



## A renewed approach to governance fostering self-determination

### Health and social services governance process

#### Frequently asked questions

##### Why a governance process?

The state of health in Quebec First Nations is alarming, despite some improvements observed in recent years. The communities have consequently seen that the current health and social services governance model does not meet the needs of Quebec First Nations.

##### What is not working with the current health and social services governance model?

In 1989, the Government of Canada began transferring responsibilities for health and social services to the First Nations, but without allowing them to determine the services to offer their populations. The existing governance model is based on the sharing of responsibilities and decision-making powers between different governmental entities, which limits the First Nations and leaves them little room for action at the local level. In the current model, the real decision-makers show little interest in the communities' particular needs or the choices they would like to make. They do not take account of the fact that Quebec laws differ from those of the other provinces. They prefer to implement national programs defined by federal government departments for all the First Nations in Canada.

##### What should the preferred solution look like?

Develop a governance model that is adapted to the needs and context of Quebec First Nations, i.e., a renewed approach to governance fostering self-determination. This adapted governance model must:

- Give more powers and responsibilities in health and social services to First Nations communities and organizations;
- Reinforce the take-over and capacity for decision-making of First Nations communities and organizations;
- Improve and ensure better access to services;
- Put the communities back at the heart of the decision-making in health and social services.

The implementation of this model must ultimately:

- Improve First Nations' wellness.

## Frequently asked questions

**Why a renewed approach to governance (adapted to the First Nations' needs and context) fostering self-determination?**

Self-determination is a health determinant.

The United Nations, the World Bank and numerous other self-government experts have demonstrated a link between self-determination and the improvement of Aboriginal populations' socio-economic conditions. The more control that a people have of their situation, the more their socio-economic conditions will improve.

**What is the expected result of the health and social services governance process?**

By the end of the process, Quebec First Nations will have collectively built a health and social services governance model which is adapted to their needs and context and which fosters self-determination.

**Who is participating in this process?**

Quebec First Nations.

The Cree and Naskapi nations, as well as the Inuit, are kept informed and have access to the information. But because they adhere to the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement of 1975, these nations are integrated into Quebec's health system.

**Is it a "project" of the FNQLHSSC?**

This is a process originating with the communities. In accordance with a motion passed by the AFNQL chiefs, the FNQLHSSC is coordinating the process, with support from the AFNQL chiefs. The Board of Directors is closely following the progress being made. The FNQLHSSC is guided by a chiefs' advisory committee (add a link leading to the committee's make-up).

**Are the communities and organizations being consulted?**

Yes. The chiefs, the general directors and the health and social services directors of the First Nations communities in Quebec are invited to various meetings on a regular basis. Presentations are made to the chiefs and band councils, upon request.



## Frequently asked questions

### What is the situation regarding communities involved in comprehensive claims?

The communities involved in comprehensive claims are also invited to participate in the meetings. They have essentially the same concerns regarding health and social services that the non-agreement communities have.

The work being done collectively can be used by these communities to complement their reflections in various areas, e.g., transfer of responsibilities, taking of the communities' needs into account, organization of services, mobilization of the population, expertise transfer, etc.

The health and social services governance process is intended to foster local autonomy, at the same time organizing, where there is room to do so, the pooling of certain resources to ensure better support for the delivery of services in communities requesting such support.

### Will the selected model be the one used in British Columbia?

No. Like many other models, the British Columbia model is a source of inspiration for the communities. However, several cultural, historical and structural elements call for a unique governance model in Quebec.

The Quebec First Nations health and social services governance model will be established according to their needs and context.

