



2022-23 ANNUAL REPORT



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Message from the Grand Chief

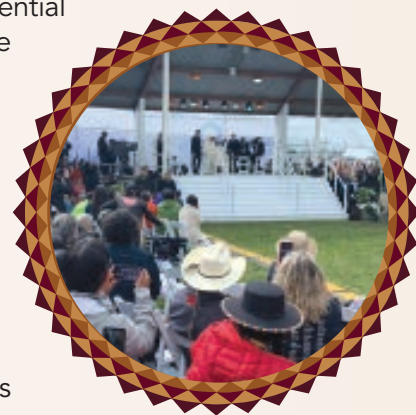
As the Grand Chief of Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc., I am honored to welcome you to our 42nd Annual General Assembly. Over the past year, we have focused our efforts on “ReconciliAction” to call for action and commitment to moving forward with a “Whole of Government Response.”

A “Whole of Government Response” is an approach that requires collaboration, communication, and cooperation among different levels of government, and stakeholders to achieve better outcomes. Such a response ensures that responses are effective and efficient, avoiding duplication of effort or missed opportunities. Together, we can achieve a comprehensive and cohesive framework for identifying and addressing complex issues that require a coordinated response.

I want to begin by acknowledging the dedication of the staff and leadership over the past two decades that culminated in our official seat at the United Nations. The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), under the authority of the U.N. General Assembly, have granted Special Consultative Status to MKO. This status recognizes MKO as a Non-Governmental Organization within the United Nations system. Our leadership now has a voice on the international stage to raise First Nations’ issues, such as implementing Treaties and the imposition of unjust laws by the Canadian government.

Last year, we witnessed the Pope’s pastoral visit to Canada, which was named “Healing and Reconciliation: An Historic Journey.” Along with a delegation of MKO citizens, I observed the Catholic Church’s apology to Indigenous people for its role in Indian Residential Schools. The schools have had a significant impact on First Nations people, and we continue to recover from the direct and intergenerational traumas caused by it. MKO citizens still follow Christian teachings, and it is crucial to support all faiths’ journeys towards reconciliation.

The discovery of the 215 unmarked graves in Tk’emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation is a painful reminder of the grim history of Indian Residential Schools. MKO launched the Indian Residential



School Path Forward project to help support investigations into missing children who did not return from these schools. We look forward to making strides towards healing, commemoration, and reconciliation with First Nations communities.

Several First Nation communities declared a state of emergency this year, and with the support of MKO, we were able to mobilize quickly to support leadership and advocate for their communities. Many First Nation communities continue to fight high crime rates as well as alcohol and drug abuse to high crime rates as well as substance misuse, prompting leadership to look for ways to help community members seek the help they desperately need. MKO will continue to work alongside First Nation leadership to address the root causes of community states of emergencies and advocate for resources to support these efforts. MKO remains committed to providing ongoing support to improve the well-being of Indigenous communities to First Nation.

I admire the determination and bravery of leaders and citizens who work tirelessly to overcome challenges. Shenika Chornoby from Tataskweyak Cree Nation is a true hero who saved several children from a dangerous fire.

I would also like to acknowledge the tireless efforts of the MMIWG and Mobile Crisis Response Team in supporting our families and Nations through times of tremendous hardship. Their efforts have been recognized by both the Canadian and Manitoba governments, highlighting the dedication and strength of these small teams in crisis situations.

I am honored to have been welcomed into your Nations and homes of Elders to learn of our shared history. I had a memorable opportunity to spending two nights at the end of March 2023 in Northlands Denesuline Nation and visiting 10 homes, meeting 15 Elders alongside Chief Denechezhe. This powerful experience made my visits to share in the 50th anniversary of Lac Brochet even more impactful.

Meeting our youth was also a humbling

experience, such as welcoming 1,100 Indigenous youth from across the North to Winnipeg for the Winnipeg Blue Bombers game last September. This event was made possible with the partnership of the Exchange Income Corporation and the Blue Bomber Football Club. I was also delighted to join youth from Barren Lands, Northlands, and Shamattawa First Nations at Winnipeg Jets games throughout the hockey season.

It has been heartwarming to bring back the MKO Santa Express, and together with our elves at MKO, Custom Helicopters, and Perimeter Air, we had the pleasure of personally having MKO take Santa into 11 of our MKO Nations in the course of a few days. As the airline industry and our Nations return to a more normal situation coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic, I hope to escort the MKO Santa Express to each and every MKO First Nation.

Speaking of COVID-19, I would like to acknowledge the efforts of the MKO Health team, the Communications team, our partners, and Keewatinohk Inniniw Minoayawin Inc. (KIM) in continuing to ensure that our First Nations had priority access to vaccines and necessary supplies for our Nations to operate safely.

The safety of First Nation citizens is paramount, our team has been working with leadership with the "MKO By-Law Pilot Project." This collaboration with the Provincial and Federal governments, we are working on building the framework for the implementation of the First Nation Laws which is crucial in promoting justice and addressing key issues within First Nations communities. Our team continues



to support the Indigenous Justice Strategy and the MKO Community Safety and Well-Being Plan Initiative, both of which seek to address issues of community safety and justice for Indigenous peoples.

As we move into a new year, I want to assure you that MKO remains committed to improving the quality of life of our First Nation communities by championing their rights and addressing issues such as justice, healthcare, education, natural resources, culture, families and children, and economic development. Together, we can bring about positive change and create a brighter future for all.

Chiefs, I want to thank you for the support and welcoming you have provided to me and our entire MKO team. We are committed to supporting you at the community level and addressing your issues in a "Whole of Government Response" by every government that has a responsibility to ensuring our people don't just continue to survive but thrive!

Ekosi, Masi-cho, and thank you for your continued trust and support.

**Garrison Settee, Grand Chief,
Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.**



MKO STAFF ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I also want to acknowledge one of our former employees, **Sherry Gott**, who was appointed as the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth.

I would like to thank **Mark Sweeny**, for his support as Assistant to Grand Chief.

I would like to acknowledge **Melanie Ferris**, Communications Officer.

I would like to welcome **Kevin Carlson** back to MKO as Assistant to Grand Chief.

I would like to thank **Brennan Manoakeesick** who has held the role of Chief of Staff and has spearheaded many priorities and initiatives for MKO. I congratulate and look forward to working with him in his new role of Director of Intergovernmental Relations.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge **Kelvin Lynxleg** our Executive Director and her amazing dedication and commitment to MKO. It is with her leadership that we continue to grow and demonstrate the power of compassion and unity. Thank you Kelvin!

Special Reports

MKO POLICING AND PUBLIC SAFETY: BROADER PROTOCOL AND ENFORCEMENT OF FIRST NATION LAWS

During 2022-2023, MKO has worked with the MKO First Nations, the Manitoba Department of Justice, the Public Prosecution Service of Canada (PPSC) and RCMP "D" Division and has achieved agreement as of June 30, 2023 to a broader pilot program to enforce First Nation laws pursuant to the *Protocol relating to the Enforcement and Prosecution of ByLaw(s) adopted pursuant to s. 81 and 85.1 of the Indian Act*.

As requested by MKO and as proposed by the Director of Public Prosecutions and Deputy Attorney General of Canada, this broader Protocol is effective for two years until June 30, 2025, unless further renewed by the parties, and provides for the enforcement and potential prosecution of all By-laws enacted by the MKO First Nations pursuant to s. 81(1) and 85.1 of the Indian Act.

This two-year pilot project being carried out by the "MKO By-law Pilot Project" and the renewed broader Protocol provides a joint opportunity to expand on the work done to date beyond the crisis posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The broader Protocol will also provide an opportunity to gather evidence and experience that will inform the development of policing and public safety approaches and solutions for the MKO First Nations in the long term.

MKO acknowledges and appreciates the engagement of Michael Foote, PPSC's Chief Federal Prosecutor in Manitoba, in achieving this important milestone through close collaboration with MKO and with MKO's legal services team at the Public Interest Law Centre. MKO also wishes to acknowledge the direct participation and important contributions of Mr. Foote during the recent MKO & RCMP Symposium held on May 31

and June 1, 2023 in Winnipeg, including engaging the MKO leadership and representatives in a fulsome Q&A session regarding the role effect of the renewed broader Protocol and two-year pilot project.

MKO also acknowledges and appreciates the leadership and engagement of Rob Hill, Assistant Commissioner and Commanding Officer of RCMP "D" Division, as well as the senior officials of RCMP "D" Division, in supporting the important tool represented by the renewed broader Protocol in achieving the effective targeted enforcement by RCMP of First Nation laws.

MKO recognizes the partnership of Manitoba Justice Minister Kelvin Goertzen and many senior officials in Manitoba Justice through their close collaboration with MKO to amend, effective May 30, 2023, the Police Services Act and the Provincial Offences Act to enhance the peace officer authority of First Nation Safety Officers when enforcing First Nation laws and to create a ticketing regime for the enforcement of summary conviction offences pursuant to First Nation laws.

All of these contributions and steps taken by MKO's Key Partners are directed at supporting the law-making and community safety and well-being initiatives of the MKO First Nations and MKO and to operationalize the Elements and Roles of the MKO Vision of the Whole of Government Response (attached).

The two-year pilot program now built upon the broader Protocol will maintain the momentum developed by MKO through what Canada describes as the "MKO By-law Pilot Project." The MKO By-law Pilot Project is now also supporting the Indigenous Justice Strategy supported by Justice Canada and the MKO Community Safety and Well-Being Plan Initiative supported by Indigenous Services Canada.

The broader Protocol will enhance the relationships and collaborations between the MKO First Nations, RCMP and PPSC as well as provide an essential foundation for MKO's ongoing collaborations with RCMP, PPSC, Justice Canada and Manitoba Justice on the enforcement and adjudication of First Nation By-laws.

During the past year, MKO worked closely with Manitoba Justice to achieve the passage on May 30, 2023 by the Manitoba Legislative Assembly of important amendments to the *Police Services Act* and the *Provincial Offences Act* that were co-drafted by MKO. MKO is now in active collaboration with MKO's legal team at the Public Interest Law Centre and Manitoba Justice to complete the "next steps" identified by MKO in as part of MKO's "Whole of Government Response Workplan" to give effect to these amendments:

- ▶ Development of regulations under the amended Police Services Act, including a ministerial regulation to designate Indian Act By-laws as enactments which FNSOs may enforce with the powers and protections of a peace officer.
- ▶ Development of regulations under the amended Provincial Offences Act to create a ticketing regime for the issuance of tickets by police and First Nation Safety Officers for offences of Indian Act By-laws:
- ▶ Revision of all First Nation Safety Officer Operating Agreements to reflect and be consistent with statutory amendments and new regulations.

MKO looks forward to proceeding collaboratively with Manitoba to develop these regulations and to revise the FNSO Operating Agreements and Policy Directives to reflect and be consistent with these statutory amendments and the related regulations.

In response to the urgency expressed by the MKO First Nations, MKO and the Public Interest Law Centre are presently developing and engaged in the review of an updated MKO Framework Intoxicants By-law that includes enforcement of the By-law by First Nation Safety Officers through a ticketing regime. The MKO Framework Intoxicants

By-law will be applicable to the broader *Protocol relating to the Enforcement and Prosecution of By-Law(s) adopted pursuant to s. 81 and 85.1 of the Indian Act*.

The renewal of the broader Protocol until March 31, 2025, will support the next two years of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan Project for the participating MKO First Nations, the MKO Indigenous Justice Strategy and the MKO By-law Pilot Project. This two year pilot project on the enforcement of MKO First Nation laws will provide MKO and our Key Partners with time and opportunity to continue to work with all stakeholders to develop and refine long-term viable solutions to the broader issue of enforcement and adjudication of Indigenous Community laws in general.

MKO also looks forward to our continuing collaboration and partnership with the MKO First Nations, PPSC, RCMP, Justice Canada and Manitoba to enhance the law-making capacity, self-governance and public safety of the MKO First Nations.

MKO STATUS AT THE UNITED NATIONS

On June 7, 2023, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), under the overall authority of the U.N. General Assembly, adopted the recommendation of the U.N. Committee on Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and has granted Special Consultative Status to Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. (MKO).

The granting by the ECOSOC of Special Consultative Status to MKO means that MKO is now formally recognized as a Non-Government Organization within the United Nations system.

The granting of Special Consultative Status follows a recommendation made during the 2023 regular session of the Committee on NGOs that took place from January 23 to February 1 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. MKO initiated the application for Special Consultative Status in June, 2013, shortly after MKO's active participation



in the Universal Periodic Review of Canada by the U.N. Human Rights Council and MKO completed the application on May 31, 2021. During the past year, MKO was in regular contact with the U.N. NGO Branch to successfully update and augment the MKO application.

MKO may now directly participate and intervene directly before entities of the United Nations and with other NGOs and share the MKO approach to making the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples enforceable in Canada's national law.

Being granted consultative status with ECOSOC means that MKO can enter United Nations buildings to attend official meetings, submit and make written and oral statements, meet official government delegations and other NGO representatives, organize and participate in parallel events, and participate in debates and panel discussions.

The granting of Special Consultative Status means that MKO will be able to bring the objectives, issues and concerns of the MKO First Nations to an international level, be it on Indigenous and Treaty rights, an economic and social issue, human rights issues or the application of the Charter, Conventions and Declarations of the United Nations.

MKO may also be called upon to provide the Secretary-General, ECOSOC and subsidiary bodies with interventions, papers or studies as they see fit regarding subject matters about which MKO is considered to be knowledgeable or expert. As just

a few examples, MKO is preparing submissions to several Special Rapporteurs appointed by the U.N. Human Rights Council, including:

- ▶ Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change;
- ▶ Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights;
- ▶ Special Rapporteur on the right to development;
- ▶ Special Rapporteur on the right to education;
- ▶ Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment;
- ▶ Special Rapporteur on the right to food;
- ▶ United Nations Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous Peoples;
- ▶ Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women;
- ▶ Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health;
- ▶ Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living; and
- ▶ Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation

Plans are underway for MKO to intervene before the UN Human Rights Council as part of the Universal Periodic Review of Canada that will take place during the 44th session of the UPR Working Group scheduled for November 6 through 17, 2023. The review of Canada by the United Nations Human Rights Council is scheduled to take place on November 10, 2023 at the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland.

Submitted by: Michael Anderson, Research and Information Services (MKO UNDRIP Implementation and Action Plan Advisor)

Chief of Staff

During my time as Chief of Staff, I prioritized collaboration between the Political Office and Program Managers to ensure that our activities were aligned with the objectives of the Assembly Resolutions and Executive Council Motions. We worked closely with key partners in the provincial and federal governments, as well as service providers in health, justice, policing, education, and other areas, to advance our goals and objectives. One of the hallmarks of our advocacy approach is our solution-focused approach, which relies on analyzing a situation, understanding the issue, and creating a compelling narrative based on the lived experiences and realities of our communities. This enables us to maintain focused on addressing the issue or crisis at hand, while ensuring that follow-up actions are taken to achieve meaningful change.

Our efforts have led to key partnerships with provincial and federal officials, including the formation of working groups that include Assistant Deputy Ministers, Director Generals, and other key decision-makers. These groups have afforded us unprecedented access to influence policy and legislative changes that advance our vision for community safety and well-

being. Notably, we have formed a 'Whole of Government Working Group' to address MKO's vision to address public safety and community wellness in the MKO First Nations. This group includes representatives from key government departments and agencies such as Department of Justice, Public Safety Canada, Indigenous Services Canada, Public Prosecution Service of Canada, Manitoba Justice, and the RCMP D Division.

In addition, we have been acknowledged for our expertise in the area of by-law enforcement and adjudication, which has helped ensure that First Nation laws and by-laws are enforced and adjudicated fairly and consistently. We have also made important interventions in legal cases such as the *Southwind v Canada* case at the Supreme Court of Canada, where our recommendations were instrumental in shaping the outcome.

