



Government Relations and
Aboriginal Affairs



Partnership Agreement

between

Saskatchewan Union of Nurses

and

**Saskatchewan Association of Health
Organizations**

and

Government Relations and Aboriginal Affairs

The parties to this agreement recognize that First Nations and Métis persons are not represented in the health sector workforce in proportion to their potential labour force numbers. Therefore, the parties agree that specific initiatives are required by health sector employers, health sector employee unions and by other stakeholders including the Aboriginal community, the provincial and federal governments and Saskatchewan's education/training institutions, to prepare and develop the Aboriginal workforce and to facilitate the integration of Aboriginal persons into health sector occupations.

The parties therefore agree in principle to work together to identify possible solutions to the following general employment related issues. Details to be addressed in implementing this agreement shall include but not be limited to those issues identified in Appendix A to this agreement:

1. Review provisions in current collective agreements with Saskatchewan employers to identify potential barriers to Aboriginal employment and draft model collective agreement provisions which are designed to ensure equal access along with a supportive work environment;
2. Develop an Aboriginal/health sector communications strategy;
3. Participate in career information and planning events within the Aboriginal community;
4. Develop a health sector training needs communications strategy with the appropriate training institutions;
5. Work with health sector employers to adopt a strategy to recruit, hire, train and retain Aboriginal workers.

In recognition of their commitment to the above initiating the parties to this agreement set their hand to this agreement this 31st day of March, 2003.

Mr. Alex Taylor

Ms. Rosalie Longmoore

On behalf of Saskatchewan Association of
Health Organizations

On behalf of Saskatchewan Union of Nurses

Honourable Eldon Lautermilch

On behalf of Government Relations and
Aboriginal Affairs

Appendix A

Some of the important issues and possible solutions to be discussed are:

1. Collective Agreement Initiatives

- Remove any barriers to Aboriginal employment which may exist in current collective agreements;
- Develop model collective agreement provisions with Aboriginal specific language;
- Assess the degree to which Aboriginal workers' needs are being addressed by the current collective agreement; and
- Recommend that such model provisions be used in future SAHO/SUN collective agreement negotiations.

2. Employer/Union/Community Strategy

- Make Aboriginal communities aware of employment opportunities in the health sector;
- Regularly provide the Aboriginal community with information that current and potential future Aboriginal employment candidates can use for career planning and to prepare themselves with the knowledge and skills they need to successfully compete for employment in the health sector;
- Stress the importance of Aboriginal students completing their high school; and
- Stress the need to choose the appropriate high school classes if they are to gain access to medium and high knowledge/skill health sector occupations.

3. Aboriginal Community/Union/Employer Communications Strategy

- Make employers aware of the potential Aboriginal community workforce;
- Invite partners to represent or present information at activities; and
- Assist health sector employers to identify, actively recruit and seek applications for job vacancies from qualified Aboriginal persons.

4. Career Planning

- Provide to the Aboriginal community and to schools in the Aboriginal community, information about career opportunities in the health sector including qualification requirements, responsibilities and duties, pay scales and other personnel practices and benefits;
- Employer to provide personnel to participate in career development and planning events; and
- Inform the Aboriginal community of Aboriginal role models, including those who are union members, and assist the Aboriginal community to enable such role models to participate in career planning and development events.

5. Training Needs Strategy/Employer/Training Institutions

- Inform training institutions of current and future staff needs of employers;
- Make training institutions aware of the potential students in the Aboriginal community;
- Work with training institutions to modify and/or enhance current training curriculum, and where feasible, to respond to the specific social and cultural needs of Aboriginal persons and the general student body;
- Jointly with training institutions recruit high school graduates and other Aboriginal persons for entry into post secondary training programs;
- Determine specialized remedial and social/cultural support services Aboriginal students may require;
- Jointly with the Aboriginal community work to develop and deliver such services;
- Jointly undertake initiatives which are required to assist Aboriginal students to be successful in making the transition from the formal classroom setting to the health sector workplace in addition to what is already there; and
- Jointly undertake with the Aboriginal Community mentoring and support programs to integrate new entrants into the workforce.

6. Health Sector Policy Modification, Recruitment/Training/Retention Strategy

- Encourage and assist health sector employers to review their human resource policies and practices to identify potential barriers to Aboriginal employment and to make modifications to current policies and practices so they encourage and support Aboriginal persons to actively compete for health sector jobs;
- Work with the employers' existing staff to prepare them to accept and to actively participate in the integration of Aboriginal persons into the health sector workplace;
- Provide bursaries and/or scholarships to support further formal training for Aboriginal persons;
- Guarantee Aboriginal employees continued employment while completing training or upgrading which would result in a move from one bargaining unit to another within the health sector workforce; and
- Encourage employers to take other initiatives to make the workplace culturally friendly to Aboriginal employees. Examples are: Aboriginal art, Aboriginal publications or Aboriginal cultural awareness training.