
Assembly of First Nations

50 O'Connor Street, Suite 200
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6L2
Telephone: (613) 241-6789 Fax: (613) 241-5808
www.afn.ca



Assemblée des Premières Nations

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Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6L2
Téléphone: (613) 241-6789 Télécopieur: (613) 241-5808
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ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY
September 3-4-5, 2025, Winnipeg, MB

Resolution no. 17/2025

TITLE: Support for a First Nations-Led Organ and Transplant Program

SUBJECT: Health, Organ Donation and Transplant, Self-Determination

MOVED BY: Chief Derek Nepinak, Minegozibe Anishinabe First Nation, MB

SECONDED BY: Andre Bear, Proxy, Little Black Bear First Nation, SK

DECISION Carried; 5 Opposition; 5 Abstention

WHEREAS:

- A. The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) is mandated to advocate for the collective rights, interests, and priorities of First Nations across Turtle Island, consistent with the Inherent right to self-determination and the protection of health and wellness.
- B. Access to timely, culturally appropriate, and equitable health care services—including organ and tissue donation and transplantation—is a human right and essential for the wellbeing of First Nations citizens.
- C. First Nations people face systemic barriers and inequities in the current organ and transplant system, including disparities in access, outcomes, culturally safe care, and opportunities for community-led solutions.
- D. Existing provincial and federal organ donation and transplant systems have not adequately addressed First Nations-specific needs, perspectives, or cultural values related to life, death, body integrity, and traditional beliefs.
- E. There is an urgent need for a First Nations-led approach to organ and tissue donation and transplantation, grounded in Indigenous knowledge, community engagement, and Nation-to-Nation relationships.
- F. The development of a First Nations-led Organ and Transplant Program is aligned with the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UN Declaration), the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action—particularly Call to Action #18, which demands the recognition and implementation of Indigenous health rights—and the AFN's health transformation strategy.

Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 5th day of September, 2025 in Winnipeg, Manitoba

Cindy Woodhouse

CINDY WOODHOUSE NEPINAK, NATIONAL CHIEF

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THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the First Nations-in-Assembly:

1. Support the development and implementation of a First Nations-led Organ and Transplant Program, designed and governed by First Nations in accordance with their laws, customs, and knowledge systems.
2. Call on Health Canada, provincial/territorial governments, and related health authorities to engage in formal partnerships and funding agreements with First Nations leadership and organizations to support the development and sustainability of such a program.
3. Direct the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) to collaborate with First Nations, technical experts, and knowledge holders to advance national dialogue, policy development, data sovereignty initiatives, and advocacy related to organ donation and transplantation.
4. Urge the inclusion of cultural safety, trauma-informed care, and traditional perspectives in all aspects of organ and transplant services involving First Nations individuals and communities.
5. Support efforts to raise awareness and increase informed consent and participation in organ donation and transplantation through community-based education and culturally relevant public health initiatives.
6. Affirm the Inherent right of First Nations to design, deliver, and control health services, and call for the immediate mobilization of resources and political will to achieve equity, dignity, and self-determination in the field of organ and transplant health services.

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