Our pragmatic approach to advocacy and presentation of solution-based strategies has elevated our standing with ministers at the federal and provincial governments. We have been invited to participate in various public forums, including the MKO Chiefs Assemblies, the RCMP Symposium, and other important venues where we have articulated our vision and concerns directly to decision-makers.





I am particularly proud of our efforts to recognize over 30 individuals from the MKO region through the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Award. This initiative was a collaboration between the Political Team, Program Managers, and the Chief of Protocol, and it demonstrates our commitment to acknowledging and celebrating the achievements and contributions of our citizens.

As the outgoing Chief of Staff, I want to express my gratitude for the opportunity to serve the MKO Political Office team and the amazing individuals who supported me during my tenure. I am grateful for their unwavering commitment to advocating for the interests of MKO First Nations and their dedication to fulfilling our vision of creating safer and more secure communities for our citizens to live.



I wanted to share with the Leadership that MKO continues to offer opportunities to our staff to grow into new roles within the organization. Mentorship and team building are a cornerstone of any successful team, and I would like to congratulate Brenda Wood as the new Chief of Staff, and for the new team members who have been hired on to the Political Team this past year. I look forward to supporting her and the team as they work to advance our vision for community safety and well-being in the months and years ahead.

Thank you again for the opportunity to serve the MKO Political Office team, and best wishes to everyone as we work together to achieve our goals.

Submitted by: Brennan Manoakesick

Communications

THE COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

The Communications department is comprised of a dedicated team that play a crucial role in supporting the Office of Grand Chief by developing and implementing communication strategies to promote public awareness and understanding of key issues and priorities. This includes working closely with internal stakeholders such as Chiefs and Councils, community leaders, and program managers to develop clear and consistent messaging that aligns with MKO's strategic goals and objectives.

Key Responsibilities

One of the key responsibilities of the communications department is to ensure that accurate and timely information is provided to the media. This involves coordinating media requests, developing media releases, and organizing press conferences and media briefings. Given the fast-paced nature of news reporting, it is critical that the communications department is able to respond quickly and efficiently to media inquiries. Through careful planning and preparation, the department is able to ensure that the Office of Grand Chief is able to communicate its message effectively to the media.

Social Media

Social media has emerged as a powerful tool for organizations to engage with their stakeholders. With over 14,000 followers on the MKO Facebook page, social media represents a key channel for the communications department to reach MKO citizens and promote the organization's values and priorities. By leveraging social media, the department is able to share important updates on opportunities, employment, and community events, as well as communicate important news and announcements.

In addition to using social media as a tool for communication, the communications department also hosts Facebook livestreams at community events. These livestreams provide an opportunity for the Office of Grand Chief to issue video statements, press conferences, and Chiefs' Assemblies to a wider audience. By making these events accessible to a larger audience, the Office is able to engage with more citizens and provide important information in real-time.

Communication staff create content for MKO's website and social media accounts. This content is designed to provide the public and stakeholders with timely and accurate information about the activities of the office and the MKO Nations. It is also aimed at building engagement with the public and maintaining the organization's reputation. The content created by the communication staff must be compelling, visually appealing, and easy to understand.



Pathways to External Partners

Another important responsibility of the communications department is to maintain communication pathways between MKO and its external partners, including government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and other stakeholders. By keeping these lines of communication open, the department is able to identify opportunities for collaboration and partnership, as well as ensure that the concerns and priorities of MKO citizens are heard and taken into account by external partners.

As part of its ongoing efforts to promote transparency and accountability, the communications department also plays a role in preparing the Annual Report to Chiefs Assembly. This report provides a comprehensive overview of the organization's activities and achievements over the past year, and is an important tool for ensuring that Chiefs and Councils are informed of the organization's performance and are able to hold it accountable for achieving its strategic goals and objectives.

The Communications team at MKO has undergone significant changes over the past year, and we are excited for what the future holds. As the landscape continues to evolve, we remain committed to ensuring that our community members have access to timely and accurate information, and that our message is heard by as many people as possible. With a comprehensive strategic communication plan, and support for our leadership and managers, an improved website, and enhanced social media and video capabilities, we are well-positioned to communicate the important work that we are doing. We remain committed to building strong relationships with community members and leadership as we look forward to continuing to make a positive impact on the communities we serve.

Submitted by: Communications Team

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Senior Research and Policy Analyst: Natural Resource, Environmental and Lands Program

OVERVIEW

The Senior Research and Policy Analyst provides research, writing and advisory support services for a variety of environmentally related concerns throughout the MKO region. Such concerns are brought to MKO's attention seeking technical or advisory support to ensure all information is shared and decisions are made mutually among all project stakeholders. Advisory efforts prioritize resource conservation, protection, and management for the good of our people throughout the region. These advisory efforts include the support in accessing funding, involvement in the planning processes of development and environmental mitigation strategies.

AREAS OF SUPPORT

The Environmental and Resource advisory program supports First Nation communities on projects and concerns that are related to the environment and natural resources of the region. The following areas of support are briefly described of the current ongoing efforts provided by MKO. The support is provided to ensure all communities have access to reliable advisory and technical supports whenever it is required.

LEGISLATION, POLICY, AND REGULATION

Many areas of concern require advisory support to ensure all aspects for the communities are considered and understood during project

consultation and community engagement phases. This program will provide information and advice to determine the best course of action for the resources of the region. MKO advises all researchers and corporations to fulfill all compliance obligations ensure the communities are adequately consulted and environmental impact is impacted.

WATER

There are numerous support areas regarding freshwater management and monitoring throughout the MKO region. There are various institutes seeking to engage with First Nations on the past drinking water advisories and drinking water quality within the communities. These indicators are being further evaluated with water quality and sanitation to human health, with the main goal to connect homes throughout the region to piped water.

This program also partakes in additional forums to ensure efforts to better protect and conserve the freshwater ways. One includes the involvement to establish a process to address and mitigate the impact of aquatic invasive species, particularly Zebra mussels, *Dreissena polymorpha* within the region. Further, advisory and support is provided to establish an Indigenous Protected Conservation Area to the Sea River Watershed working group.



WASTE MANAGEMENT

Many of the First Nation communities throughout the region are battling with waste management efforts, due to accessibility limitations and available infrastructure. MKO has provided support for our communities to access funding to further improve the condition of the landfills. Further discussions will continue to develop a feasibility waste management strategy for all communities. Discussions have been underway to design a winter road backhaul program to organize and transport recyclables to extend landfill capacity in remote communities.

NATURAL RESOURCES: HUNTING AND FISHING

Natural resource harvesting has been a source of sustenance for First Nation people for many years. MKO continues to advocate and protect the region from infringement on our harvesting rights throughout the region. MKO remains vigilant on harvesting assertions from Metis and non-Indigenous hunters to ensure the ancestral lands are not infringed upon. The Moose Lake

Freshwater Fishery is now restructured and now has a feasible strategy to conserve and manage the number of fish harvested from their fishery.

MINERAL EXPLORATION

Mineral exploration pressures continue to persist throughout the MKO region. Advisory and technical support are provided to concerned First Nations to ensure these surveys do not occur without proper community approvals. Protocols will be further developed to support communities and provide guidance once approached for consultation. Just recently the province of Manitoba announced the Critical Mineral Strategy that includes a significant First Nation engagement component.

Submitted by: Dr. Stewart Hill, Senior Research Analyst

Health Report

Health care in Manitoba is currently in recovery mode from the ongoing effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic. This post-pandemic period presents a unique opportunity to reimagine the delivery of health services. This is an opportune time for all levels of government to conduct a comprehensive analysis that addresses the lessons learned and identifies areas for improvement. Embracing innovation, fostering collaboration among stakeholders and centring equity is essential for creating a health system that can effectively respond to challenges and close the health gaps within First Nation communities.



COVID-19 UPDATE:

First Nation communities in the MKO region have demonstrated resilience and coordination during the COVID-19 pandemic. On March 15, 2022, the Manitoba Government removed all remaining public health orders related to COVID-19. First Nation communities have been successful through diligent measures, strict adherence of community mandated protocols, robust testing and vaccination campaigns that have significantly reduced COVID-19 cases and outbreaks. Manitoba continues to see low infection rates as vaccinations, including boosters remain a priority for vulnerable populations.



MKO thanks the tireless efforts of Chiefs, Councillors, frontline and essential workers in keeping First Nation communities safe.

PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY FUNDING:

MKO has completed the “Minoayawin Keewatinowi Askik” project which was aimed to:

- 1) Improve knowledge about the importance of vaccinations
- 2) Build confidence in vaccinations
- 3) Address barriers to accessing vaccination services in Northern Manitoba

Vaccine hesitancy remains a challenge in the fight against COVID-19 and other seasonal viruses. Various factors contribute to this reluctance, including misinformation, historical mistrust and concerns about vaccine safety. The *Minoayawin Keewatinowi Askik* project sought to address vaccine hesitancy through community and educational campaigns with a final output that included the development of an educational game, *Vaccine Quest*. Vaccine Quest is an engaging game that educates players about vaccines through interactive challenges and quests promoting the understanding and awareness about their importance in public health.

INDIGENOUS HEALTH LEGISLATION (IHL)

In 2019/2020 the Prime Minister of Canada mandated the Minister of Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) to co-develop distinctions-based Indigenous health legislation. The First Nation

Health and Social Secretariat of Manitoba (FNHSSM) has taken a lead role in the research and engagement phase. A significant point of consideration of Indigenous health legislation is the intersection with signed Treaties between Indigenous communities and the federal government. Indigenous health legislation can support the operationalization and fulfillment of Treaty obligations by providing a legal framework to address health needs of First Nation people. It is necessary that authentic engagement and collaboration with First Nation communities to ensure legislation aligns with Treaty Rights and respects the unique cultural contexts, perspectives, and needs to improve health outcomes and address historical underfunding that has contributed to health disparities. MKO has been collaborating with FNHSSM on identifying a position for the Manitoba region and has been working to identifying next steps in the implementation process.

DECLARATION TO ELIMINATE ALL FORMS OF INDIGENOUS-SPECIFIC RACISM

MKO recognizes the urgent need to address Indigenous specific racism within the health system within the Northern Regional Health Authority (NRHA). Since the joint signing of the *Declaration to Eliminate Indigenous Specific Racism* within the NRHA, in September 2022, a collaborative working group has been developed. MKO, Keewatinohk Inniniw Minoayawin Inc. (KIM) and NRHA continue to develop a comprehensive framework. The framework is an integral guiding document that supports the promotion of equity and addressing systemic discrimination. Three high level areas of priority include education and awareness training for all staff to enhance cultural competency among healthcare providers, that foster an understanding of Indigenous histories, cultures and health care needs. The second priority includes examining policies and standards to support cultural safety and respectful care for Indigenous patients and families. Thirdly, data collection of disaggregated



information that report acts of racism, including critical incidents, self-reporting, staff-reporting, etc. The on-going monitoring and evaluation of policies and standards will ensure accountability and progress towards addressing Indigenous-specific racism as we work towards a healthcare system that is inclusive, equitable and respectful.

CLINICAL PREVENTATIVE SERVICES PLAN (CPSP):

November 2021, Audrey Gordon, Minister of Health with the Province of Manitoba presented the Clinical Preventative Services Plan (CPSP) to MKO Chiefs-in-Assembly. The Government of Manitoba is proposing investments into Northern health services and has committed to including Indigenous partners in the co-development and co-planning of investment. As directed by the Chiefs-in-Assembly, MKO has drafted a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to support this collaboration and partnership.

MKO had requested financial resourcing to build capacity to meaningfully engage in the co-development process as the Province has a

Transformation Management Office (TMO) to lead the CPSP work. Without adequate resourcing, the process for Indigenous participation compromises the collaborative process of co-development and any effective outcomes. MKO continues to partner with the TMO towards CPSP priorities by:

- a. Establishing a constructive, regular process of dialogue between MKO and Manitoba through the establishment of Northern Health Leadership Table and Regional Working Groups.
- b. Through the Northern Health Leadership Table and Regional Working Groups will be a co-development venture that will adopt concepts from a distinction-based model that are aligned with the Government of Canada's Speech from the Throne that acknowledges commitments of reconciliation.
- c. MKO and Manitoba to collaborate to work towards co-designing and co-planning towards creating policies and service delivery plans that will increase the health outcomes for First Nations people of northern Manitoba. Mobile Crisis Response Team

Submitted by: Brenda Wood, Senior Health Analyst

DECOLONIZING HEALTH PRACTICES

Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. (MKO) has been working diligently to address Indigenous-Specific racism within health care. It has become increasingly clear that many First Nation citizens are blending traditional healing practices with western medical practices. Addressing Indigenous-Specific racism in healthcare requires a multifaceted approach to support the inclusion of traditional healing practices and to have culturally-safe access to healthcare.

First Nation people have had healers and medicine people since time immemorial, although times have changed from traditional ways of seeking healing, such as traditional bartering and trading of goods like moccasins, meat & fish, leather goods, and other sustain goods. We have now live in a society where the exchange of currency is the primary offering when seeking traditional healing. Accessing traditional goods can be difficult to procure and expensive for many people.

The westernized version of Healer Services has changed the way in which we must now operate in the westernized system, however, MKO applauds the fact that healers are being recognized and will be compensated for healing the people. However, as this is a colonized system where monetary compensation is provided to healers, attached to it are accountability systems that are required by the funder, that requires MKO to account for the funding provided.

Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak acknowledges that Indigenous Traditional Healing Programs are funded by the Government system in Canada, and that there are formal procedures that are required to be in place to have a Traditional Healer Program, a program that enables Healers to assist the people with their health in a culturally respective manner. Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak sees how colonization has severely diminished Indigenous healing teachings, practices, and ceremonies in Canada, and we know that funded support is critical to ensure that

the valuable healing knowledge is maintained and passed on to the next generation of healers.

Traditional healers are crucial, as they provide an alternative to Western medical practices that may not align with Indigenous cultural values and traditional practices. The misinterpretation and lack of understanding of traditional healing has led to skepticism and sometimes hostility from Western medical practitioners, impeding Indigenous peoples' access to holistic healing practices.

In addressing systemic racism, it is important to recognize that colonial practices have deeply impacted Indigenous peoples' access to healthcare and traditional healing in Manitoba and across Canada.

Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. stands as a testament to the resilience and strength of traditional Indigenous practices.

However, there remains the challenges with colonial accountability practices such as currency transactions, which have commercialized the exchange of services.

Moreover, MKO continues to advocate to empower communities to have more control over their health and well-being. MKO acknowledge that the Western healthcare system has not always served First Nation people well due to systemic racism and barriers to access and MKO will continue work towards balancing Western medicine and establishing a more holistic approach that will benefit not just individuals but entire communities.

Policy Analyst

The position of Policy Analyst was created in October 2022, to support the growing demands of the political team that supports the Office of Grand Chief. This role also provides representation of MKO and the Office of Grand Chief at public relations events, conferences, meetings, and to support the Grand Chief and political team during events. Administrative functions include conducting research on policies, analyzing data, preparing reports and contributing to the development of policies and strategies. The overall role is to provide a diverse range of responsibilities that contribute to advancing MKO's objectives and promoting positive change in the organization and within the MKO region.

