



For immediate release -

May 12, 2021

Acknowledging Indigenous Nurses Day and National Nursing Week

Treaty One Territory, Winnipeg, MB – During National Nursing Week, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, First Nations Health and Social Secretariat of Manitoba (FNHSSM), Keewatinok Inniniw Minoayawin Inc. (KIM), Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. (MKO) and Southern Chiefs Organizations Inc. (SCO) join Manitoba Indigenous Nurses Inc. to recognize and acknowledge all nurses in Manitoba who have chosen the health care profession and for their great contributions over the past year throughout the pandemic. On Indigenous Nurses Day, they collectively honour all Indigenous nurses for their important role as healers and caregivers.

National Nursing Week runs from May 10 to 16 and in Manitoba, **Indigenous Nurses Day** has been proclaimed on May 12 by the Honourable Heather Stefanson, Minister of Health and Seniors Care for Manitoba. Indigenous Nurses Day has been celebrated in Manitoba for over a decade.

“Over the past year, it has been our health care workers who have been leading the fight against COVID-19 across the world, in Manitoba and in our First Nations. On behalf of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, we give our deepest gratitude to our nurses for being an integral part of protecting and caring for our people. We also thank you for being there for individuals and their families when there has been loss. You have put in many hours and had many difficult moments. We thank you for your strength and courage.”

~**Grand Chief Arlen Dumas** of Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC).

"Indigenous nurses have really answered the call throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, working tirelessly to support people in Northern Manitoba during outbreaks in First Nations and in personal care homes. The nurses have also stepped up as part of the COVID-19 vaccine rollout—they have been instrumental in getting vaccines into the arms of First Nations citizens. I am proud of my colleagues, nurses **Caroline Chartrand** and **Kathleen North**, who have demonstrated their commitment to the health and well-being of Manitoba First Nations. The accomplishments of Indigenous nurses clearly demonstrate that the collective health and well-being of First Nations people is in good hands. I encourage anyone who wants to help care for others to consider pursuing a career in nursing. I commend Indigenous nurses for taking on the essential role of caring for others.”

~**Grand Chief Garrison Settee, Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak**

“Our First Nation and Indigenous Nurses have long been integral to the health and well-being of our communities, but this past year they have gone above and beyond to keep us safe from the many devastating health impacts of COVID-19. They’ve been the fighters on the frontlines, saving lives while putting their own at risk. I offer the biggest thanks and deepest gratitude to them. Their strength and commitment have gotten us through this pandemic, offering comfort to many families during times of great loss. Your grace and fortitude has touched us all.”

~**Grand Chief Jerry Daniels** of the Southern Chiefs Organizations Inc. (SCO)

“We take this time today to thank our Indigenous nurses for their tireless efforts, for the many hours they’ve travelled and worked to support people in Manitoba, especially in our Indigenous communities,” said Caroline Chartrand, President of Manitoba Indigenous Nurses Inc., and Senior Nurse Advisor with KIM, a new First Nation led health entity focusing on healthcare transformation in northern Manitoba. “Thank you for the sacrifices you made and for going on the front lines to protect and care for our people and all Manitobans.”

~**Caroline Chartrand**, President of Manitoba Indigenous Nurses Inc., and Senior Nurse Advisor with KIM

“We know nurses have always done so much through their work, and now even more so through this pandemic. Nurses have gone above and beyond working in many settings and locations throughout our province. They have been educating, volunteering to do vaccination clinics, been part of and have led pandemic response teams, worked at the health centres, nursing stations, personal care homes and hospitals. We’re so grateful for each and every one of these amazing nurses and the work they are doing.”

~**Chief Sheldon Kent**, chair of the First Nations Health and Social Secretariat of Manitoba (FNHSSM)

“Today and every day, we celebrate Indigenous nurses. They are dedicated leaders who are vital to the health and wellness of those in our communities across the province. As agents of change, they have faced and overcome numerous challenges in the ongoing response to the pandemic for First Nation communities. I am proud of the evolving innovations in care they continue to provide, including the delivery of racism free health care which is paramount to all First Nations people. Thank you for your strength, compassion and kindness, and love.”

~**Dr. Barry Lavallee**, CEO of Keewatinohk Inniniw Minoayawin Inc. (KIM)

There will an online celebration for Indigenous Nurses Day at 12 pm NOON on the partner organization Facebook pages:

[Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs](#) (AMC)

[First Nations Health and Social Secretariat of Manitoba](#) (FNHSSM)

[Keewatinohk Inniniw Minoayawin Inc.](#) (KIM)

[Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak](#) (MKO)

[Southern Chiefs Organizations Inc.](#) (SCO)

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