



**Keewatinohk Inniniw
Minoayawin Inc.**
Northern Peoples' Wellness



**NORTHERN
HEALTH REGION**



Manitoba
Keewatinowi
Okimakanak Inc.

September 26, 2022

Three Partners Commit to Eliminating All Forms of Indigenous-Specific Racism in Healthcare in Northern Manitoba

Treaty Five Territory, Thompson, MB... Today, representatives from Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO), Keewatinohk Inniniw Minoayawin (KIM), and the Northern Regional Health Authority (NRHA) signed a *Declaration to Eliminate All Forms of Indigenous-Specific Racism*.

The signing of this declaration is a major step forward in working to end the racism Indigenous Peoples face when accessing or working within the healthcare system in Northern Manitoba.

“For years, First Nations citizens have shared stories reflecting their encounters with racism while they are trying to access health care,” shared MKO Grand Chief Garrison Settee. “Today, I was pleased to sign a declaration that shows our commitment to working in partnership to eliminate all forms of racism that impact Indigenous Peoples accessing health care in Northern Manitoba. Health care is a Treaty right. My hope is this is one of the first steps in helping us to build a positive experience for MKO citizens who have the right to access culturally safe healthcare services in the Northern Health Region.”

“Ending Indigenous racism in healthcare is fundamental to ensuring regional health equity leading to the best health outcomes for all our citizens,” said Cal Huntley NRHA board chair. “We thank Minister Gordon for witnessing the document signing and appreciate her ongoing support.”

“Prioritizing the issue of Indigenous specific racism in the provincial health care system with Indigenous leadership and communities can support healing and the spirit and intent of Truth and Reconciliation,” Health Minister Audrey Gordon said. “I am pleased to witness this signing and indicate our government’s support for this important work.”

“The pathways to address specific racism in the health care system commences officially today. This is just the first step to true reconciliation and meaningful health transformation for Manitobans,” said Dr. Barry Lavalley, CEO of Keewatinohk Inniniw Minoayawin Inc. “We have lots of work ahead of us, but we are confident we are moving towards a system that is truly equitable for all Indigenous people that we support in northern Manitoba.”

“Today we mark the culmination of more than a year of joint efforts in developing a foundation for the elimination of Indigenous racism in healthcare in the NRHA,” CEO Helga Bryant said. “This signing acknowledges racism exists in healthcare and demonstrates our pledge to work with MKO and KIM to this shared goal to stamp it out and promote healing in the spirit of reconciliation for the betterment of all northerners.”

The commitment to biannual reporting in the declaration will ensure a transparent and accountable process to track progress and report to northern communities. These efforts will continue in a collaborative manner that is Indigenous-led and powered by women.

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