TITLE:	Support for Nishnawbe Aski Nation and Grand Council Treaty #3 Strategy on "Restoring our Nations: Action Plan for Community Recovery from Opioid Addiction"
SUBJECT:	Health
MOVED BY:	Bruce Achneepineskum, Proxy, Marten Falls First Nation, ON
SECONDED BY:	Chief Warren White, Naotkamegwanning First Nation, ON
DECISION:	Carried by Consensus – 1 abstention

WHEREAS:

A. As the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) has stated:

Article 21

1. "Indigenous people have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions," including education, employment, training, health and social security;

Article 22

2. "Indigenous women and children enjoy the full protection and guarantees against all forms of violence and discrimination";

Article 23

"Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for exercising their right to development" and "to be actively involved in developing and determining health … and social programs";

Article 24

1. "Indigenous peoples have the right to their traditional medicines and to maintain their health practices";

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Article 25

"Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources."

B. These rights are without discrimination, to the improvement of their health; to determine and administer health programmes; and to have an equal right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health with states taking the "necessary steps with a view to achieve progressively the full realization of this right" (Article 24, UNDRIP).

C. An epidemic of opioid drug addiction has entered our territories and has created a major health burden, social disruption, violence, predators targeting women and children and has incapacitated our workforce.

D. Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) and Grand Council Treaty #3 (GCT#3) have embarked on a joint strategy, "Restoring Our Nations: Action Plan for Community Recovery from Opioid Addiction", to address the high prevalence of Prescription Drug Abuse, particularly opiate drugs, to provide treatment, prevention and security to our members and to work on root causes of addiction.

E. Our First Nation Governments have been extensively lobbying for funding and have only been met with resistance from both Federal and Provincial governments, have had requests for meetings with Ministers and senior government officials ignored; or we have been diverted into meaningless policy strategies and processes which are time-consuming and have no authority or ability to fund our programs and projects

F. Existing community-based programs such as Health Canada's National Native Alcohol and Drug Program, Brighter Futures and Building Health Communities are ill-equipped to deal with opiate addiction, and facilities for treatment do not exist in our territories.

G. NAN and GCT#3 have been advocating for the approval of a detoxification medication, Suboxone, to be used in community-based clinical withdrawal programs, and to be included on Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB), but have been either ignored or been given restrictive criteria that our members do not qualify for this medication.

H. NIHB approval for the drug Subutex is also required for prenatal moms who are at medical risk for miscarriage when abruptly ceasing the use of opiods, and the standard practice is to place them on Methadone and/or Subutex on an emergency basis to protect the unborn child.

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

1. Support the Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) and Grand Council Treaty #3 (GCT#3) "Restoring Our Nations: Action Plan for Community Recovery from Opioid Addiction", a strategy to address the increasing addiction to opiate drugs so they can fund programs and services for their members.

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2. Direct the National Chief and the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Executive Committee to urge the Federal government to develop, implement and fund a First Nations Opiate Recovery and Prevention Strategy, outside of the National Native Alcohol and Drug Program.
3. Direct the AFN to assist NAN and GCT#3 with securing funding for the "Restoring Our Nations: Action Plan for Community Recovery from Opioid Addiction" strategy.
4. Direct the AFN to report back to Chiefs-in-Assembly on progress developing a National First Nations Opiate Recovery and Prevention strategy.
5. Direct the AFN to urge other jurisdictions to examine how this opioid epidemic has placed innocent women and children at risk and has violated their rights to live in a safe environment due to lack of resources for security and policing and targeting those who prey on innocent women, youth and children.
6. Direct the National Chief and AFN Executive Committee to advocate for First Nations inclusion in the Anti-Drug strategy that will fund community security members to implement search and seizure of illicit drugs and charges against drug dealers and to encourage that the profits from illicit drug trade be directed back to the community for prevention programs.
7. Direct the AFN to lobby for NIHB access to Suboxone and Subutex for medical detoxification and/or maintenance, and ensure controls are in place for documented medical legitimacy for OxyContin.

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