

Northwest Territories Council of Leaders hold Mental Health and Addictions Meeting

Yellowknife (November 29, 2022) – Indigenous leaders and leaders from the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) Department of Health and Social Services held a special meeting of the Northwest Territories Council of Leaders (NWTCOL) on Mental Health and Addictions on November 25, 2022, in Yellowknife and virtually.

Leaders discussed Mental Health and Addictions, including:

- recovery service needs, what is working in their regions, and what needs improvement;
- the end of Poundmaker's Lodge contract with the GNWT;
- the growth and development of made-in-the-north, community-led mental health and addiction recovery initiatives;
- ways that the GNWT and Indigenous Governments can work together to streamline access to funds that support wellness at the community level; and
- upcoming opportunities for continued collaboration including the Territorial Wellness Gathering in December 2022, additional gatherings for youth and Indigenous men in 2023, and the Weaving our Wisdom Conference planned for 2024.

The NWTCOL forum offers members the opportunity to discuss territory-wide social and economic issues that are of interest to all member governments and work towards solutions.

Leaders attending the meeting included:

- Chief Louie Balsillie, Denínu Kúé First Nation
- Grand Chief Herb Norwegian, Dehcho First Nations
- Councillor Gina Dolphus, Délıne Got'ıne Government
- Grand Chief Ken Kyikavichik, Gwich'in Tribal Council
- Chief April Martel, Kátł'odeeche First Nation
- Vice-President Marc Whitford, North Slave Métis Alliance
- Chair Charles McNeely, Sahtu Secretariat Incorporated
- Grand Chief Jackson Lafferty, Tłıchq Government
- Chief Clifford Daniels, Tłıchq Government
- Minister Julie Green, Health and Social Services

Delegates also attended from the following governments:

- Kristen Tanche, Dehcho First Nations
- Lena Black, Yellowknives Dene First Nation
- Evelyn Storr, Inuvialuit Regional Corporation
- Julie Beaver, Salt River First Nation
- Jason Lepine, Northwest Territory Métis Nation

Quick Facts

- Strengthening relationships with Indigenous governments is a priority of the 19th Legislative Assembly.
- The *Northwest Territories Council of Leaders Memorandum of Understanding* was signed by leadership on June 11, 2021. The MOU was signed for a four-year term.
- Signatories to the NWT Council of Leaders include: Acho Dene Koe First Nation, Akaitcho Dene First Nations, Délı̨nę Got'ı̨nę Government, Gwich'in Tribal Council, Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, Kátł'odeeche First Nation, Nahanni Butte Dene Band, North Slave Métis Alliance, Northwest Territory Métis Nation, Salt River First Nation, Sahtu Secretariat Inc., Tłı̨chǫ Government, and the Government of the NWT.
- The inaugural meeting of the NWTCOL was held on June 11, 2021, in Yellowknife, NT and virtually. Subsequent meetings were held November 18-19, 2021, May 20, 2022, and September 27-29, 2022.
- The MOU commits the NWT Council of Leaders to meeting annually.

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