
Assembly of First Nations

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Assemblée des Premières Nations

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**ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY
JULY 11, 12, & 13, 2023; HALIFAX, NS**

Resolution no. 59/2023

TITLE: Call for Extending Indigenous Services Canada's Timeline for Developing the Long-term and Continuing Care Framework

SUBJECT: Health, Social Development

MOVED BY: Chief Rachel Manitowabi, Wikwemikong Unceded First Nation, ON

SECONDED BY: David Pratt, proxy, James Smith Cree Nation, SK

DECISION Carried; 1 abstention, 1 opposed

WHEREAS:

- A. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration) states:
- i. Article 5: Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic, social, and cultural institutions, while retaining their right to participate fully, if they so choose, in the political, economic, social, and cultural life of the State.
 - ii. Article 21 (1): Indigenous peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including, inter alia, in the areas of education, employment, vocational training and retraining, housing sanitation, health and social security.
 - iii. Article 21 (2): States shall take effective measures and, where appropriate, special measures to ensure continuing improvement of their economic and social conditions. Particular attention shall be paid to the rights and special needs of Indigenous elders, women, youth, children, and persons with disabilities.
- B. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and associated United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities issued Concluding Observations on Canada's initial report, including specific recommendations to:

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- i. Adopt cross-sectorial strategies with a view to combating inequality and discrimination faced by persons with disabilities through, inter alia, affirmative action measures that include clear targets and the collection of data on progress achieved disaggregated by age, sex, and Indigenous background.
 - ii. Consider Article 5 of the Convention while implementing targets 10. 2 and 10. 3 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, Agenda 2030, "Leave No One Behind."
- C. Bill C-81, the Accessible Canada Act, was passed in the House of Commons on May 29, 2019, and received royal assent on June 21, 2019. The Accessible Canada Act's aim is to make a barrier free Canada by January 1, 2040, including working with provinces and territories to coordinate efforts on accessibility.
- D. Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Resolution 19/2019, Developing a Seven Generations Continuum of Care for First Nations by First Nations of Health, Economic and Social Services, mandated the AFN to work with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) to reform the conventional siloed program-by-program approach to long-term and continuing care services into a wraparound continuum of care to ensure stronger health, social, and economic wellbeing for aging First Nations and Persons with Different Abilities (PWDA) at all stages of life.
- E. Budget 2019 provided \$8.5 million over two years for ISC to work with First Nations and Inuit communities to develop a Wholistic Long-term and Continuing Care Framework. The First Nations-led engagements hosted between September 2020 and September 2022 emphasized the importance of ensuring improved services and supports within the Assisted Living and First Nations and Inuit Home and Community Care (FNIHCC) Programs are administered in a wholistic wraparound support method within First Nations.
- F. Engagement summary reports were submitted by First Nations to ISC to be synthesized into a national engagement summary report. ISC's national engagement summary report was delayed and provided inadequate time for First Nations feedback before being finalized in April 2023. Many First Nations leaders expressed disappointment with the quality of the report and stated the development of the framework should not be based exclusively on the unsatisfactory report.
- G. In their 2021 Mandate Letter, the Minister of Indigenous Services was directed to work with First Nations and other federal departments to co-develop a distinctions-based Indigenous Long-term and Continuing Care Framework to ensure Indigenous Peoples can receive these services in or near their own communities.
- H. In 2022, the AFN Executive Committee passed Resolution 44/2022, Co-development of Policy Options with Indigenous Services Canada for a Memorandum to Cabinet on the Wholistic Long-term and Continuing Care Framework, mandating the AFN's work to co-develop policy recommendations to address the shortfalls caused by the current siloed approach to service delivery and recommend a First Nations-informed path forward for Long-term and Continuing Care services.

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- I. On April 20, 2023, the Chair of the Chiefs' Committee on Health (CCOH) sent a letter to ISC's Minister to affirm the AFN's commitment to the co-development of policy options and requesting additional time to adequately analyze and deliberate the priorities for reform by amending ISC's current timeline of submitting a Memorandum to Cabinet from Fall 2023 to Winter 2024.
- J. The AFN is currently planning a series of virtual regional focus groups on the Wholistic Long-term and Continuing Care Framework to further discuss the priorities for reform and co-develop First Nations-led policy recommendations. Following the conclusion of the series of regional focus groups, the AFN will provide a summary report, host a national validation session and report back to First Nations at the December 2023 Special Chiefs Assembly for additional validation prior to submitting the recommendations to ISC to annex into a memorandum to cabinet in Winter 2024.

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

1. Call upon the federal government to revise their Memorandum to Cabinet submission timeline to Winter 2024 to allow Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) and the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) the appropriate amount of time to work with First Nations in the co-development of policy recommendations for the development of a continuous, dynamic wholistic Seven Generations Continuum of Care approach that effectively provides culturally safe care to First Nations across their lifespan.
2. Direct the Chiefs' Committee on Health to continue to oversee the AFN and the Technical Working Group on Social Development (TWGSD) co-development of policy recommendations with ISC for a Wholistic Long-term and Continuing Care Framework through the reform of the Assisted Living (AL) and First Nations and Inuit Home and Community Care (FNIHCC) Programs.
3. Direct the AFN to continue to work horizontally in the co-development of policy options for the reform of the AL and FNIHCC programs into a Wholistic Long-term and Continuing Care Framework.
4. Direct the AFN to seek validation of the proposed First Nations-developed policy recommendations for the reform of the AL and FNIHCC Programs in December 2023.

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