



Manitoba Keewatinowik Okimakanak Inc.

For immediate release
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Celebrating Indigenous Nurses Day and National Nursing Week

Treaty Five Territory, Thompson, MB – Manitoba Keewatinowik Okimakanak Inc. (MKO) and Keewatinohk Inniniw Minoayawin Inc. (KIM) commend all Indigenous nurses who have chosen to work in a profession that allows them to dedicate their lives to advancing the health and safety of Indigenous peoples across Manitoba and Canada.

National Nursing Week runs from May 11 to 17 and May 13, 2020, has been proclaimed as **Indigenous Nurses Day**, by the Honourable **Cameron Friesen, Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living** for Manitoba.

“Today is a special opportunity to applaud the continuous efforts of our Indigenous nurses who have worked diligently to ensure that First Nations receive the highest level of trauma-informed health care,” stated **Grand Chief Garrison Settee**.

“We really appreciate all the essential work our Indigenous nurses do, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic,” shared **Dr. Barry Lavallee**, Medical Advisor for MKO/KIM. “Their dedication to care and treatment, along with the research and advocacy they carry out, have been paramount to the health and wellness of our First Nations and Metis communities. The level of skill is always there, and they are doing incredible work—even in non-COVID times.”

“I want to acknowledge the dedication and commitment of the nurses out on the front lines,” emphasized **Caroline Chartrand**, President of Manitoba Indigenous Nurses Inc., who is also the Senior Nurse Advisor of the new health entity KIM. “Indigenous nurses are unique as they are the bridge between western medicine and traditional health and healing practices. Indigenous nurses are also well-versed in trauma-informed care and have lived experience with the realities of Indigenous communities. We had planned on having a celebration on May 13, but it had to be cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.”

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Manitoba Keewatinowik Okimakanak Inc. (MKO) is a non-profit, political advocacy organization that has represented 26 First Nation communities in Manitoba's North since 1981. The MKO represents more than 72,000 First Nations people.