



HEAD OFFICE: ENOCH CREE NATION NO. 135 P.O. BOX 270, ENOCH AB T7X 3Y3

February 9th, 2024

The Honourable Adriana LaGrange
Minister of Health
Health.minister@gov.ab.ca

The Honourable Dan Williams
Minister of Mental Health and Addictions
Mha.minister@gov.ab.ca

Re: Conditional Support the Proclamation of the College of Counselling Therapy of Alberta (CCTA)

Dear Honourable Minister LaGrange and Honourable Minister Williams;

On behalf of the Confederacy of Treaty No. 6 First Nations, I am writing to offer our letter of support to the proclamation of the College of Counselling Therapy of Alberta (CCTA). Proclaiming the College will provide the necessary oversight and regulatory guidance to counselling providers. Mental Health care that is regulated by the CCTA, certifies access to quality mental health care for First Nations.

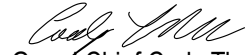
The Confederacy of Treaty Six had previously expressed our concern with Bill 30 *Health Statutes Amendments Act 2020*, citing the lack of engagement and consultation with our Member Nations. This Legislation poses direct impacts on our Treaty Right to Health Care, therefore we must be provided the opportunity for consultation and co-development. We are concerned that the lack of consultation has resulted in a complete lack of recognition of our traditional ways of healing.

Following our opposition to Bill 30 *Health Statutes Amendments Act 2020*, the Alberta College of Counselling Therapy (ACTA) began actively engaging with our First Nation leadership to address our concerns. In the last three years we have established a positive working space for collaboration and support the proclamation of the College of Counselling Therapy. Our support is contingent on CCTA's commitment to work collaboratively with Confederacy of Treaty Six through a Memorandum of Relational Understanding on the following recommendations:

- a. Cultural and Traditional healing practices included as qualifications for counseling therapists.
- b. Establish appropriate Cultural & Traditional safety protocols.
- c. Collaborate on standards, cultural competencies and anti-racism strategy(s).
- d. Creation of an Elders Advisory Panel made up of First Nations representatives from across the province.
- e. Collaborate and Engage with the College of Social Workers (ACSW) to develop qualification standards for all registered social workers, who offer Mental Health Counselling for First Nations and hold a Master of Social Work or Bachelors of Social Work.

In closing, the Chiefs Treaty Six First Nations declared a State of Emergency in 2023, in response to the growing mental health crisis and increasing number of opioid deaths in our First Nation communities. With this in mind, we recommend the College of Counselling Therapy of Alberta (CCTA) be proclaimed by the Government of Alberta. Then the CCTA can begin the important work of providing oversight and accreditation, in addition providing our members with culturally safe mental health services.

In Peace and Friendship,



Grand Chief Cody Thomas
Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations

c.c: Confederacy of Treaty Six Chiefs
Treaty 6 Health Directors/Technicians
MLA Brooks Arcand-Paul, Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation Critic, NDP