A few highlighted projects and partnerships include:

BEGINNING WITH THE TRANSPORTATION CANADA PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

In partnership with Transport Canada (TC), MKO launched a project focused on community engagement with First Nation communities along the rail line from The Pas to Churchill, Manitoba. The railway is now owned by the Arctic Gateway Group (AGG), and was previously owned by Hudson Bay Railway and was commonly referred to as the "Bayline." The purpose of community engagement was to identify the interconnected roles of the AGG rail line, Port of Churchill, and the Churchill Marine Tank farm under the following themes:

- ▶ Cultural significance
- ▶ Connectivity and essential goods and services transportation
- ▶ Health
- ▶ Employment
- ▶ Economic development
- ▶ Tourism
- ▶ Climate change

The themes were not exclusive and was tailored to evolve based on engagement direction and responses. The engagement sessions will provide the framework to support a comprehensive assessment of the viability of a trade corridor and identify long-term planning of the AGG rail line in northern Manitoba. The findings from the community engagements will serve to support the development of future policy options for transportation services along the AGG rail corridor.

The community engagements were successful in identifying that the AGG rail line is important and essential to maintaining community connectivity and to meet the essential needs of the lives of people living along the "Bayline." The final report is being drafted and is expected to be released early summer 2023.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY MANITOBA ADVISORY BOARD

Efficiency Manitoba (EM) is a crown corporation dedicated to energy efficiency in Manitoba that incorporates an Indigenous Community Energy Efficiency Program. This program is aimed at offering First Nation communities the opportunity, support and resources to hire an energy efficiency advocate to develop and implement a community energy efficiency plan that is guided by energy efficient experts. Recently, MKO was invited to



the Efficiency Manitoba Indigenous Conference to target First Nation communities with their programs, which offer rebates and energy-efficient home upgrades.

Efficiency Manitoba is seeking seeking input from First Nation organizations, businesses, and communities on how to tailor these programs to better meet the needs of First Nation people and communities. While Efficiency Manitoba recognizes the gap in northern First Nation community housing and the importance of these programs in closing that gap, there has been limited success in engaging First Nation peoples so far. Trust is a key factor in building successful relationships with First Nation communities, and Efficiency Manitoba is taking steps to ensure that their programs are designed with the needs and concerns.

Meetings have been focused on discussing past, present, and future work plans, their effectiveness, and strategies for change. The process was found to be flexible and accessible to communities with a strong willingness to work with them. Information packages were easily accessible and readily available, contributing to the well-informed and productive discussions. The emphasis was on inclusivity and encouraging maximum participation from all stakeholders.

TREATY 5 SUMMIT, MARCH 2023

The Treaty Five Sovereign Nations held a two-day summit in Winnipeg, focused on establishing a Sovereign Self-Determined/Government system. The summit covered the Treaty process, including the history of Treaty 5, and included power point presentations on Traditional Lands, constitution drafting, Self-Governance, Agreement-In-Principle and Fiscal relations.

PROVINCIAL CLIMATE ADAPTATION GATHERING, APRIL 2023

The Province of Manitoba's Climate and Green Plan Implementation Office is working towards building partnerships with First Nation communities to better understand how climate change is impacting First Nation communities and traditional territories. A series of engagement sessions were held to discuss the impacts and challenges caused by climate changes and to understand the barriers and limitations to adapting to these changes.

MKO has participated with engagement sessions and have emphasized the importance of respecting First Nation knowledge and traditional practices in the process. The lack of representation in such initiatives is not uncommon, and it highlights the ongoing systemic issues to make space for First Nation worldviews. It is crucial to recognize and address these issues to create effective partnerships and avoid further marginalization. We look forward to collaborating with stakeholders and industry representatives to create a model that represents all perspectives and acknowledges the value of First Nation knowledge. First Nation communities want to participate in environmental projects as many First Nation peoples are intrinsic stewards of the lands and waters.

Submitted by: Damien Lynxleg, Policy Analyst, Political Team

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Liaison Unit

The Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) Liaison Unit has experienced the busiest year since the program's inception in 2017. This year has been difficult for many families, survivors of gender-based violence, 2SLGBTQIA+ people, and community members due to the high rate of violence and tragedies which resulted in the loss of life. The MMIWG Unit operates from a victim-centered, dignified approach while ensuring families and survivors receive the fullest culturally appropriate and trauma-informed care available.

The MMIWG Liaison Unit recognizes the work can be very difficult at times for staff and can take a toll on the wellbeing of staff. The MMIWG Unit strives to ensure staff have access to resources and supports both externally and internally to support personal and professional wellness. The MMIWG Unit is committed to providing wellness supports to staff so they can continue to provide the valuable and compassionate support to families and communities affected by gender-based violence.



HIGHLIGHTS AND SUCCESSES

Indian Residential School Support

The MMIWG Liaison Unit expanded services to include survivors of Indian Residential Schools, Indian Day Schools, 60's Scoop and others who are impacted by the discovery of unmarked burials at the sites of former Indian Residential Schools. This enhancement of the main mental wellness program within the MMIWG Liaison Unit's current services allows more accessibility to current and new participants. This additional funding has allowed the unit to grow significantly to a current roster of 17 support staff and various external contract service providers who work closely with the unit.



PROGRAM STATISTICS

12 MMIWG2S Vigils

7 Memorials & Funerals

36 Community Engagements
& Gatherings

2,000+ Number of
participants
receiving health &
cultural support
(community engagements/
planned events, one-on-one/
group family support)

When the unit is not providing health and wellness support to MMIWG2S+ relatives and survivors, the team members often participate in various community engagement and networking opportunities.

Papal Visit-2022

Pope Francis made a pastoral visit to Canada in July of 2022 to address the impact of colonization and the participation of the Catholic Church in the operation of Indian Residential Schools throughout Canada. With the Indian Residential School funding, the MMIWG Unit, in collaboration with other MKO programs, was able to support 60 participants from the MKO region, the opportunity to travel to several events in and around Edmonton, AB. This once-in-a-lifetime opportunity was for participants to reflect on the experience as part of their personal healing journey.

Decolonizing Anti-Racism Project: Men and Boys are Part of the Solution

The Men and Boys are Part of the Solution to Building Healthy Communities and Decolonizing Anti Racism projects will continue delivering education and community focused workshops throughout the province. Both projects are staffed with individual project coordinators who are dedicated to fulfilling work plans until completion where then a report on the findings of the work will be made available to stakeholders, community members and families of MMIWG2S+.

The Online Toolkit for Wellness project is nearing completion and will be launched in the summer of 2023. MMIWG2S+ families, survivors and community members across Manitoba will have access to new tools for their wellness and healing journeys via online and hard copy booklets.





CHALLENGES

MMIWG2S+ victims of homicide and reports of missing persons soared to alarming rates, prompting the House of Commons to declare a national state of emergency into MMIWG in May of 2023. Manitoba families endured many tragedies which the unit responded to in addition to the significant negative impacts the global pandemic had on MMIWG2S+ families and survivors of gender-based violence.

The emotional, spiritual, physical, and mental strain could be felt throughout the team early in the year as everyone worked tirelessly to meet the needs of the high volume of calls the unit was receiving daily. This strain did begin to improve as our staffing levels increased and the workload became more manageable.

EVENTS

In March 2022, the MMIWG Liaison Unit hosted its 6th annual Healing Gathering with MMIWG families and survivors from across Manitoba in Thompson, MB. The in-person gathering focused on the families and survivors. This was the first gathering since the COVID-19 pandemic, which prevented activities. The gathering was a success and well received by the family members and survivors who were in attendance.

In September of 2022, the first Annual "Looking After our Mother Earth in a Good Way" Land Based Healing Gathering took place near Selkirk, MB. The event was a great success which saw many new families and survivors accessing support from the unit's program delivery services. The second annual gathering is planned to take place in northern Manitoba in the summer of 2023.





During December 2022, three community Christmas Dinners were hosted and co-hosted for MMIWG2S+ families and survivors right across Manitoba over one week. Visits were made in Thompson, Opaskwayak Cree Nation and Winnipeg, MB. The team's planning expertise and dedication to making the holiday season a memorable one for many MMIWG2S+ families and survivors was successful.

The unit hosted five community and three online commemoration events/engagements to offer MMIWG2S+ families and survivors an opportunity to have their voices and visions heard for the construction of a permanent MMIWG Memorial Monument for northern Manitoba. The monument design has been selected by a majority decision from the families and is currently under construction. The unveiling is set to take place in the fall of 2023.

Other notable events which the unit hosted over the year included:

- ▶ October 4, 2022: National Day of Action for MMIWG2S+ Walk & Rally in Thompson, MB
- ▶ June 3, 2022: 3rd Anniversary of the Final Report into the National Inquiry of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls/231 Calls for Justice engagement at City Center Mall in Thompson, MB
- ▶ February 22, 2023: 231 Calls for Justice Workshop at the Momentum Center in Winnipeg, MB
- ▶ July 22, 2023: Family Fun Day at St John's Park in Winnipeg, MB

The MMIWG Liaison Unit will continue to support families of MMIWG, survivors of gender-based violence, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people in Manitoba. We will be putting significant emphasis on prevention and education in Manitoba's northern First Nation communities, particularly with our youth. We recognize that more investment needs to be made in our northern communities as the resources are gravely lacking in contrast to our communities in urban centers.

Submitted by: Heidi Spence, MMIWG Director



Mobile Crisis Response Team

The Mobile Crisis Response Team (MCRT) is comprised of 18 team members of Indigenous heritage from Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Ontario First Nations. The MCRT continues to respond in their mandate of providing mental health crisis response for all 63 First Nations, including the Independent Nations, in Manitoba. The MCRT continues effectively providing crisis response at the Manitoba regional level since 2017.

In the 2022-2023 fiscal year, the MCRT had 202 deployments, a 43% increase from the previous year of 130 deployments. The MCRT team deployments consist of two members and each value represents one deployment of one or more teams, as many deployments involve multiple teams and/or rotation of continued support.

The MCRT increased requests for crisis response created opportunities for unique opportunities to adapt programming models, integrated roles, and expanded partnerships.

crisis response action for First Nations citizens. As the MCRT provides services to all 63 First Nations, it is imperative that we strive to provide culturally sensitive and trauma informed care to our citizens.

First Nation communities that have declared States of Emergencies throughout the 2022-2023 year, the MCRT has been deployed to provide mental health support. The MCRT has responded to 21 State of Emergency requests for service. The MCRT has experienced capacity strains, however, MKO was able to identify and deploy internal staff as a concerted effort to ensure no First Nation community went without support.

In May 2023, Grand Chief Garrison Settee and Minister of Indigenous Reconciliation and Northern Relations, Eileen Clarke of the Government of Manitoba made a one-time commitment of support for MKO's MCRT to assist with First Nations Crisis Response in Manitoba.

PARTNERSHIPS

The MCRT continues to work in collaboration with new and existing service providers in their respective areas.

- ▶ The Southern Chiefs Organization Mobile Crisis Response Team
- ▶ The KTC Wellness & Crisis Response Coordinator Teams
- ▶ The Peguis Mental Wellness Team
- ▶ The Norway House Cree Nation Health Division
- ▶ The Canadian Red Cross
- ▶ RCMP
- ▶ Government of Manitoba

MCRT along with other First Nations and professional organizations continue to collaborate and identify effective pathways to address urgent





ADAPTING TO THE LANDSCAPE OF CRISIS RESPONSE

In the 6 years of operation, the MCRT is always adapting to the landscape of crisis. As we all know, the social issues affecting our First Nations continue to change throughout the years and it is paramount the services we receive adapt with what's presented. MCRT has heard the needs of Manitoba First Nations grassroots and introduce new types of culturally appropriate care. The MCRT has updated and integrated new roles within our team that are inclusive and serves our people.

Elder – Mobile Crisis Response Team Member

In observation of culture, protocol, and tradition, the MCRT has conducted a ceremony where one of our knowledge keepers has graciously answered the request to adapt into a new role. The sacred ceremony and subsequent feast marked a new milestone in delivering crisis response action with our Elder traveling alongside our MCRT Members into First Nations. Through their knowledge and ceremony, our First Nations continue to receive an excellence in culturally appropriate crisis response activity.

LGBTQ2S+ Mobile Crisis Response Team Members

Our sacred circle has expanded in providing life promotion and safe space for our LGBTQ2S+ relatives across Manitoba First Nations. We successfully deployed two wonderful team members, one in the North and the other in the South. With the advent of our newest members, we have increased our life saving efforts for those in the community that require safe, relevant, crisis response activity from those who offer their lived experience.

Pipe Carriers

The MCRT currently has two pipe carriers. These amazing Knowledge Keepers continue to bring Creators teachings to the forefront of their kind, caring, loving work in the frontlines of crisis response.

Language Speakers

The MCRT is always looking to include as many fluent language responders as possible in our roster. We currently have speakers fluent in Cree and Ojibway.

Our active recruitment is cognizant of this need and continues to seek as many fluent language speakers as possible.

MOBILE CRISIS RESPONSE TEAM

Elder Gloria Kejick, Pipe Carrier

Janet Head

Theresa Henderson

Charles Harper

Sharon McIvor

Nelson McKay

Trudy Stevenson

Trevor Constant, Pipe Carrier

Mitchell Saunders, LGBTQ2S+ Member, South

Francis Budd, LGBTQ2S+ Member, North

Michele Genaille

Joyce Budd

Jolene Mosiondz

Brenda Macumber

COORDINATION TEAM

Trevor Sinclair, Assistant Program Manager

Virginia Nataweyous, Intake & Deployment
Coordinator

Virginia Moore, Administrative Program Assistant

Greg Fontaine, Program Manager



Mental Wellness Report

INTRODUCTION

Manitoba Keewatin Okimakanak (MKO) has established nine Mental Wellness Teams (MWTs) to provide culturally appropriate mental wellness services to First Nations communities. These teams, made up of multidisciplinary professionals to provide trauma-informed care, capacity-building, crisis response, early screening and intervention, aftercare, care coordination, and enhanced continuum of care, among others. They blend traditional, cultural, and modern approaches to deliver mental wellness services.

The MWTs aim to increase access to comprehensive, client-centered, culturally safe, and community-based services that meet the gaps in the continuum of care. They enhance collaboration among clinical and community experts to achieve their objective of improving health outcomes in member communities. These teams also promote community engagement, development, and self-determination.

SERVICE DELIVERY

The MKO mental wellness program supports six Tribal Councils, two First Nation communities and one health organization and works closely with the Mobile Crisis Response Teams, which serves 63 First Nations across Manitoba. The program is owned, defined, and guided by the First Nation communities they serve. The establishment of MWTs by MKO is a significant step toward improving mental wellness and support services for First Nation communities. These teams leverage the values of traditional, cultural, and modern approaches to provide high-quality services.

The MWTs compile reports with a focus on activities, successes, best practices, and challenges they face. The quarterly report submitted by the MWTs to MKO is a strength-based learning tool that enables the teams to identify gaps and opportunities for improving their services.



MENTAL WELLNESS TEAM SUCCESSES

The success of MWT is measured through various services for First Nations communities. Three main themes emerged in capacity development and training, clinical and support services, Indigenous ceremonies and land-based activities. Increased investment in community and mental wellness, with a focus on land-based healing, is important for MWT programming and services.

The important of including communities in designing and developing their mental wellness model is very important to indigenous people. A holistic approach with a focus on culture (language, practices, ceremonies, knowledge, land, and values) is critical to the overall success of indigenous developed and indigenous lead programming.

The important of documentation and collecting data will reveal what indigenous communities are undergoing in terms of the mental wellness. Data sovereignty is critical to address the mental health disparities that indigenous people face daily.

Following the First Nations mental wellness continuum model strengthens the inter connections between mental, physical, spiritual, and emotional behaviour that provide purpose, meaning, hope and belonging in the lives of First Nations peoples.

A balance between all these elements leads to optimal mental wellness for our people.

MENTAL WELLNESS TEAM CHALLENGES

The mental wellness field faces various challenges that limit their ability to balance wellness supports while also building and maintaining capacity within their teams.

