

# Assembly of First Nations

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# Assemblée des Premières Nations

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**SPECIAL CHIEFS ASSEMBLY**  
**December 2-3-4, 2025, Ottawa, ON**

**Resolution no. 80/2025**

**TITLE:** Unilateral Health Supply Restrictions Resulting in Service Disruptions

**SUBJECT:** Health

**MOVED BY:** Chief Kurvis Anderson, Pinaymootang First Nation, MB

**SECONDED BY:** Jeremy Fourhorns, Proxy, Nekaneet First Nation, SK

**DECISION:** Approved by the AFN Executive Committee by consensus.

## WHEREAS:

- A. The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UN Declaration), which Canada has a legal and moral obligation to implement, states:
- Article 24(1): Indigenous peoples have the right to their traditional medicines and to maintain their health practices, including the conservation of their vital medicinal plants, animals and minerals. Indigenous individuals also have the right to access, without any discrimination, to all social and health services.
  - Article 24(2): Indigenous individuals have an equal right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. States shall take the necessary steps with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of this right.
- B. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) Calls to Action state:
- Call to Action #19: We call upon the federal government, in consultation with Aboriginal peoples, to establish measurable goals to identify and close the gaps in health outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities, and to publish annual progress reports and assess long-term trends. Such efforts would focus on indicators such as: infant mortality, maternal health, suicide, mental health, addictions, life expectancy, birth rates, infant and child health issues, chronic diseases, illness and injury incidence, and the availability of appropriate health services.
- C. The narrowing of Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) mandate runs contrary to the TRC's Calls to Action, particularly 18-19, as well as federal Treaty responsibilities and Canada's obligations under the UN Declaration, Jordans Principle, and C-92.

**Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of January, 2026 in Ottawa, Ontario**

*Cindy Woodhouse*

**CINDY WOODHOUSE NEPINAK, NATIONAL CHIEF**

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- D. Due to historical and ongoing government-imposed health policies, First Nations people continue to face disproportionately high health challenges compared to the general population. The federal government has an obligation to uphold its commitments to ensure First Nations people have non-discriminatory, timely, and equitable access to comprehensive health services, including preventative, and chronic disease management.
- E. These procurement restrictions are not a minor administrative adjustment but represent a withdrawal of federal responsibility in communities where federal jurisdiction over health services remains both active and essential. These restrictions are delaying diagnostics, interrupting chronic disease management, and widening already unacceptable health outcome disparities.
- F. This decision was made without consultation, without transition planning, and without any regard for the realities for the health service delivery in First Nations and is contrary to the development and support of mandates and policies that should uphold First Nations rights to receive healthcare services closer to home.
- G. The absence of coordinated federal/provincial engagement to date has deepened the harm and confusion caused by ISC's procurement decision.
- H. Many health centres currently play a vital role in delivering primary healthcare services within their communities. Nations are being denied basic materials on the grounds that primary care falls within the provincial authority. At the same time, First Nations Health Centres routinely fill gaps left by the province that serves both First Nations and non-First Nations populations in the surrounding regions. The impact to community is severe.
- I. Communities cannot absorb the consequences of administrative disputes between governments, nor should they be forced to.

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

1. Direct the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) to work with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) and Health Canada to determine an immediate and coordinated path forward to mitigate the short- and long-term consequences of this unilateral administrative change.
2. Direct the National Chief to convene an urgent meeting with the federal Minister of Indigenous Services Canada and Minister of Health Canada to immediately correct this procurement directive and streamline outdated mandates that are not reflective of realities of First Nations health service delivery.
3. Call upon the AFN and ISC to reconstitute the scope of health center designations and expand the scope of services to include both public health and primary healthcare services in First Nations communities.

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