

Board Appointments to advance First Nations Health

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COAST SALISH TERRITORY/WEST VANCOUVER

First Nations Health Council today announced the incorporation of the First Nations Health Society and the appointment of its Board of Directors. The newly incorporated Health Society will act as the business arm of the Health Council. "The Health Council is pleased to have recruited such a dynamic board, one with experience in the public, private and First Nations sectors." said Debbie Abbott, Co-chair of the First Nations Health Council. "Our vision is to develop the Health Council into a first rate First Nations health organization, and the combined experience of our new board lends itself naturally to capacity building and knowledge transfer."

The new board appointments include Pierre Leduc who brings to the Health Society 37 years experience in the health care industry, including 25 in a senior management capacity. John Scherebnj (CGA) joins the board following a 35 year career within the federal government including a senior management positions within Health Canada and INAC.

"The Tripartite First Nations Health plan is one of the most innovative government to government accomplishments in Canada today," said Scherebnj. "I feel privileged to join this exciting and dynamic team and look forward to working closely with senior staff and the rest of the board during the next phase of the Health Plan's implementation."

Also joining the board is Ruth Williams, CEO All Nations Trust Company (ANTCO). Ruth is Shuswap and descended from the Tl;Etoinqox-t'in and High Bar First Nations. She brings to the Board over 30 years experience in social and economic development with First Nations in BC. In her capacity at ANTCO, Williams is managing the Pathways Project to bring internet connectivity to all First Nations in BC. Ruth is excited about her appointment and the potential for First Nations governance for Health. "Health governance is a critical part of self-determination; I take this sacred trust seriously and look forward to working with senior staff to ensure a smooth transition."

Chris Dennis (MBA) runs his own consulting business, is a director for Bioform Medical Inc. and has 27 years of operational experience in the health care industry with Johnson and Johnson and Bristol Myers. He comments "I am excited to join such a strong team of well-rounded and experienced individuals working on this important initiative."

Carol Anne Hilton (MBA) is a member of the Hesquiaht First Nation and brings to the board an extensive background in research and First Nations data. Marilyn Rook (MES) has many years of senior leadership experience in healthcare in Ontario and BC, and was the former Chief Operating Officer of Vancouver Island Health Authority.

"I am extremely pleased to be offered this opportunity to participate on the Board," said Rook. "The Tripartite Plan offers us a unique position to contribute to health outcomes of First Nations people. I am keen to develop a deeper understanding of First Nations Health and to lend my expertise of cultivating excellence through strategic planning and sound management. "

Also joining the board is Matt Pasco (MBA), department head and instructor for the Administrative and Aboriginal Community Economic Development Programs at NVIT, and former Director of Finance and Administration and Acting Dean for the Institute of Indigenous Government is a member of the Oregon Jack Creek Band.

“With the incorporation of the First Nations Health Society, BC First Nations turn a page in advancing the First Nations Health agenda,” said Grand Chief Doug Kelly of the First Nations Health Council. “Our Board has the combined education; senior management experience and health sector expertise to manage the day to day business of implementing the health plan. This important shift creates room for our Health Council to focus on a political advocacy role.”

The First Nations Health Society is the business arm of the First Nations Health Council. The First Nations Health Council was created in 2007 to implement the Tripartite First Nation Health Plan on behalf of BC First Nations. The 10-year plan is mandated to improve the health and wellbeing of First Nations, and to close the gaps in health outcomes between First Nations and other British Columbians.

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