Recruitment and retention in the field are challenging, having enough staff to respond to crises takes a toll on individuals, resulting in high burnout rates, and it is difficult to fulfill all the requests for mental health support from community members.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also led to an increase in mental health and addiction issues, requiring added service response and debriefing. Inadequate staff levels and lack of funding for training and crisis response further hinder efforts to provide effective mental wellness services.

Indigenous communities also lack culturally competent mental health providers, who can offer culturally safe practices relevant to Indigenous peoples and adequate training for mental health professionals working with Indigenous clients. Investing in mental wellness infrastructure and increasing funding for mental wellness services can aid in building capacity, conducting effective data analysis, and supporting access to culturally safe mental health services.

OPIATE AGONIST THERAPY

Opiate Agonist Therapy (OAT) provides a treatment option for opioid addiction, which is affecting many First Nation communities within the MKO region. Indigenous Services Canada approved funding for fiscal year 2021-2022 for an Opioid Agonist Therapy (OAT) wraparound services, that was carried forward to 2022-2023 fiscal year due to the pandemic. Funding will support wraparound services that may include harm reduction approach involving mental wellness support, traditional healing services, nursing station, pharmacy, and medical doctors. Collaborative partners will be included to provide comprehensive, holistic, youth and family-driven way of responding to addictions and violence in the community. The wraparound services will put the child or youth and family at the center for effective outcomes. This funding is a step towards accessing and developing local addiction treatment options for many underserved First Nation communities.

*Submitted by: Rene Linklater,
Mental Wellness Manager*



Traditional Healer Program Report

OVERVIEW

The Traditional Healers Program (THP) is funded under the Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) which is division to First Nation Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB). The Traditional Healer Program is committed to providing safe and accessible traditional healing services to clients in Manitoba. The program ensures that providers are qualified to offer the services and offers support to individuals, families, and groups. The MKO Traditional Healer Program recognizes the importance of these services and works to ensure that they are accessible to all eligible members, both on and off reserve.

The demand for traditional healing services has been consistent, and the program follows a well-defined process for offering support to clients. Indigenous traditional healing can involve costs for both the service provider and the client, and the program provides financial assistance to cover expenses such as travel, accommodations, and food. By supporting traditional healing practices, the program is contributing to the wellbeing of Indigenous communities and promoting cultural preservation.



Program Staff

The Traditional Healer Program is overseen by a Program Manager and supported by a NIHB Analyst, Administrative Assistant, and Transportation Coordinator. The MKO Executive Director is responsible for oversight of the program implementation and delivery.

- **Duke Beardy**, Program Manager
- **Patsy Reid**, Administrative Assistant
- **Brenda Flett**, Transportation Coordinator

Program Delivery

Over the past months, the Traditional Healer Program have engaged in efforts to provide access to traditional healing services for First Nations individuals and families whose mental wellness, counseling and healing needs require a traditional approach. Citizens from fifty-three (53) of the First Nations communities were served, and most of the communities are from each of the Tribal Councils and the independent First Nations in Manitoba.

The rates are based primarily on the current Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) Medical Transportation Policy Framework (interim). Mileage is offered and bus transportation alternately plus taxi fares. Air transportation is also provided where there is no all-season road access from the remote community. As per the Contribution Agreement with FNIHB, a treaty number, DOB is required with the name of the client(s).

“People who seek assistance from Healers must provide their own tobacco, cloth and the gift. These are not to be provided for people because they must be passed from the individual (sincerely, genuine). People must seek the Elders and Healers on their own.”

-July 2010 Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs Regional Traditional Healers Gathering Final Report

With respect to compensation for the Traditional Healer providers, the program reviewed and examined ways to provide reasonable rates in a form and manner that is appropriate to their roles.

While ceremonial offering such as tobacco, cloth or gift is offered, the contemporary gift includes a monetary allowance. The monetary gift from the Traditional Healer Program is for the Traditional Healer and the associated helpers.

Traditional Healers continue to have an important role in many communities, and service requests for traditional teachings, healing and ceremonies remain high. It is important to have accessibility for Traditional Healers to travel to client and communities to provide their services. The THP provides travel assistance for the Traditional Healer and considers ancillary costs to support supplies and helpers. Following community visits, reports are typically required to provide feedback on community events.

In addition to providing Traditional Healer support, the THP have received requests from clients seeking Medicine People and Herbalists to send traditional medicines for a variety of uses, ailments and conditions.

Manitoba Indigenous Cultural Society

The Manitoba Indigenous Cultural Society (MICS) is an oversight committee comprised of 10 Elders, with male and female representation from each

of the Cree, Ojibway, Densuline, Dakota and Anisininew Nations. The committee meets every quarter to discuss healing efforts, education, information sharing and networking.

Traditional healers are important members of Indigenous communities, utilizing traditional knowledge and practices to help individuals heal physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. The Oversight Committee ensures that the traditional healer's program remains supported, accessible, and respectful of Indigenous cultural practices. Traditional healing is an integral aspect of Indigenous culture and history, and it's essential to preserve and cultivate these practices for future generations.

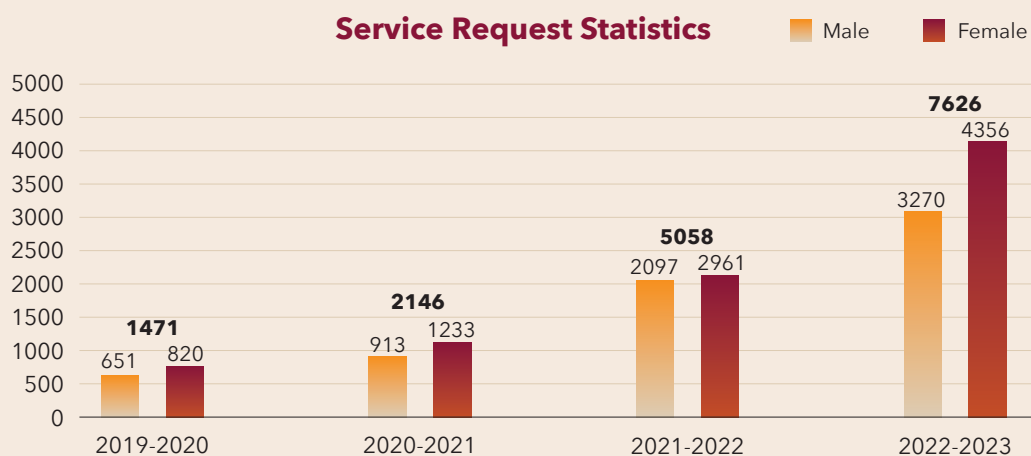
CHALLENGES

The Traditional Healers Program continues to address ongoing challenges that include:

- ▶ Obtaining referral signatures on the healer request forms
- ▶ Short notice requests on the preceding TH appointment dates
- ▶ Hospital TH visits
- ▶ Use of TH providers from outside of Manitoba borders
- ▶ Non-Insured Health Benefits travel/ transportation rates

SERVICE REQUEST STATISTICS

The information provided shows there has been a consistent increase in the number of clients accessing the Traditional Healers services provided by the THP. The fiscal period of 2022-2023 saw the highest number of clients accessing services, with a total of 7626 clients receiving support.



Comparing this to previous fiscal years, there has been a substantial increase in the number of clients accessing THP's services. In 2019/2020, THP provided support to a total of 1471 clients, while in 2020/2021 and 2021/2022, the numbers increased to 2146 and 5058 clients, respectively. This is a significant increase of 456% in just three years, indicating a rising demand for Traditional Healing services.

Furthermore, the gender breakdown of clients accessing services shows that there are more females seeking services compared to males. In all fiscal years, the number of females accessing services was higher than the number of males. For instance, in the fiscal period of 2021-2022, 2961 females received TH service support compared to 2097 males. This suggests a potential gender disparity in accessing Traditional Healing services or that females may be more likely to seek out such services.

Overall, client feedback has been favorable indicating the importance of Traditional Healing in meeting the wellness and healthcare needs of First Nations people in Manitoba. The Traditional Healers Program will continue to present at Chiefs' Assemblies, Tribal Council and Health Director meetings and will continue to promote the resources available through the program.

Submitted by: Duke Beardy, Program Manager



Client Navigator Report

The Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) Client Navigator assists eligible First Nation and Inuit Clients navigate the NIHB program. The NIHB program can often be a complex and difficult program to navigate and the NIHB Client Navigator supports clients to access appropriate services under the program. The NIHB Client Navigator collaborates with health services at local and provincial levels to address barriers clients face when accessing services.

Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. (MKO) has a funding agreement with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) to provide advocacy services to 23 First Nation communities within the MKO region. Areas of advocacy include:

- ▶ Medical transportation
- ▶ Accommodations & meals
- ▶ Escorts
- ▶ Medical equipment & supplies
- ▶ Pharmacy
- ▶ Vision care

The Client Navigator partners with Keewatinohk Inniniw Minoayawin Inc. (KIM) on the Patient Experience team. The Patient Experience team support and navigate with patients who have complex medical situations or are experiencing challenges accessing services at Thompson General Hospital.

The Client Navigator is a member of the national NIHB Navigators committee, that meets throughout the year to discuss challenges, successes, updates, processes and client experiences all aimed at improving NIHB services.

January – March 2023:

Orientation/Training sessions – 4

Working Groups – 8

Conferences – 3

Meetings attended – 5



Medical Transportation

An area of high demand for advocacy is in medical transportation, patients and leadership have expressed their frustration and concerns regarding the process of medical transportation. There are two streams in which calls are processed; the Patient Transportation Coordination Unit coordinates services during business hours, with the exception of during lunch; and Keewatin Tribal Council Referral Services manage the after-hour calls and lunch hour calls. The average call wait time can range between 15 minutes to two or more hours. MKO had met with First Nations & Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB) to address the growing concerns of patients and community leaders.

In December of 2022, the Manitoba NHIB Regional Office sent out a memorandum indicating process changes to the medical transportation program. NIHB will support community-based Medical Transportation Accommodations Coordinator that will coordinate departure from community, arrange accommodations and ground transportation all prior to the patient and if applicable, escort, prior to leaving their community. This model has significantly reduced the call volumes to the Client Navigator for advocacy on medical transportation.

Accommodations continue to be a challenge for many patients traveling for medical purposes that require over night and extended stays. The Client Navigator held a meeting with hotel managers in Thompson to explore opportunities for enrolling into contract services with Health Canada. These hotels included Quality Inn, Days Inn, Best Western and Super 8. Unfortunately, no hotels submitted an

application for contract services to Health Canada. Client Navigator Program and MKO continue to advocate with hotels, in both Thompson and Winnipeg, to ensure safe and appropriate accommodations are provided to medical patients, under contracts with Health Canada.

Advocacy

Over the course of the year, we have experienced calls for advocacy where patients have travelled to an urban centre such as Winnipeg or Thompson to seek medical care. Patients have then turned to the Patient Navigator to request accommodations and meals. This situation is difficult to address as patients leave their community for “unauthorized” medical care. For patients and escorts to qualify for medical transportation (accommodations/meals/transportation), patients must be cleared from their local nursing station or health centre. When patients leave the community on their own accord, the Client Navigator is unable to acquire an approval from NIHB for medical travel.

The Northern Patient Transportation Program (NPTP) is a program designed to support travel

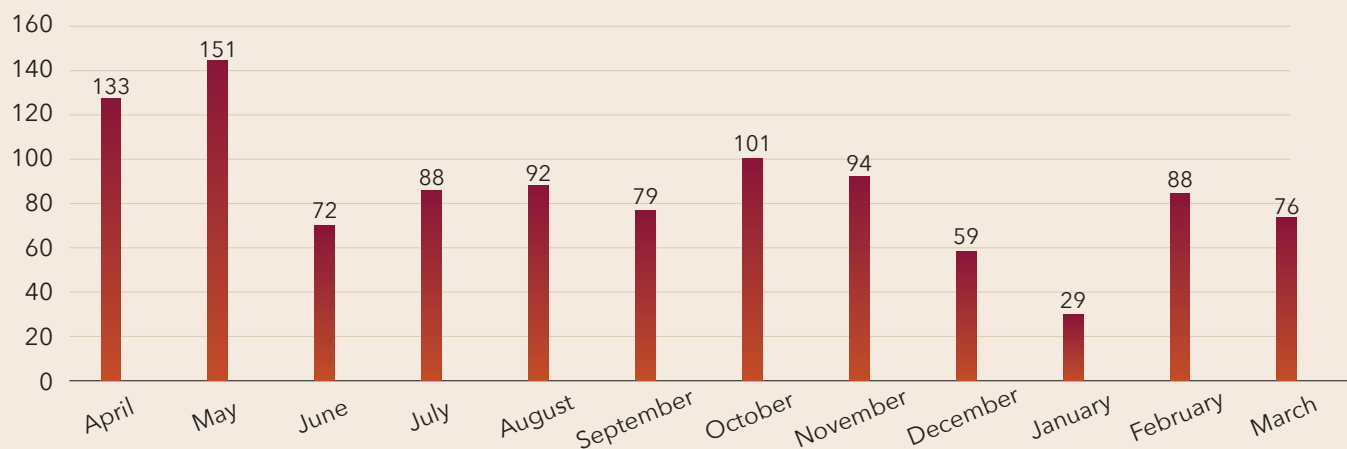
for patients to attend medical appointments, that do not reside on a First Nation, such as the Town of Leaf Rapids. The NPTP does not provide accommodations or meals for patients and escorts but will only cover a portion of mileage to/from the home community. Patients have expressed frustration that they are expected to travel to and from their home community which can be exhaustive and challenging, especially in the winter months. In most cases, the NPTP operates on a reimbursement basis, which requires patients and escorts to cover costs.

Client consent is vital to providing advocacy services and in the majority of instances when consent is required, patients do not have access to printer/emails to sign consent forms. Should this continue to be a growing area of concern, it may be beneficial to seek solutions such as having forms at nursing stations, boarding homes, and hospitals, so patients can sign and send via cell phone or fax.

*Submitted by: Bernice Thorassie (April-December 2022),
Charmain Clipping (January 2023-March 2023)*

Yearly Statistics

Client Navigator April 2022-March 2023



Total number of clients provided services for Fiscal Year - 1062
Non-NIHB related - 33 (January 2022 - March 2023)

First Nations Justice Strategy

In accordance with a resolution ratified by the MKO Chiefs-in-Assembly in 1996, the MKO First Nations Justice Strategy (FNJS) continues to work towards implementing changes to the way justice is administered in First Nation communities within the MKO region.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

The First Nations Justice Strategy recognizes that traditional methods of justice that centre on restoration and healing are essential for the wellbeing of First Nation communities. To this end, the FNJS advocates for the implementation of culturally appropriate practices that focus on community involvement and healing. These practices aim to restore harmony between community members affected by disputes, as well as focusing on healing among the wrongdoer and victim(s). Therefore, this approach emphasizes community participation in the resolution process. This involvement takes different forms in different regions, but the goal remains to ensure that community members have a say in how disputes are resolved.

The ultimate objective of the MKO First Nations Justice Strategy is to restore harmony within First Nation communities by creating a justice system that focuses on healing rather than punishment. Many First Nation communities have values, principles and beliefs to restore the traditional practices that have been historically used to maintain justice, balance and harmony within their communities.



The Restorative Justice program also provides an opportunity for communities to articulate and implement appropriate and effective justice practices within their respective communities. Develop and introduce culturally sensitive programs, promote community-based justice concepts utilizing a cross cultural awareness of community beliefs, values and customs ensuring that the local restorative justice committee and the community recognize the healing processes.

The Justice Program continues to advocate and support First Nation communities to set up Justice Committees in some of the isolated & remote communities for fiscal year 2022-2023. The Department of Justice Canada and Manitoba Justice have renewed FNJS funding to March 31, 2024.

