



# Council of Yukon First Nations

2166-2nd Avenue  
Whitehorse, YT Y1A 4P1  
867-393-9200  
cyfn.ca

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VIA EMAIL: [Kate.White@yukonassembly.ca](mailto:Kate.White@yukonassembly.ca)

Kate White  
Leader of the Yukon New Democratic Party  
MLA for Takhini  
Yukon Legislative Assembly  
Box 2703  
Whitehorse, Yukon, Y1A 2C6

## **Re: Yukon First Nations role in Health System Transformation**

Dear Ms. White

On behalf of the Chiefs Committee on Health, I would like to congratulate you on your election.

We are writing to you, and to all Parties, to affirm our collective commitment to advancing a health system that meaningfully reflects our inherent rights and our shared responsibility to support the wellbeing of Yukoners across all communities.

As you know, Yukon First Nations have long advocated for a system that delivers high quality care and is culturally grounded, trauma-informed, and responsive to the needs of our people.

Over the past several years, Yukon First Nations governments, Elders, citizens, and front-line providers have contributed significant knowledge and experience to identify gaps, solutions, and priorities. This work has already demonstrated that culturally safe, community-driven approaches result in better health outcomes for all Yukoners. As transformation efforts continue, it is essential that Yukon First Nations are not only consulted but recognized as partners with defined governance roles, authorities, and accountability structures.



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Creating Shāw Kwä'ą is a key recommendation in Putting People First based on thorough engagement with all Yukoners. This and many of the other recommendations are foundational to the system-wide changes that are required to fix our healthcare system in crisis.

Yukon First Nations worked directly with the Government of Yukon on the legislative development of the Health Authority Act and its implementation. The co-development enshrined consensus-based decision-making into the health system for the first time in the Yukon, setting an example nationally. The 26 provisions that require reasonable efforts at consensus affirm Yukon First Nations' rightful role in territory-wide health governance.

Yukon First Nations Leadership believe in and are in absolute support of the continuing work to build an integrated health system that works better for everyone across the territory. Shāw Kwä'ą is not adding new bureaucracy as some have implied, it is about replacing ineffective and siloed institutions to create lasting system changes and more people-centered care for all Yukoners.

We would like to take this opportunity share some of the good work that has been done to date and what we will continue to work on collaboratively:

- We have collaborated with Yukoners in communities to co-develop Health and Wellness Plans to ensure rural perspectives are prioritized and communities are in control of implementing their visions for community health and wellness. We have a strong picture of what Yukoners want out of their healthcare system.
- We have completed a comprehensive current state inventory of health and wellness programs to inform the design of an integrated healthcare system that is set up to deliver efficient and high-quality care. We know the gaps in our current system.
- We are creating a cultural safety and humility strategy that will guide the health and wellness system cohesively towards equitable access to care. We must guide the creation of culturally safe delivery of healthcare.
- We are involved in recruitment and retention strategies to attract healthcare professionals, especially Indigenous healthcare professionals, to work and live in our communities. We understand the frontline support communities need.



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- We have engaged with staff, unions, and professional organizations to understand workers' needs and ensure they feel supported and valued. We have heard the priorities of the workforce in health transformation.
  - We have completed feasibility studies for medical lodging options to support Yukoners on medical travel. We are dedicated to advancing projects that benefit access to care for all Yukoners.

With respectful partnership and committed leadership, Yukon can take a healthcare system in crisis and work together to create a model system, unique nationally, that is not only efficient and high-quality but addresses long-standing inequities and serves as an example of reconciliation in action.

We do not need to reassess the work done to date. We need to move forward toward a transformed health system that delivers equitable, culturally safe care for all our people.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pauline Frost'.

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Chief Pauline Frost  
Chair of the Chiefs Committee on Health