
Assembly of First Nations

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Assemblée des Premières Nations

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SPECIAL CHIEFS ASSEMBLY
DECEMBER 3 – 5, 2019, OTTAWA, ON

Resolution no. 110/2019

TITLE:	Funding for First Nations-Specific Programs, Services and Supports for Adults with Disabilities in First Nations
SUBJECT:	Disabilities
MOVED BY:	Chief Derrick Henderson, Sagkeeng First Nation, MB
SECONDED BY:	Chief Karen Batson, Pine Creek First Nation, MB
DECISION:	Carried by Consensus

WHEREAS:

A. The *United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UN Declaration) states:

- i. 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.
- ii. Article 21 (2): States shall take the effective measure 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 person with disabilities.

B. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities states:

- i. Article 21 (b): Accepting and facilitating the use of sign languages, Braille, augmentative and alternative communication, and all other accessible means, modes and formats of communication of their choice by persons with disabilities in official interactions.

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- ii. Article 27: States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others; this includes the right to the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities. States Parties shall safeguard and promote the realization of the right to work, including for those who acquire a disability during the course of employment, by taking appropriate steps, including through legislation, to, inter alia.
 - iii. Article 30 (4): Persons with disabilities shall be entitled, on an equal basis with others, to recognition and support of their specific cultural and linguistic identity, including sign languages and deaf culture.
- C. In Manitoba, estimates reveal that, at a minimum, 1,070 First Nation adults live with disabilities in their First Nations. After many years of advocacy, First Nations with disabilities still do not have the supports they require to live independently in their First Nations with dignity, respect and inclusion.
- D. The supports required for First Nations with disabilities include but are not limited to: supported living/housing, supported employment, land-based cultural programs, self-managed care, homecare, adult education and day programming, adult foster care, universal design accommodations/retrofitting and new accessible design.
- E. The Government of Canada provides funding and services for the implementation of Jordan's Principle, as ordered by the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal, to provide access to services and supports for First Nations children up to the age of 18. However, coverage under Jordan's Principle ends at the age of 18, and little to no supports exists for those over the age of majority.
- F. First Nations with disabilities are falling through jurisdictional gaps as both the Federal Government of Canada and provincial governments do not provide adequate services and funding to First Nations with disabilities.
- G. The lack of services for adults with disabilities results in: homelessness, drug and alcohol abuse, forced relocation to neighbouring communities and cities, accidents, sickness and early death, unnecessary placement in senior care homes, poor quality of life, and unrealistic responsibilities to caregivers with no support.
- H. The Assembly of First Nations has passed several resolutions calling for policy and funding frameworks for disability on and off-reserve, including: Resolution 74/2018, *Non-Insured Health Benefits: Ongoing Commitment to a Joint Process*; Resolution 55/2016, *First Nation Federal Accessibility Legislation*; Resolution 48/2014, *Support for Persons with Disabilities*; Resolution 10/2018, *Resources for Engagement on Distinct First Nations Accessibility Legislation*; Resolution 55/2018, *First Nations Disabilities Program On-Reserve*; Resolution 98/2017, *Distinct First Nations Accessibility Legislation*; and Resolution 19/2019, *Developing a Seven Generations Continuum of Care for First Nations, by First Nations Health, Economic and Social Services*.

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THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Chiefs-in-Assembly:

1. Recognize and affirm the rights of First Nations adults and youth with disabilities to access programs, services and supports, including sports, within their First Nations across Canada.
2. Direct the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) National Chief to call upon the Government of Canada, including Employment and Social Development Canada and Indigenous Services Canada, to provide equitable funding to First Nations for the necessary programs, services and supports to enable First Nations adults with disabilities to live in their First Nations with dignity, choice and independence.
3. Direct the AFN Chiefs' Committee on Human Resources Development and the Chiefs' Committee on Health to urge the Government of Canada to work with First Nations to develop a First Nations-specific policy and funding framework that guarantees the right to access prenatal and birth-to-death continuum of First Nations-based supports and services for all First Nations living with disabilities, regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, and/or residency, and ensure this policy and funding framework is resourced and operationalized.
4. Direct the AFN to report to Chiefs-In-Assembly at the 2020 Annual General Assembly on progress towards implementation of the numerous resolutions calling for improved programs, services, and funding for First Nations with disabilities.
5. Direct the AFN Economic Sector Secretariat to immediately establish a national First Nations sub-working group on adults with disabilities, with a mandate to address improved programs, services, and funding for First Nations with disabilities.

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