COMMUNITY JUSTICE WORKERS

The Community Justice Workers (CJW) assume control over the process by forming Justice Committee's which apply the traditional forms of restorative justice. The CJWs aim to support the justice system by collaborating with the Court, Crown, and law enforcement. They also possess knowledge about the Provincial Judge Court, Judicial Justice of the Peace (JJP) courts, RCMP, and court etiquette when court is in session.

There are currently nine (9) community-based Community Justice Workers in the following MKO First Nations:

1. Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation
2. Mosakahiken Cree Nation
3. Bunibonibee Cree Nation
4. Northlands Denesuline First Nation
5. Chemawawin Cree Nation
6. Sapotaweyak Cree Nation
7. Mathias Colomb First Nation
8. Misipawistik Cree Nation
9. Tataskweyak Cree Nation

A Regional Community Justice Worker serves MKO citizens in Winnipeg, MB and provides programming and services to various communities, while also supporting the FNJS administrative assistant who works closely with the Justice Program Manager.

DIVERSIONS/STATISTICS

During this reporting period the FNJS program is currently reporting a **total of 389 restorative justice diversion referrals**. Many referrals have been successfully completed by the participant while some are still on-going for a variety of reasons. The diversion breakdown is as follows:

Post charge –	298
Pre-charge –	91
	<hr/>
	389

Youth –	69
Adult –	380
	<hr/>
	449

Male –	239
Female –	211
	<hr/>
	450

Crime against person –	334
Crime against property –	124
Fail to comply –	90
Possession of Narcotics –	1
Arson –	2
Threats –	34
Other –	55
	<hr/>
	180

In March 2021, the RCMP North District began a pre-charge restorative justice diversion program and shared referral forms with the MKO FNJS Program. As of 2022-2023, there have been 14 RCMP referrals received, and MKO is working on ways to increase diversions with the RCMP.



COURT PROCEEDINGS

The COVID-19 Pandemic presented challenges for the program and MKO communities in 2022. Provincial Court sittings continued to be postponed or delayed resulting in lower than usual referrals for this fiscal year. Virtual Court is presently not an option for many of the First Nation communities due to poor internet connectivity. However, MKO has secured federal funding to purchase up to nine (9) business models of the Star Link Satellite system. Star Link has proven to be a significant improvement over existing internet service providers which will benefit these communities where the possibility of hosting virtual Court appearances is presently being explored and discussed with the Province of Manitoba for implementation in 2023/2024.

INDIGENOUS COURT WORKERS

In June 2021, the Province of Manitoba announced the transfer of the Indigenous Court Worker (ICW) program to Regional Indigenous Organizations (RIOs). MKO has received funding for three (3) ICW positions, one position in located The Pas/Opaskwayak Cree Nation and two positions will be in Thompson, MB. All three of the ICW positions have been filled and these staff have assumed court worker duties in their respective areas. Training is ongoing as the ICW program evolves.



PROGRAMMING/TRAINING INITIATIVES/PARTNERSHIPS

The FNJS continues to facilitate the Family Violence and Anger Management programs in First Nation communities. Certificates are provided to participants upon the successful completion of the program. The training module/curriculum was co-developed by the MKO Justice Program Manager and the Indigenous Learning Development Institute Inc. (ILDI). The program has been well-received by participants and several First Nation communities within the MKO region have reached out for this training from the FNJS, which is being planned for the 2023-2024 year.

The FNJS successfully secured federal funding for CJW training for two streams in 2022-2023:

Stream 1 – Computer/Technology Training
– completed in September 2022

Stream 2 – Trauma Informed Training
– completed in March 2023

Trauma Informed/Mental Health training was a joint 5-day training for up to 30 MKO staff from the Justice Program, Mobile Crisis Response Team, Missing and Murdered Women and Girls Liaison Unit and the Secured Certification of Indian Status (SCIS) programs. These staff will be trained in fundamentals on self-care, warning signs for self-directed violence risk triage (SDVRT). Some staff members received two extra days of train-the-trainer for sustainability and building capacity at a local level and bringing training opportunities closer to home.

Submitted by: Edwin Wood, Justice Program Manager



Youth Justice

YOUTH HEALING LODGE

Background

In March of 2022, the MB Minister of Justice and MKO Grand Chief announced a partnership for the development, implementation, and operation of a Youth Healing Lodge in Thompson, MB. The Youth Healing Lodge will focus on the creation of community-based transitional resources for youth by creating open-custody beds in northern MB. This initiative will provide youth with a culturally responsive and supportive way to re-integrate and transition back with their families and communities.

The Youth Healing Lodge will connect youth with their culture, language and identity and will utilize traditional healing practices that are culturally responsive and appropriate to the needs of the youth, their families, and the community. It will be a place of support and healing for youth.

By providing a safe and supportive environment, the Youth Healing Lodge will help address the over-representation of Indigenous youth in the youth justice system. It will also empower Indigenous communities to take a more active role in the rehabilitation of their youth and promote intergenerational healing.

This partnership demonstrates the joint commitment to reconciliation and the belief in the importance of investing in the well-being of Indigenous youth. The Youth Healing Lodge is just one step towards creating a justice system that is more equitable, just, and culturally responsive. The success of this initiative will serve as a model for other communities across Canada seeking to address the needs of Indigenous youth in the justice system.



Progress

In October of 2022, MKO hired a full-time Project Manager to oversee planning, development, implementation, and operation of the Youth Healing Lodge initiative. MKO has formally engaged with Verne Reimer Architecture (VRA) Inc., a Winnipeg-based company to assist MKO in achieving its vision.

A summary of activities since engagement with VRA is noted below:

- ▶ Creation of project understanding/visioning of the Youth Healing Lodge.
- ▶ VRA has established a working team of consultants – Civil, Structural, Electrical and Mechanical engineers.
- ▶ Establishing a short form RAIC 6 contract between VRA and MKO
- ▶ Collecting existing materials from MKO to do the work, i.e., surveys, blueprints, land title, and program information.
- ▶ Regular meetings between VRA and MKO to review existing drawings, program information, and project to create further understanding, set goals, etc.

THE SITE

Located at 20 Wapusk Drive, Thompson MB, the Youth Healing Lodge is situated along the banks of the Burntwood River.

- ▶ Creating project program and evaluating against the existing building use/codes, square footage, exiting, fire separations, etc.
- ▶ Site tours and documentation of similar buildings i.e., the Youth Addictions Stabilization Unit in Winnipeg and the Hope North Recovery Centre for Youth in Thompson.
- ▶ Creating full 3D digital model based on existing drawings received from client, and auditing drawing plans.
- ▶ Preliminary Schedule of Project developed – VRA able to adjust to fit MKOs requirements.

Further, meetings between the Project Manager and MB Justice officials occur on weekly basis to review and discuss progress.

Target timelines

The next phases of the Youth Healing Lodge project will require feedback and input from MKO's Construction Project Coordinator, whom has since been hired, however, the Project Manager is targeting:

- ▶ August/September 2023 for construction/retrofitting to begin.
- ▶ Late 2023/Early 2024 for the Youth Healing Lodge to be operational.

Next Steps

- ▶ Involvement of MKOs Construction Project Coordinator with the project.
- ▶ Establishing a long-form, more comprehensive agreement between VRA and MKO.
- ▶ Site Design confirmation by MKO.
- ▶ Project Agreement/Charter to be established.
- ▶ Construction/Retrofitting of the Youth Healing Lodge to begin.
- ▶ Operational protocols to be established.

YOUTH JUSTICE INITIATIVE

Background

Originating from MB Justice' Reduction in Youth Justice Involvement Social Impact Bond (SIB) and in partnership with Marymount Inc., the MKO Youth Justice Initiative will deliver interventions and programming that is culturally responsive and appropriate to the needs of youth, families, parents, and communities. The SIB aims to decrease the number of days Manitoba's youth spend in custody, while increasing connections to their culture and identities. The MKO Youth Justice Initiative was formalized in April of 2023.

Staffing

The MKO Youth Justice Initiative employs six (6) full-time staff, with four (4) staff based in Winnipeg and two (2) staff based in Thompson. Areas of focus for each of the staffing positions includes youth wellness, family wellness, cultural mentorship, and community reintegration. As part of a collaborative process, program staff will engage with the youth and other formal and informal supports and provide ongoing support of a healing plan for the youth, family, and community.

Submitted by: Charles Wood, Project Manager, Youth Justice

MKO Child Welfare Secretariat

INTRODUCTION

The Child Welfare Secretariat (CWS) receive direction from the MKO Chiefs-in-Assembly to offer advocacy and technical assistance to both leadership and communities in the area of child welfare. The CWS is also responsible for the exercising of legislative and jurisdictional authority. Over the years, MKO has developed different programs and initiatives aimed at improving the lives of Indigenous children in Northern Manitoba. One of the initiatives is the MKO Chiefs Task Force on Child Welfare Transformation. This report will provide an overview of the Child Welfare Transformation program, including the provincial and federal child welfare reform initiatives, the MKO Family Law Template, and the program's impact on Indigenous children's lives.



MKO CHIEFS TASK FORCE ON CHILD WELFARE TRANSFORMATION

The MKO Chiefs Task Force on Child Welfare Transformation was established in 2021. The mandate of the Task Force is to assert self-determination of sovereign First Nations and to affirm their inherent right of self-government in respect to child and family services.

Chief Task Force Membership:

- ▶ **Chief Larson Anderson**, Norway House Cree Nation
- ▶ **Chief Shirley Ducharme**, O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation
- ▶ **Chief Betsy Kennedy**, War Lake First Nation
- ▶ **Chief Simon Denechezhe**, Northlands Denesuline First Nation
- ▶ **Chief Jordna Hill**, Shamattawa First Nation
- ▶ **Grand Chief Garrison Settee** (ex-officio member)

The Chiefs Task Force and CWS extends gratitude to former Task Force member Councillor Doreen Spence, Tataskweyak Cree Nation and Chief Evan Yassie (former), Sayisi Dene First Nation.



PROVINCIAL CHILD WELFARE REFORM

In 2022-2023, under the pillar of Legislative Reform, the Government of Manitoba introduced new legislation in child welfare. Some of the reforms include:

The Child and Family Services Amendment Act (Information Sharing)

The amendment act allows for better coordination among different government agencies by allowing the sharing of information in cases of child welfare. The act enables information sharing between the child welfare agency, police, courts, and healthcare providers.

Bill 32 – An Act respecting Child and Family Services (Indigenous Jurisdiction and Related Amendments)

Bill 32 recognizes the importance of Indigenous culture and language in child welfare services. The bill also allows for Indigenous communities to take control of their child welfare services through self-government agreements. Bill 32 is a legislative act that outlines the jurisdiction of Indigenous communities over their child and family services. The bill ensures that Indigenous communities have greater autonomy in the provision of these services, which is a step toward reconciliation and allows for culturally appropriate care for Indigenous children and families.

Leadership Council

In Manitoba, the Leadership Council was established by proclamation of The Child and Family Services Authorities Act in 2003. The Leadership Council is a body comprised of membership from the Government of Manitoba and Indigenous political organizations to provide guidance on the implementation of the child welfare reforms in Manitoba. Meetings were held in December 2022 and January 2023 included discussions about proposed amendments to provincial child welfare legislation.

First Nations of Northern Manitoba Child and Family Services Authority.

Under The Child and Family Services Authorities Act, MKO is responsible for appointing the board of directors to the First Nations of Northern Manitoba Child and Family Services Authority (Northern Authority). As of March 31, 2023, the board included the following members.

- ▶ **Sydney Garrioch** – Board Chair
- ▶ **Theresa Yetman** – Vice-Chair
- ▶ **Denise Packo** – Secretary/Treasurer
- ▶ **William Lathlin** – Elder
- ▶ **Gilbert Andrews** – MKO Representative

The Northern Authority is responsible for overseeing the provision of child welfare services in Northern Manitoba. The authority works in collaboration with Indigenous communities to ensure that their unique needs are met.

FEDERAL CHILD WELFARE REFORM

The federal law, An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families, (the federal Act), formerly known as Bill C-92, came into effect on January 1, 2020. A primary purpose of the federal Act is to provide a framework and pathway for Indigenous peoples to establish their own laws for child welfare.

Federal Legislation on Indigenous Child Welfare

Under the Act, an Indigenous Governing Body (IGB) is defined as a council, government or other entity that is authorized to act on behalf of an Indigenous group, community or people that holds rights recognized and affirmed by section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982.

As of March 31, 2023, 63 IGBs in Canada have either given notice of their intention to exercise legislative authority or requested a coordination agreement with the government.

In Manitoba, six IGBs have given their notice of intention, including Pimicikamak Okimawin and Misipawistik Cree Nation, while five IGBs have requested to enter into a coordination agreement, including Opaskwayak Cree Nation.

MKO Executive Council endorses Governance Process

On October 9, 2020, for the purposes of the Federal Act, Shamattawa First Nation authorized the CWS to act as the IGB on behalf of the community. This means, under section 12 of the Act, all Notices of Significant Measure (including child apprehension) for Shamattawa First Nations children must be sent by a service provider to the CWS.

In October 2020, for the purposes of the federal law, An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit, and Metis children, youth and families (the Act), Shamattawa First Nation authorized the CWS to act as the IGB on behalf of the community. This means, under section 12 of the Act, all Notices of Significant Measure regarding Shamattawa First Nations children must be sent by a service provider to the CWS.

Capacity-building Funding

In July 2020, the Government of Canada announced a funding commitment of \$542 million over five years, starting in 2020-21, to support the implementation of the Act. The CWS is available to assist the MKO leadership and communities in developing a proposal for Capacity-Building Funding at their request. To date, the CWS has been working with the Chief and Council of seven MKO communities to develop a proposal and secure funding.

- ▶ Shamattawa First Nation
- ▶ Northlands Denesuline First Nation
- ▶ Tataskweyak Cree Nation
- ▶ Barren Lands First Nation
- ▶ O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation
- ▶ Sapotaweyak Cree Nation
- ▶ Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation

Summit on First Nations Exercising Jurisdiction Over Child Welfare

CWS hosted a Summit on First Nations Exercising Jurisdiction Over Child Welfare on October 17 and 18, 2022, in Winnipeg. Presentations at the Summit focused on the following topics: the history of child welfare in Manitoba; the federal Act; implications of Bill 41; reform of the First Nations Child and Family Services Program; and Camp Hope, a land-based therapeutic treatment program initiated by Montreal Lake Cree Nation.

Community Well-Being and Jurisdiction Initiatives Program

The Community Well-Being and Jurisdiction Initiatives (CWJI) Program supports First Nation communities in providing culturally appropriate prevention and well-being services for children and families on reserve. In Manitoba, the program has an annual allocation of \$15.3 million until 2023. In 2022-2023, the CWS collaborated with ISC to allocate these funds to MKO communities.

Regional Advisory Committee on First Nations Child and Family Services

In Manitoba, the Regional Advisory Committee on First Nations Child and Family Services (RAC) was established in 2001. The RAC meets at least six times during the year and is responsible for hosting the Annual North/South Gathering on First Nations Child and Family Services in Manitoba. The RAC hosted the 10th Annual Gathering on September 27-29, 2022, in Winnipeg. This event is an opportunity for key stakeholders in child welfare to share and discuss innovative best practices in child and family services.

MKO FAMILY LAW TEMPLATE

The MKO Family Law Template is a significant step towards decolonization, as it allows Indigenous communities to exercise jurisdiction over child welfare in a way that aligns with their culture and values.

Since 2020, as directed by the MKO leadership, the CWS continued to develop the draft MKO Family Law Template in relation to the federal Act and create a template law for all MKO

communities to adopt if they choose. The CWS worked with Mack Law Corp to develop the MKO Family Law Template and to align it with the federal Act.

