

PRESS RELEASE

National Association of Friendship Centres

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Romanow Report Good News for Urban Aboriginal Peoples

“The Romanow Report brings good news for urban Aboriginal peoples across Canada”, said Mary Head, President of the National Association of Friendship Centres (NAFC) in Ottawa today. “For too long, urban Aboriginal peoples have fallen through the cracks in the health system caused by endless jurisdictional wrangling among the federal, provincial, territorial and Aboriginal governments. It is time for a change in attitudes and a change in direction. Mr. Romanow has shown not only the wisdom to understand this, but the courage to say it out loud.”

The report calls for the consolidation of Aboriginal health funding from all sources to support the creation of Aboriginal Health Partnerships to manage and organize health services for Aboriginal peoples and promote Aboriginal health.

Aboriginal Health Partnerships would have a mandate to use the funding to address specific health needs, improve access to all levels of health care, recruit new Aboriginal health providers and increase training for non-Aboriginal healthcare providers. Aboriginal peoples would play a central role in the direction and design of health services in their communities.

The report also calls for a major breakthrough in primary health care change, including the integration of prevention and promotion initiatives. Friendship Centres have long supported a holistic approach to wellness and the NAFC supports Mr. Romanow’s efforts to move health care systems in this direction.

The report suggests using the Aboriginal Health Partnerships model as a basis for approaching delivery of primary health care for Aboriginal peoples in different settings. The NAFC endorses this approach.

Judith Moses, Executive Director of the NAFC, said “we are looking forward to working with the other national Aboriginal organizations to turn Mr. Romanow’s recommendations into reality and improve the quality of life for urban Aboriginal peoples.”

The NAFC represents a network of 117 Friendship Centres located in all regions of Canada. For more than 50 years Friendship Centres have delivered a broad range of health, social and economic development programs and services in urban settings. Friendship Centre programs and services are available to both Aboriginal and non Aboriginal peoples, regardless of where they reside.

For more information, please contact Judith Moses, Executive Director at (613) 563-4844, extension 18.