



**KTUNAXA
NATION**

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**For Immediate Release
January 12, 2009**

Ktunaxa Implement Health Service Liaisons

Kootenays / Ktunaxa Traditional Territory – Thanks to funding from the First Nation Health Council, there will be three new Health Liaisons working on behalf of the Ktunaxa Nation. The Liaisons' role will be to assist in the planning for the delivery of health services to Aboriginal people across the Ktunaxa Traditional Territory. Ktunaxa service principles include providing equitable access to services regardless of a person's residency (on or off-reserve), federal status or lineage.

The Liaison team will work within three separate geographical areas in the Ktunaxa Traditional Territory, and will be supported by the staff of the Ktunaxa Nation Social Sector, a full team of technical specialists who are dedicated to the empowerment and well-being of Aboriginal people.

"The new Liaison positions are key in the implementation of our health plan as outlined in our previous strategy sessions," said Shannon Girling-Hebert, the Manager of Health Services and Strategic Initiatives for the Ktunaxa Nation. "The Liaisons will be working from a family based model in which innovation, flexibility and responsiveness will be a priority. They will have the ability to adapt their consultation to changing client needs, as well as create new strategies, opportunities and initiatives for Aboriginal people to participate in creating the foundation for future services."

The Liaisons are part of an effort to transform the health system where gaps currently exist for Aboriginal people seeking appropriate care and services. The long term goal is to transition the full range of Aboriginal health services to the Ktunaxa Health Authority in full partnership and coordination with the Interior Health Authority and Health Canada.

This transformation will include inter-governmental initiatives that strive to bring about systemic change to how government makes decisions related to the health and well-being of Aboriginal people.

"Through this process the Ktunaxa hope to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal people across their territory, by establishing culturally relevant community based service delivery systems, providing supports and services that reflect the unique strengths and challenges of all communities served, and by building capacity within the Aboriginal community." Girling-Hebert went on to explain.

Takisqnuuk

Lower Kootenay

St. Mary's

Tobacco Plains

In the first phase of activities, the objective will be to identify Aboriginal people living both off and on reserve and engage them in a dialogue. It is through this process that the Ktunaxa Nation hopes to receive feedback on what services are needed and how they can best be delivered.

The Liaisons will also research historical data and current demographics in the different geographic locations which will help to determine the best use of all Aboriginal health resources within the Traditional Territory.

The Ktunaxa Nation will be engaged in negotiations, consultations and strategic initiatives with industry and government over the next few months as they continue to transition to self-government and assume jurisdiction over health and wellness standards and services.

“It will require a cooperative approach to improve the overall health outcomes of Aboriginal people in our region,” continued Girling-Hebert. “We certainly encourage those who want to become involved in this evolutionary initiative to contact us for more information.”

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For Further Information Contact:

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“Strong, healthy citizens and communities speaking our languages and celebrating who we are and our history in our ancestral homelands, working together, managing our lands and resources, as a self-sufficient, self-governing Nation.”

- Ktunaxa Nation Vision Statement