Sioux Lookout
First Nations
Health Authority

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

Resolution #26-07

Support for New Hostel and Expansion of Client Services

WHEREAS, The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration) states:

i. Article 23: Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for exercising their right to development. In particular, Indigenous peoples have the right to be actively involved in developing and determining health, housing and other economic and social programmes affecting them and, as far as possible, to administer such programmes through their own institutions.

ii. Article 24(2): Indigenous individuals have an equal right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. States shall take the necessary steps with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of this right.

WHEREAS, The Indian Health Policy (1979) committed Canada to strengthen capacity and support First Nations-led health systems; however, the Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) program continues to impose restrictive policies that deny access to medical care in a culturally appropriate way; and,

WHEREAS, Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) NIHB coverage is exclusive and violates First Nations' Inherent and Treaty Right to Health; and,

WHEREAS, The 2025 Auditor General's Report entitled *Follow-up on Programs for First Nations* found that ISC has made unsatisfactory progress on 53% of recommendations and continues to fail in closing health gaps and lacks accountability in addressing program deficiencies, including NIHB; and,

WHEREAS, the Sioux Lookout area Chiefs passed multiple resolutions throughout the years advocating for the expansion of client services, which include negotiating and developing a First Nation operated medical transportation system, enhancing a client services presence in Thunder Bay, design and implement a client coordination system, secure resources for patient navigators and client escorts; and,

WHEREAS, SLFNHA has proven to be a competent health service delivery organization in Sioux Lookout and Thunder Bay, offering quality health care in culturally appropriate and sensitive ways; and

WHEREAS, SLFNHA recognizes that hostel accommodations in Thunder Bay, including the Wequedong Lodge, is still not adequate to provide ample and safe hostel services to the high volume of clients requiring basic health care, resulting in overflow to local hotels which places clients at risk; and,

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WHEREAS, SLFNHA serves 33 First Nations and clients require access to a SLFNHA operated hostel to ensure they receive safe and quality care; and,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Sioux Lookout area Chiefs direct SLFNHA to continue to advocate for a new hostel in Thunder Bay and for the expansion of culturally safe client services; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Sioux Lookout area Chiefs call on ISC to support and approve funding for a new SLFNHA hostel in Thunder Bay; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Sioux Lookout area Chiefs call on ISC to commit to data transparency and data sharing as it relates to First Nations members accessing health services in the region; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, SLFNHA will not impede a Tribal Council or communities' efforts to open their own hostel or accommodation services.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, the Sioux Lookout area Chiefs call on Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) to continue to advocate on behalf of First Nations for appropriate and equitable client services, including funding for hostel services in Thunder Bay.

Dated this 10th day of September 2026 in Lac Seul First Nation, Ontario.

Moved by: Chief Merle Loon, Mishkeegogamang First Nation
Seconded by: Proxy John Gray, Fort Severn First Nation

Decision: **CARRIED**

SLFNHA Board Chair: _____
Cynthia Fiddler