In 2022-2023, the CWS continued to make the Template available to MKO First Nations and assisted communities in exercising jurisdiction over child welfare at their request. The Template can be customized by a community to reflect the local values and beliefs on child and family matters.

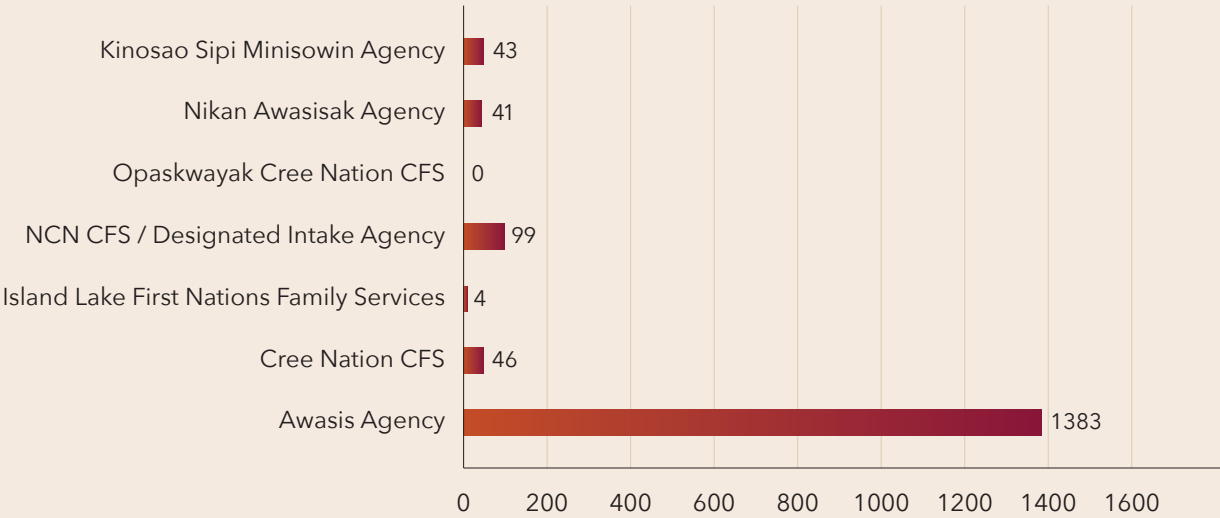
ADVOCACY AND SUPPORT TO FIRST NATION CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

A key function of the CWS is to provide advocacy, guidance, and support to First Nations children, youth and families who are involved in the CFS system in Manitoba, as well as other provinces and territories.

The Northern Authority oversees seven Northern First Nation child and family services agencies. In 2022-2023, the CWS received a total of 1,616 intakes from both Thompson and Winnipeg offices. Intakes were identified from the following agencies/territories:

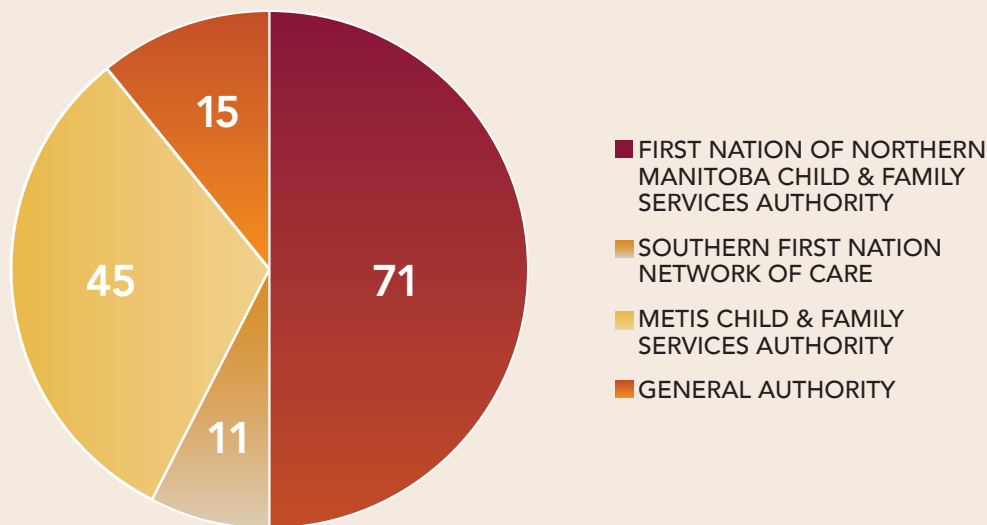


MKO Child Welfare Secretariat Yearly Intake



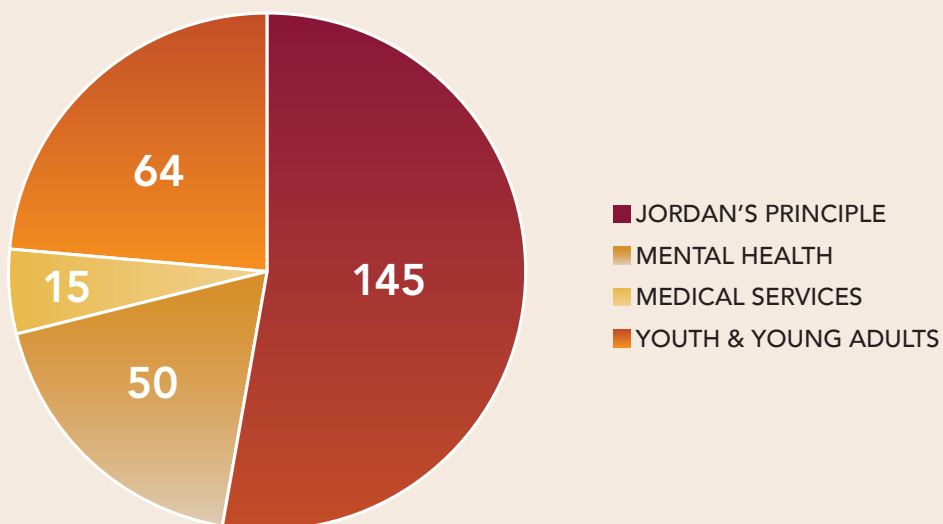
In 2022/23, the CWS responded to a total of 142 intakes from the following CFS Authority:

MKO Child Welfare Secretariat Intakes of Manitoba CFS Authorities



In 2022/23 the CWS responded to a total of 274 intakes from urban or remote communities, seeking resources:

Resource Intake Calls



Please note, effective April 1, 2023, as directed by the MKO Chiefs Task Force on Child Welfare, the name of the MKO Child Welfare Secretariat is now changed to the MKO Family First Nation Secretariat.

Submitted by: Shirley Allarie, Director

MKO Path Forward: Investigations of Former Indian Residential School Site

In May 2021, MKO Grand Chief Garrison Settee issued a statement in solidarity with Tk'emlups te Secwepemc and all First Nations impacted by the loss of a child(ren) during the operation of Indian Residential Schools. The announcement of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School (IRS) initiated the start of MKO's contribution to the search, identification, and recovery of unmarked graves, child burials sites, and missing Indigenous children. On November 9th, 2022, the MKO Path Forward for Investigations of Former Indian Residential School Sites (Path Forward) Project began.

HOW WE GOT STARTED

The Path Forward Project started with an environmental scan. The purpose of this environmental scan was to identify recognized and unrecognized Indian Residential Schools, Indian Hospitals, and Sanitoriums in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. We identified three MKO communities with a former Indian Residential School and/or sanitarium site in their territory: Pimicikamak Cree Nation, Kinosao Sipi Cree Nation, and Opaskwayak Cree Nation. We also identified several institutions children from MKO communities were forced to attend in southern Manitoba and Saskatchewan. This initial step helped us decide on a direction for the Path Forward Project.



OVERVIEW

The Path Forward Project is an initiative to uncover the truth and support affected communities and families through several investigative processes. The Path Forward Project will provide guidance, assistance, and support to MKO communities, Survivors, and families involved in searching, identifying, commemorating, and repatriating deceased and missing children at former residential schools, hospitals, and sanitoriums.

- ▶ Research and Storing Records
- ▶ Capacity Building & Information Sharing
- ▶ Community Engagement & Outreach
- ▶ Regional Healing Gatherings
- ▶ Community Support and Advocacy

REGIONAL INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

On November 17th, 2022, MKO Chiefs-in-Assembly passed Resolution #2022-11-06, "Adoption of the MKO Regional Indian Residential School (IRS) Project Advisory Committee." The function of the IRS Regional Advisory Committee is to provide guidance on activities related to the identification, commemoration, repatriation, and protection of burial sites of children who died while attending Indian Residential Schools.

Key Objectives:

- ▶ Build working relationships with Indigenous communities and Investigation Teams in Manitoba and neighboring provinces to identify MKO communities Survivors and children who died or went missing while attending a former IRS, Indian Hospital, and/or Sanatorium.
- ▶ Organize and/or support a series of fora/summits/gatherings listening to the ideas, needs and priorities of MKO communities.
- ▶ Organize and/or support events for sharing information, research findings, and investigation updates to affected communities and family members.
- ▶ Support MKO communities, tribal councils, and organizations with leveraging funding from federal sources and other agencies supporting work related to Indian Residential Schools.
- ▶ Establish a MKO Regional IRS Advisory Committee for the MKO Path Forward Project.
- ▶ Provide support on the coordination of community-based and province-wide dialogue on the location, identification, and displacement of children from MKO communities in unmarked graves and child cemeteries.
- ▶ Organize and/or support truth-telling activities for MKO First Nation survivors and relatives.

The composition of the Regional Advisory Committee will consist of one (1) Inuit Representative and six (6) MKO Nation members.

Current Committee Members:

- ▶ **Eunice Beardy**, Tataskweyak Cree Nation
- ▶ **Councillor Mary Spence**, God's Lake First Nation
- ▶ **Councillor Edwin Jebb**, Opaskwayak Cree Nation
- ▶ **Sandy Robinson**, Pimicikamak Cree Nation
- ▶ **Councillor David Swanson**, Kinosao Sipi Cree Nation
- ▶ **Gayle Gruben**, Manitoba Inuit Association

HIGHLIGHTS AND SUCCESSES

Papal Visit

Pope Francis' pastoral visit to Canada in July 2022 was a significant event for the nation. However, the choice of locations for the visit raised some concerns among First Nations peoples. Manitoba was not selected for a site visit, leading to disappointment among many Indigenous communities in the province.

In response, MKO supported a delegation from several First Nation communities within the region to attend events in and around Alberta. While the decision to support the delegation received both praise and criticism, it was motivated by a desire to enable Indian Residential Schools survivors to participate in the events. MKO recognizes that there are differing views on the issues and practices of the Church that have caused widespread trauma for First Nations peoples. However, they believe it is important to support all walks of faith.

Overall, the visit of Pope Francis to Canada highlighted the continuing need for reconciliation and healing between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in the country. The support provided by MKO for the First Nations delegation demonstrates a commitment to encouraging dialogue and understanding between all communities.

Successes

- ▶ Built working relationships with several First Nation communities investigating residential schools in southern Manitoba. Held three (3) MKO Regional Indian Residential School Advisory Committee meetings in Winnipeg and Thompson, Manitoba.
- ▶ Formed collaborative partnerships with MKO communities leading investigations at former Indian Residential Schools in the region.
- ▶ Collected, complied, and analyzed public records stored with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, Library and Archives of Canada, and several church entities.

2023-2024 PRIORITIES

- ▶ Host a Regional Survivors Healing Gathering within the MKO region and urban centres.
- ▶ Organize proposal writing workshops for MKO communities, tribal councils, and organizations.
- ▶ Organize community outreach and engagement events in communities and urban centres.
- ▶ Develop informative toolkits/resources to be distributed to community members and Survivors.



Urban Initiatives Program

The Urban Initiative Program has made significant progress in bringing together the Indigenous community and partners, to act as a venue for ongoing discussions and coordination of actions that support urban Indigenous issues and initiatives. The Urban Initiative Program acts as a bridge between urban and Indigenous partners for advocacy and addressing the needs of citizens.

The City of Thompson continues to see an upward trend of Indigenous people relocating to Thompson. The Urban Initiative Program creates unique opportunities for organizations to ensure Indigenous people are being cared for with respect and dignity.

PROGRAM INITIATIVES; HIGHLIGHTS, SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES.

MKO Food Bank

MKO Food Bank opened on September 24, 2021, under the Urban Initiatives Program. The MKO Food Bank currently relies on partnerships, such as with Sobey's, Safeway, Food Bank Canada, Harvest Manitoba and Walmart Canada. The MKO Food Bank continuously seeks resources and funding opportunities to enhance services and distribution. Recently, MKO Food Bank was successful with a proposal to purchase three freezers for food storage.



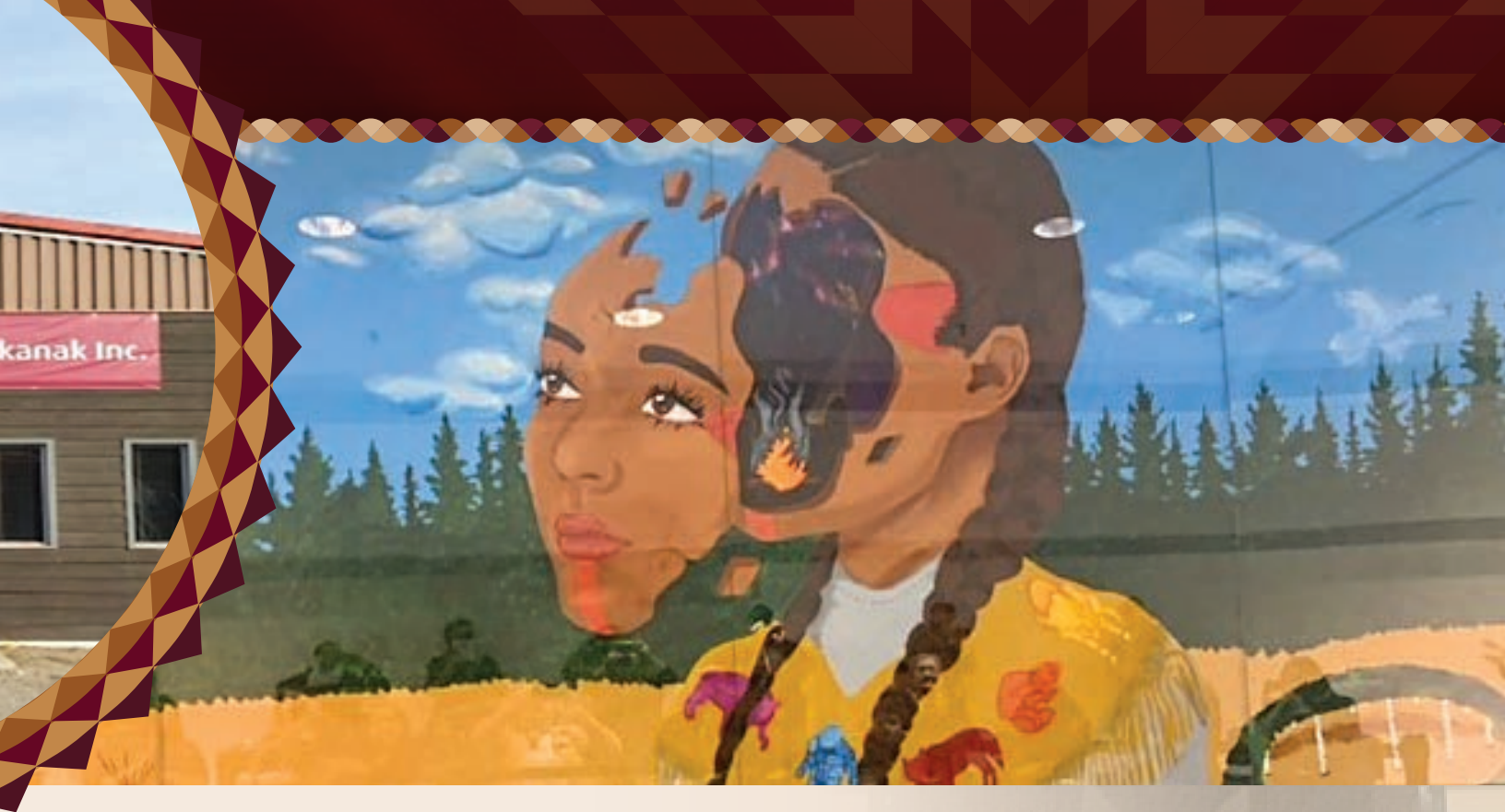
Partnerships

MKO's approach to highlighting the importance of community partnerships.

