes

"By signing this MOU today, the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia, the Government of Canada and the Government of Nova Scotia are demonstrating that we are walking the path of health transformation hand-in-hand. We are all committed to transferring control of the design and delivery of federal health and wellness services and

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programs to the Mi'kmaq; and transforming and creating a new system that is Mi'kmaq-led, culturally safe, comprehensive and trauma-informed. Together, with our health system partners, we will improve the health and wellness of our people, our communities and our Nation. Elukuti'kw wjit naji-wlo'ltinenew utanminal."

Chief Andrea Paul
 Pictou Landing First Nation
 Lead Chief, Health Portfolio, Mi'kmaq Chiefs of Nova Scotia

"When First Nations are involved in health care transformation, services improve, and Indigenous Peoples get and stay healthier. This agreement lays the groundwork to build a culturally safe and high-quality health system for the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia. Thank you to the Tajikeimik, Mi'kmaq Chiefs, provincial officials and all those who have contributed to today's milestone. Today's agreement will set in motion the transformation of health care for First Nations in Nova Scotia."

The Honourable Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P.
 Minister of Indigenous Services

"The MOU we have signed today is another step in working towards a better healthcare system for all people living in Nova Scotia. We look forward to working with our partners at Tajikeimik, the Chiefs and Health Directors from our 13 Mi'kmaw First Nations, and Mi'kmaw in Nova Scotia to change how we deliver health services to better meet the healthcare needs of our First Nations communities."

The Honourable Michelle Thompson
 Minister of Health and Wellness, Nova Scotia

Quick facts

- In January 2022, Indigenous Services Canada committed \$8.96 million in federal funding over the next two years to support the partnership with Tajikeimik. In March 2023, an additional \$6.79 million was confirmed for 2023–24, bringing the total federal funding to \$15.75 million over three years.
- Five federally funded health transformation initiatives are now underway—in Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario, and (two in) Manitoba.
- Investments in Health Transformation help Canada to meet its commitment to implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which states in Article 23 that "Indigenous peoples have the right to be actively involved in developing and determining health, housing and other economic and social programmes affecting them and, as far as possible, to administer such programmes through their own institutions."

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Associated links

- [Tajikeimik | Mi'kmaw Health and Wellness](#)
- [Indigenous health care in Canada](#)

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For more information, media may contact:

Carolyn Pierce
 Director, Communications and Engagement
 Tajikeimik
 902-305-7543
carolyn.pierce@mhwnc.ca

Twitter: [@tajikeimik](#)
 Facebook: [@tajikeimik](#)
 Instagram: [@tajikeimik_ns](#)
 LinkedIn: [@tajikeimik](#)

Zeus Eden
 Press Secretary
 Office of the Honourable Patty Hajdu
 Minister of Indigenous Services
zeus.eden@sac-isc.gc.ca
 Media Relations
 Indigenous Services Canada
media@sac-isc.gc.ca

Twitter: [@GCIndigenous](#)
 Facebook: [@GCIndigenous](#)
 Instagram: [@gcindigenous](#)
 Facebook: [@GCIndigenousHealth](#)
 You can subscribe to receive Government of Canada news releases and speeches via RSS feeds. For more information or to subscribe, visit www.isc.gc.ca/RSS

Khalehla Perrault
 Communications and Media Relations Advisor
 Nova Scotia Health and Wellness
 902-717-3193
khalehla.perrault@novascotia.ca

Facebook: [@NovaScotiaHealthAndWellness](#)
 Twitter: [@nshealth](#)

