



Nishnawbe Aski Nation
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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NAN STRONGLY OPPOSES HEALTH CANADA'S REFUSAL TO REJECT GENERIC VERSIONS OF OXYCONTIN

THUNDER BAY, ON: Today, along with the federal liberal aboriginal affairs and health critics, Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) is imploring the government of Canada to reverse the decision to approve the production of generic OxyContin.

NAN is experiencing epidemic levels of addiction to OxyContin since 2009. Many First Nation citizens are engaging in the most significant battle of their lives in trying to conquer this devastating addiction. Entire communities are impacted and the social and cultural devastation caused by this addiction is colossal.

“NAN has been steadfast in our attempt to secure the support and resources we require to help our communities from an unwavering Federal Government who has been largely unresponsive to our appeals for help,” said NAN Deputy Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler. “Nonetheless, our First Nations have not sat idly by; rather, many have pulled together all of the resources they have in order to try provide detoxification and treatment options for those affected by this addiction.”

The recent approval by Federal Health Minister Leona Aglukkaq to allow companies to produce generic versions of OxyContin is another massive blow to NAN First Nations. Just as our First Nations are beginning to implement solutions, and with the improved reformulation of OxyContin into OxyNeo, our citizens were beginning to feel hopeful once again. The hands-off approach taken by Minister Aglukkaq is an insult to our Nation and indicative of her lack of understanding of the devastating effect of this drug.

“Today, we stand united to implore Minister Aglukkaq and the government of Canada to reverse the decision to approve the production of generic OxyContin. For many members of NAN First Nations, this is a matter of life or death,” said NAN Grand Chief Harvey Yesno.

Nishnawbe Aski Nation is a political territorial organization representing 49 First Nation communities in James Bay Treaty No. 9 and Ontario portions of Treaty No. 5 – an area covering two thirds of the province of Ontario in Canada.

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