- ▶ Created a partnership with Harvest Manitoba and Canada Food Banks to receive monthly donations
- ▶ Created partnerships with Safeway and Second Harvest to receive food and other donations to receive monthly donations
- ▶ Created a local partnership with RA Distributing to have quick delivery access to food delivery

Donations

- ▶ Walmart donated \$26,924.98 to MKO Food Bank which was flowed through Winnipeg Harvest charitable registration number
- ▶ Thompson Walmart for an annual donation of \$74,000
- ▶ Safeway gift card donation of \$8,000 for food purchase

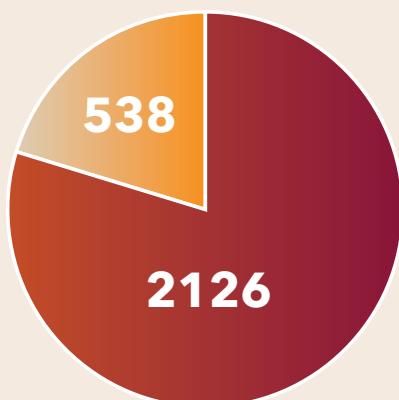


Distribution

The Salvation Army Food Bank was in operation until June 15, 2022, and MKO Food Bank was servicing approximately 538 clients on a monthly basis. Since the closure of the Salvation Army Food Bank, the monthly distribution of food hampers has grown to approximately 2126 monthly.

- ▶ Food hampers are made available to clients and families on a bi-weekly basis
- ▶ Distribution of food hampers to approximately 2126 Indigenous families
- ▶ Distribution of food hampers to approximately 50 non-Indigenous families

Monthly Distribution Growth



2022

2023





URBAN INITIATIVE MANAGER FACILITATED SUPPORTS

The Urban Initiatives Program continues to assist Indigenous community members to access programs and services within the City of Thompson. The Urban Initiative Program collaborates with community-based organizations to develop strategies and actions that support the Indigenous community.

Regional collaboration and capacity building activities/meetings by working in partnership with municipalities, local governments-The City of Thompson, and MKO First Nation or Metis government & communities to develop strategies and joint solutions to increase the socio-economic well-being of urban Indigenous people.

Initiatives

- ▶ Sobering Centre-Planning & Implementation sessions
- ▶ Managed Staff of the Food Bank and oversaw operations.
- ▶ Purchased 7-Sacred Teachings street banners that will be erected at a chosen site this summer 2023.
- ▶ Advocating to ensure an Indigenous footprint is created within urban spaces in Thompson and have input as to how the final product should look.
- ▶ In partnership with the City of Thompson, the pedestrian crosswalk in front of the MKO Thompson office was painted orange with white feathers and the words "Every Child Matters," this will be a yearly occurrence.
- ▶ Implemented the first MKO Indigenous Trade Show in partnership with the Manitoba Trappers Association-Thompson Fur Table.
- ▶ MKO Liaison to Strathallen Management, which provided an Indigenous artist the opportunity to paint a mural in the City Centre Mall.

Memberships

- ▶ Community Advisory Board
- ▶ Integrated Managed Alcohol Committee member
- ▶ Northern Equity Team Member
- ▶ Thompson Aboriginal Accord Member
- ▶ Community Wellness and Public Safety Committee
- ▶ Vaxport Logistics Member [past]
- ▶ Community Wellness and Public Safety Advisory Committee Member.
- ▶ Vice Chair for the Manitoba Cultural Indigenous Society [THP]
- ▶ Board Member of the Boreal Discovery Campaign
- ▶ Board member for Manitoba Indigenous Tourism
- ▶ President of the Northern Heritage Museum

Kinanaskimitnaw, Meegwetch, Masi Cho, and Thank You.

Submitted by: Shyanna Lynxleg, Urban Initiative Program Manager, Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak



Secure Certificate of Indian Status

In January 2021, MKO established a Secure Certificate of Indian Status (SCIS) Program. The program is run through a partnership with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) to meet the needs of Northern Manitobans who need help obtaining a secure status card or Treaty number.

MKO Status Identification Intake Clerks have completed training to be designated as a trusted source. MKO is the first trusted source organization in Canada. Our clerks are authorized to handle personal information and applications. Additional Intake Clerks have been trained to support the high volume of applications. The MKO Winnipeg office offers renewal and replacement status card services by appointment only. The SCIS Program will often set up a kiosk or pop-up at MKO Assemblies and community events.



					New Application Registrations					Quarterly
2022	1st SCIS	Renewal	Replacement	Other	Child	Adult	Monthly Total	Adults	Children	
January	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	2	1	465
February	89	8	3	3	10	5	118	81	37	
March	274	22	2	1	18	2	344	250	94	
April	128	9	5	3	27	7	179	114	65	666
May	233	13	17	6	17	3	288	232	51	
June	144	3	12	6	37	4	199	142	57	
July	179	11	16	3	28	5	237	160	77	816
August	254	16	20	3	28	5	326	186	75	
September	175	19	17	5	33	4	253	173	80	
October	82	10	8	3	22	5	130	96	34	429
November	202	38	45	2	6	0	293	n/a	n/a	
December	45	2	4	0	10	1	62	44	18	
TOTAL	1805	151	171	35	232	43	2432	1480	589	2376

The SCIS program aided in the submission of 226 birth certificate applications. Obtaining birth certificates is a key document when applying for new Treaty numbers and/or Secured Certificate of Indian Status.

*Submitted by: Gina Spence,
SCIS Program Supervisor,
TUAS Coordinator*

Month	Regular	Rush	Total
January	0	3	3
February	2	5	7
March	2	8	10
April	10	5	15
May	4	6	10
June	11	18	29
July	6	23	29
August	41	3	44
September	2	11	13
October	16	13	29
November	11	4	15
December	13	9	22
Total	118	108	226



Thompson Urban Aboriginal Strategy

TRUTH & RECONCILIATION DAY

The Thompson Urban Aboriginal Strategy (TUAS) had a record-breaking attendance for National Indigenous People's Day on June 21, 2022, with 350 people participating. The TUAS held the Soaring Eagle Awards ceremony that recognized 8 students in the areas of volunteerism, academic achievements and arts & cultural. The TUAS also set up seven booths each focused on one of the Seven Sacred Teachings that provided a safe environment for individuals and families. The event received national attention, with CBC News broadcasting live coverage. TUAS was featured on CBC National News and CBC French National coverage, highlighting the success of the event and showcasing the importance of celebrating and honoring Indigenous culture.

On September 30, 2022, the TUAS hosted an event to recognize and honor the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation. Attendees were invited to participate in a community walk from the Residential School Monument to the Thompson Legion Hall where a pipe ceremony and honor song, and a moment of silence was held for Residential School Survivors and for the children who never made it home. Following the walk, a community feast was held at the Thompson Legion Hall that included family friendly activities.

Another highlight of the event was an interactive map, approximately 11m x 8m that attendees could walk on as they were provided with educational resources to navigate through the map. This resource guides educators and their students through a discovery process that helps them understand the past, present and future of Indigenous Peoples in Canada. There is a wealth of information and diversity of stories and voices on this map.

Amanda Grieves created a stunning collection of Red and Orange Jingle dresses in honor of missing and murdered girls and women. These beautiful dresses were celebrated with an honoring ceremony at the community feast attended by 350 people. The dresses were also showcased at the Museum of Human Rights in 2023.

WINTERFEST

In February 2023 Thompson Winterfest featured an MKO Mini Cup hockey tournament with 50 youth participants and 130 attendees. As part of the celebration, 150 people were served soup and Bannock.

BABY BUNDLES

The TUAS provides new mothers with baby bundles that contain supplies like formula, pampers, bottles, clothing, blankets, pacifiers and washcloths. These bundles are to welcome new babies into our community. This year 76 female and 92 male bundles were handed out for a total of 168 baby bundles gifted.



Indigenous Skills & Employment Training Program

The Indigenous Skills & Employment Training Program (ISET) team continues to work with 13 Sub Agreement Holders that supports a total of 21 communities in delivering Employment & Training programs as well as the First Nation Inuit Child Care Initiative (FNICCI). The FNICCI agreement funding has been extended to March 31, 2024 with subsequent funding to be determined. The primary focus has been to provide tools, training, and resources to staff in the communities.

HIGHLIGHTS

ISET moved in to the new MKO Training & Support Centre at 7-1680 Ellice Avenue, Winnipeg, on July 25, 2022. This space has a training room, boardroom and small meeting space available for use by community leadership and programs.

In the fall of 2022, ISET assisted the community daycares in completing questionnaires for funding under the Urgent Repairs and Renovations program, funding was approved under 3 categories:

Urgent Repairs and Renovations – (a sample of approved activities) needs assessment, replacement of windows, adding steel doors, washroom upgrades, flooring, security systems, sprinkler systems, roof repairs, installing stairs and ramps, replace exterior of buildings, installing central air, replacing flooring, installing countertops and cupboards, installing fence and gates, eavestroughs, downspouts, fascia, siding, installing hot water tanks, lighting and covers.

Repairs to Meet Licensing Standards – (a sample of approved activities) Landscaping, interior painting, emergency lights, shaded play area, electrical, crawl space lighting, air quality/ventilation system installation.

Repairs to Support Children with Disabilities – (a sample of approved activities) Accessible bathrooms, wheelchair ramps, sensory rooms, communications accessibility, inclusive play structures, gazebo, specialized equipment, educational resources, headphones, materials and supplies (sensory toys, books, weighted blankets), wheelchair paths.

ISET Forum held November 22 & 23, 2022, attendees included MKO Leadership and Employment & Training Coordinators from each of our 13 sub agreement holder communities. This 2-day forum included presentations and discussions on roles and responsibilities of the Employment & Training Coordinators, Minimum Level of Service, ARMS client case management, client interventions and supports.

On site financial and activity monitors began in March 2023 and 5 sub agreement offices were completed (Employment & Training and FNICCI).



*Service Canada Presentation –
ISET Forum November 2022*

CAPACITY BUILDING/TRAINING:

The ISET Team continues to plan and deliver training for sub-agreement holder staff including:



- ▶ **Winnipeg Transition Centre/U of W** – Job Search Coach – April 12 & 13, 2022
- ▶ **Workplace Education Manitoba** – Igniting the Power Within (Week 2) – April 20-22, 2022
- ▶ **Winnipeg Transition Centre/U of W** – Interview Coach Training – June 28 & 29, 2022
- ▶ **Accountability & Resource Management System (ARMS) Training** – July 20 & 21, 2022
- ▶ **Employment & Training staff** – AOP Training – Feb 22 & 23, 2023
- ▶ **ARMS Training** – March 1 & 2, 2023
- ▶ **FNICCI staff – AOP Training** – March 7 – 9

ARMS training – ISET Program Coordinators continued to provide one on one training support to Sub Agreement Holder staff on client case management and data management as needed.

Moving into the new fiscal year, we are developing training on intake/assessment and counselling processes (how to identify client needs, create an action plan, follow up and case management; including referral to employment opportunities after completion/graduation) as well as client support and retention (in training and on the job), interventions and how to use them to best support clients.

ISET continues to work with our sub agreement holders to submit activity and financial reports in a timely manner. Training on financial reports, general ledgers, income statements and how to report expenses is being developed and will be delivered starting in the fall of 2023.



PARTNERSHIPS

ISET is partnering with Career Trek to set up 2 one-week long Summer Career Camps in Thompson, currently waiting on approval from the Province of Manitoba for a portion of the camp cost.

Continuing to build on the partnership with Workforce Education Manitoba (WEM) and Essential Skills Manitoba (ESM) to deliver training and services to Sub Agreement Holder staff and clients.

Developing a partnership for Indigenous Recruitment in Policing and Justice with MKO Justice, RCMP, Corrections Canada, Manitoba Justice, Province of Manitoba Correctional Services Division and First Nation Policing for the Province of Manitoba.



SCTC Pre-employment Program at ISET Forum November 2022

MKO ISET WEBSITE

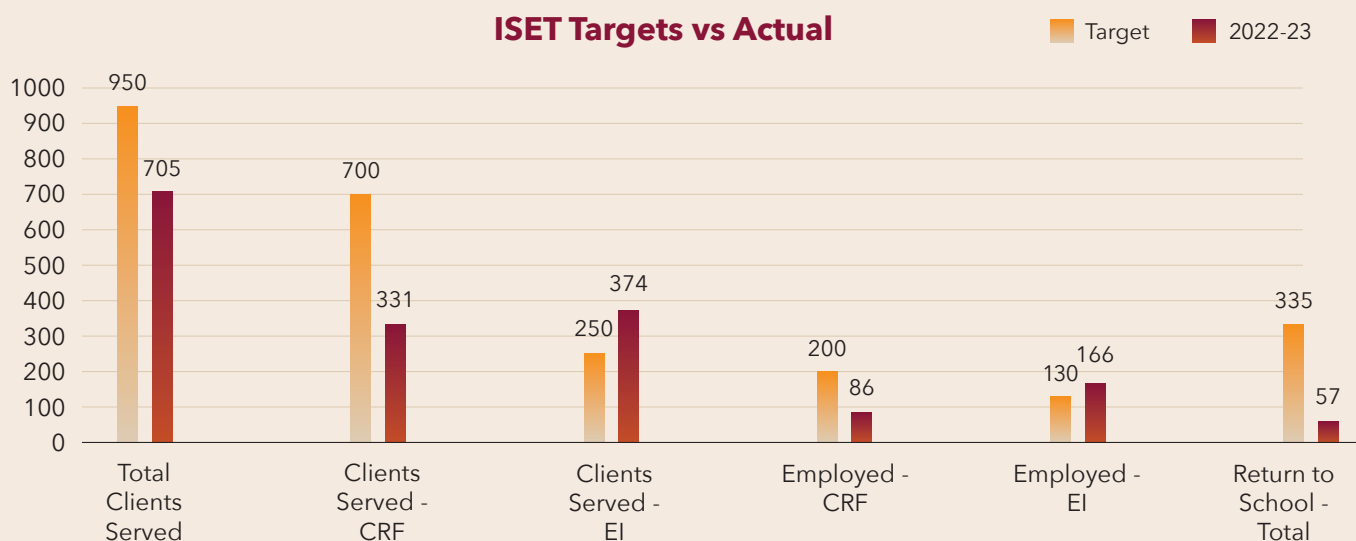
Launched in July 2022, the website includes an ISET overview, job search, resources, training and employment links for clients and information on partnerships and employer programs. There is also a log in page for Sub Agreement Holders staff and Leadership to access forms and resources any time they need.



TARGETS & STATS

ISET team will be delivering additional training on client interventions and capturing data on all clients that access sub agreement holder services. Sub agreement holders are not accurately capturing client data, and this affects our ability to meet or exceed the targets set out in our agreement. Over the next year, ISET will be assigning sub-targets to each community based on their population, budget, increasing the training on client case management, and working with our communities to ensure that client data is entered accurately and in a timely manner to decrease data errors and increase our numbers. We will also be hosting additional training on client interventions and exploring how we can create projects that will fill gaps in employment. The ultimate goal of ISET is to increase employability of our community members and create a strong and competent workforce.

