

In November 2009, the Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) Chiefs declared a Prescription Drug Abuse (PDA) state-of-emergency as a result of the PDA epidemic in NAN First Nations. PDA is an urgent issue that is affecting NAN communities and encompasses the areas of health, social, law enforcement, legal, child welfare and education. This problem is undermining the physical, mental, spiritual and emotional well-being of NAN First Nation members and communities.

The abuse of these highly addictive prescription narcotic drugs is a growing concern, particularly as it relates to the harmful effects of Opioid analgesics on the physical body, the risk for blood borne infections via injection, and the potential for death by overdose and/or through poly substance abuse. This epidemic has created an added strain on NAN First Nations across many sectors, and is contributing to higher rates of family violence, sex-trade, and other crime-related incidents.

The following are the four (4) NAN Strategic Directions for Action to address the increasing addiction and social unrest in communities due to the PDA epidemic:

- To **intervene** with people abusing, or addicted to narcotics, and their affected families through treatment and detoxification;
- To **reduce the supply** of misused narcotic prescription drugs getting into NAN communities through security and policing;
- To **reduce the demand** for misused narcotic prescription drugs by focusing on health education through prevention; and
- To work on **root causes** of abuse and addiction through creating healthy communities.