2022-2023 Statistics



FIRST NATIONS INUIT CHILD CARE INITIATIVE

The Child Care Working Group held their first meeting in July 2022 and a second one in September 2022. During the AOP training held in March a list of training was identified by the daycare directors that will be implemented in the new fiscal year.

HARVESTER SUPPORT PROGRAM

- ▶ Proposal for funding was submitted on December 6, 2022; the approved funding agreement was signed January 2023.
- ▶ Funding to the eligible communities will be allocated based on the Modified Berger Regional Allocation formula using on reserve population and remoteness/isolation.
- ▶ Meeting held February 14 to provide an overview of the new funding and a discussion on next steps, including Financial and Activity reporting. A proposal template and Harvester Coordinator job description template were developed and provided to the communities.

Transport Canada: Community Engagement Project Arctic Gateway Group Railway “On The Right Track”

Transport Canada (TC) retained the Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO) organization to engage with communities along the rail line from The Pas to Churchill in northern Manitoba now owned by the Arctic Gateway Group (AGG) formerly known as the Hudson Bay Railway or the Bayline. This engagement included not only the communities but also the regional and national Indigenous organizations, as well as other implicated communities in northern Manitoba and Inuit communities and organizations. The findings from these engagements may be used to guide the development of future policy options for transportation services along the AGG Rail corridor.

However, it is noted that the AGG is First Nation-owned and the rail line is operated by OneNorth, the business and operation entity of AGG.

MKO was expected to engage with communities on the roles of the AGG rail line, Port of Churchill, and the Churchill Marine Tank Farm with respect to the themes listed below, as appropriate. This list is not meant to be exhaustive, and it is understood that themes for the engagement will need to be tailored to the audience and will evolve based on the engagement work:

- ▶ **Cultural significance:** supporting traditional activities that hold cultural importance, such as by improving access to traplines and restricted areas.
- ▶ **Connectivity and essential goods and services transportation:** serving as the only year-round surface-based transportation option to move goods and services to communities, providing access to food, construction materials, fuel, and propane for electric generators. The only other option for transportation is by air (where airports exist), or by trail (e.g., on snowmobile or ATV).
- ▶ **Health:** providing access to health care services and providers. There are only five hospitals in Northern Manitoba (Flin Flon, The Pas, Gillam, Lynn Lake, and Thompson), and residents must travel to Winnipeg for specialized services.
- ▶ **Employment:** employing community residents, the HBR is the largest employer in many of these communities with approximately 220 employees, of which 70% are Indigenous.
- ▶ **Economic development and trade:** providing transportation infrastructure to the town of Churchill, the Port of Churchill, and the Churchill Marine Tank Farm, and facilitating the development of Canada’s interior and North.
- ▶ **Tourism:** transporting tourists to Churchill, Manitoba’s most popular Northern tourist destination, as well as helping support communities along the AGG rail line that have year-round wildlife watching industries.
- ▶ **Climate Change:** creating diverse and widespread engineering challenges along the AGG rail line. Traditional food



- sources are disappearing; ice conditions are becoming increasingly unpredictable, and therefore dangerous for travel by Indigenous hunters; and costly damage to infrastructure is being incurred.

As appropriate, engagement on these topics considered the following possible transportation infrastructure scenarios to help guide the process:

- a) **Scenario 1:** Maintain community connectivity and meet essential needs.
- b) **Scenario 2:** Support regional development (but without a major trade corridor); and
- c) **Scenario 3:** Establish a major trade corridor through the Port of Churchill.

The objective is to complete engagements with Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities to support the comprehensive assessment of the viability of a trade corridor in northern Manitoba as well as the long-term future of the AGG rail line, Port of Churchill, and the Churchill Marine Tank Farm. MKO was asked to engage with communities along the AGG rail line, regional and provincial Indigenous organizations, as well as other affected communities in northern Manitoba and

Inuit communities and organizations. The findings from these engagements may be used to support the development of future policy options for transportation services along the AGG rail corridor.

The overall conclusion that can be drawn from the community engagements is that all three of the scenarios combined as presented by Transport Canada are desired as amended; namely, maintain community connectivity and meet essential needs; support regional development; and there is support among the community respondents to establish a major trade corridor through the Port of Churchill. The three scenarios are not seen as being separate from one another but rather are connected from the past to the present to the future. This is not surprising as the high percentage of the population and demographic are of Indigenous (First Nations) and Aboriginal (Metis and non-status) ancestry and the way of thinking is holistic in nature amongst them, if not for the people in the Manitoba North in general. As well, another overall conclusion that can be drawn is that decommissioning and discontinuation of the rail line is not an option, as one resident put it: without the rail line, we will not exist (as a community).

Staff

- ▶ **Garrison Settee**, MKO Grand Chief
- ▶ **Kelvin Lynxleg**, Executive Director
- ▶ **Agnes Dantouze**, Finance Manager
- ▶ **Allyson Fournier**, MMIWG Wellness and Community Support Liaison
- ▶ **Amanda Shingoose**, Wellbriety Centre Safety Monitor
- ▶ **Amy Carriere**, MMWIG Wellness and Community Support Liason
- ▶ **Angel Hayter**, Wellbriety Centre Custodian
- ▶ **Angela Keeper**, Wellbriety Centre Program Support & Addictions Worker
- ▶ **Angela Spence**, Wellbriety Centre Shift Manager
- ▶ **Arlene Caribou**, FNJS Community Justice Worker – Mathias Colomb
- ▶ **Arvel Ross**, Wellbriety Centre Addictions Support Worker
- ▶ **Ashley Moore**, Policy Analyst
- ▶ **Bev Cameron**, ISET Finance Officer
- ▶ **Brenda Flett**, Medical Transportation Coordinator
- ▶ **Brenda Macumber**, Crisis Response Team Member
- ▶ **Brenda Wood**, Chief of Staff
- ▶ **Brennan Manoakesick**, Director of Intergovernmental Relations
- ▶ **Brianna Aubut**, Thompson Custodian
- ▶ **Cade Anderson**, MMIWG Traditional Support Worker
- ▶ **Candice Schneider**, Program & Operations Support
- ▶ **Carolyn Peckford**, ISET Program Coordinator
- ▶ **Cassie Teichroeb**, ISET Executive Assistant to Program Directors
- ▶ **Catherine Helgason**, Food Bank Supervisor
- ▶ **Charles Harper**, Crisis Response Team Member
- ▶ **Charles Wood**, Youth Healing Lodge Project Manager
- ▶ **Charmaine Clipping**, Health Navigator
- ▶ **Cheryl Bafoe**, Wellbriety Centre Cook
- ▶ **Cheryl St. Denis**, Human Resources Assistant
- ▶ **Christine Sawatzky**, MMIWG Wellness and Community Support Liaison
- ▶ **Colleen Sinclair**, FNJS Community Justice Worker – Mosakahiken
- ▶ **Cole Ross**, Wellbriety Centre Safety Manager
- ▶ **Colin Kinsella**, FFNS Senior Policy Analyst senior Policy Analyst
- ▶ **Corine Spence**, FFNS Research Analyst
- ▶ **Cortney Hudson**, FNJS Community Justice Worker- Misipawistik
- ▶ **Courtney Gazandlare**, Accounts Payables Officer
- ▶ **Crystal Halcrow**, SCIS Intake Clerk
- ▶ **Damien Lynxleg**, Policy Analyst
- ▶ **Daniel Hart**, Winnipeg Custodian
- ▶ **Danielle Jenner**, Wellbriety Centre Coordinator
- ▶ **Debra Patchinose**, FNJS Community Justice Worker- Chemawawin
- ▶ **Dee Hatley**, MMIWG Wellness and Community Support Liaison
- ▶ **Dennis Murdock**, MMIWG Cultural and Land-Based Coordinator
- ▶ **Destiny Kitchokeesik**, Community Justice Worker – Tataskweyak
- ▶ **Dianne Genaille**, FFNS Community Wellness Coordinator
- ▶ **Dolcey Campbell**, ISET Program Coordinator (Child Care)
- ▶ **Dorothy Smith**, Executive Assistant to Grand Chief

- ▶ **Duke Beardy**, Health Consultation Liaison
- ▶ **Edward Cook**, FNJS Community Justice Worker- Sapotaweyak
- ▶ **Edwin Wood**, Justice Program Manager
- ▶ **Elizabeth Bear**, MKO Indigenous Court Worker
- ▶ **Francis Budd**, LGBTQ2S Crisis Response Team Member
- ▶ **Gina Spence**, SCIS Supervisor & TUAS Coordinator
- ▶ **Glenn Tsessaze**, FFNS Community Jurisdiction Worker, Northlands
- ▶ **Gloria Kejick**, Crisis Response Team Member
- ▶ **Greg Fontaine**, Mobile Crisis Response Team Program Manager
- ▶ **Gregory Robson**, MMIWG Prevention and Healing Initiatives Coordinator
- ▶ **Gurpreet Khosa**, FFNS Post-Majority Support Services Supervisor
- ▶ **Heidi Spence**, MMIWG Liason/Director
- ▶ **Hiliary Wood**, Youth Engagement Worker
- ▶ **Hunter Settee-Beardy**, Regional Community Justice Worker – Thompson/Case Conference Coordinator
- ▶ **Inez Vystcil-Spence**, Leaf Rapids Project Manager
- ▶ **Janet Head**, Crisis Response Team Member
- ▶ **Janine Spence**, FFNS Research Assistant
- ▶ **Jasmine Doolan**, Mobile Response Team Member
- ▶ **Jaye White**, ISET Program Director
- ▶ **Jennifer Daniels**, Youth Healing Lodge Community Reintegration Coordinator
- ▶ **Jennifer Linklater**, Wellbriety Centre Health Care Aide
- ▶ **Jennifer Samuel**, MMIWG Executive Assistant
- ▶ **Jenny Lay**, MMIWG Administrative and Technical Assistant
- ▶ **Jeremy Burton**, Construction Project Coordinator
- ▶ **Jimmy Muskego**, Wellbriety Centre Safety Monitor
- ▶ **Jolene Mosiondz**, Crisis Response Team Member
- ▶ **Jordon Big George**, Operations Support
- ▶ **Joy Budd**, Crisis Response Team Member
- ▶ **Judy Hart**, Community Justice Worker – Bunibonibee
- ▶ **Julianna Albert**, IRS Post- Secondary Summer Student
- ▶ **Katie Ledger**, Wellbriety Centre Addictions Support Worker
- ▶ **Kayla Andrews**, IRS Administrative Assistant
- ▶ Kayla Sinclair, Administrative Assistant/ Receptionist
- ▶ **Kayleigh Pagee**, Summer Student Scanner
- ▶ **Kevin Carlson**, Assistant to Grand Chief
- ▶ **Kimberly Beardy**, Regional Community Justice Worker – Thompson/Case Conference Coordinator
- ▶ **Kimberly Bee**, MKO Indigenous Court Worker
- ▶ **Kyle Paynter**, Wellbriety Centre Shift Manager
- ▶ **Lacey Foure**, Youth Healing Lodge Family Wellness Navigator
- ▶ **Leroy Constant**, Special Project Coordinator – Mining Conference & Youth Economic Development
- ▶ **Maegan Courchene**, IRS Project Manager
- ▶ **Mandy Lavallee**, Justice Support Worker
- ▶ **Marie Ballantyne**, MMIWG Liaison Unit Grandmother
- ▶ **Marlon Wilson**, ISET Project Assistant

- ▶ **Martina Saunders**, MMIWG Wellness and Community Support Liaison
- ▶ **Mary Ann Colon**, MKO Indigenous Court Worker
- ▶ **Mary Linklater**, MMIWG Wellness and Community Support Liaison
- ▶ **Maryssa Oniske**, FFNS Community Engagement Coordinator
- ▶ **Max Ledger**, Wellbriety Centre Shift Manager
- ▶ **Melanie Beardy**, Custodian
- ▶ **Melanie McKay**, Youth Healing Lodge Family Wellness Navigator
- ▶ **Melvin Halkett**, Maintenance and Facilities Worker
- ▶ **Michael Okeowo**, Wellbriety Centre Safety Monitor
- ▶ **Michele Genaille**, Crisis Response Team Member
- ▶ **Miranda McPherson**, ISET Receptionist for Winnipeg
- ▶ **Mitchell Saunders**, LGBTQ2S Crisis Response Team Member
- ▶ **Monica Linklater**, Administrative Support, First Nation Emergency Management
- ▶ **Nelson McKay**, Crisis Response Team Member
- ▶ **Nithanial Nasikapow**, Justice Support Worker
- ▶ **Nolan Spence**, Wellbriety Centre Youth Navigator
- ▶ **Oliver Veuillot**, MMIWG Project Officer
- ▶ **Paige Clemons**, FFNS Data Entry Clerk
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- ▶ **Peter Dumas**, Custodian (Thompson)
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- ▶ **Rachelle Halls**, IRS Post- Secondary Summer Student
- ▶ **Raymond Dumas**, FNJS Regional Community Justice Worker – Winnipeg
- ▶ **Rena Stevenson**, FFNS Senior Advisor
- ▶ **Rene Linklater**, Mental Wellness Manager
- ▶ **River Johnson**, MMIWG 2SLGBTQQIA+ Coordinator
- ▶ **Robert Bryan**, Wellbriety Safety Officer
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- ▶ **Rochelle Scott**, Wellbriety Centre Program Support
- ▶ **Roger Thomas**, Youth Healing Lodge Cultural Mentor
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- ▶ **Sherri Schweder**, FFNS Community Wellness Worker, Shamattawa
- ▶ **Sherry Smith**, Accounts Payables & Visa Reconciliation
- ▶ **Shirley Allarie**, Director of Family First Nation Secretariat (FFNS)
- ▶ **Shyanna Lynxleg**, Traditional Healer Program Manager
- ▶ **Sonia Anderson**, Wellbriety Centre Addictions Support Worker
- ▶ **Stacey Rockell**, Thompson ISET Receptionist
- ▶ **Stan Manoakseesick**, IRS Research Advisor

- ▶ **Stephanie Landherr**, MMIWG Wellness and Community Support Liaison
- ▶ **Stewart Hill**, Senior Research and Policy Analyst
- ▶ **Sylvia McKay**, ISET Program Coordinator
- ▶ **Tannis Henderson**, SCIS Intake Clerk
- ▶ **Terry Linklater**, FNJS Community Justice Worker- Nisichawayasihk
- ▶ **Tobi Jolly**, MMIWG Decolonizing Anti-Racism Coordinator
- ▶ **Trent Dantouze**, MMIWG Summer Student
- ▶ **Trevor Constant**, Crisis Response Team Member
- ▶ **Trevor Sinclair**, Mobile Crisis Response Team Program Manager Assistant
- ▶ **Trudy Stevenson**, Crisis Response Team Member
- ▶ **Virginia Moore**, MCRT & Mental Health Administrative Assistant
- ▶ **Virginia Nataweyous**, Crisis Response Team Intake and Deployment Coordinator
- ▶ **Wade McKay**, Youth Healing Lodge Engagement and Wellness Navigator
- ▶ **Yahnel Tait**, Traditional Healer Assistant Manager



Year of Photos










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WINNIPEG OFFICE

102-1700 Ellice Avenue

Winnipeg, MB R3H 0B1

Phone: (204) 927-7500

Fax: (204) 927-7509

Toll Free: 1-800-442-0488

THOMPSON OFFICE

206-55 Selkirk Avenue

Thompson, MB R8N 0M5

Phone: (204) 677-1600

Fax: (204) 778-7655

Toll Free: 1-800-442-0488

mkonation.com