



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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AMC Observes International Overdose Awareness Day

Treaty One Territory, Manitoba – The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) issues this statement today to mark *International Overdose Awareness Day*. Since 2001, countries around the world have recognized August 31 as a day to raise awareness about the tragedy of overdose and commemorate those who have died due to drug overdose.

Deputy Grand Chief Cornell McLean states, "Overdose is a public health crisis both in our Nations and worldwide. It is a tragedy that does not discriminate based on any factor, including ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, income or societal status."

Today, AMC reminds our Nations that we must strive to end the addiction cycles that too often end in overdoses, to remember those who have died from an overdose, and acknowledge the grief of the families and communities' loved ones left behind. We remind anyone impacted by addiction or an overdose that they are not alone, and there is help.

With overdoses increasing at an alarming rate, people must have access to safe supplies and safe consumption sites. As such, our leaders in government and non-government organizations should provide strategies for safer consumption to reduce the risk of an overdose. They must also increase frontline worker education and public awareness initiatives on how to spot the signs of an overdose and how to help someone who is experiencing an overdose.

These leaders must tackle this issue as allies willing and ready to provide support to those with addictions, for their families, and to anyone who has lost a loved one to an overdose.

May we all work to end the stigma of addiction and work to end overdoses altogether. Some things we can do include:

- Tell anyone we love who is a current or former drug user that they are loved and valued.
- Take naloxone training if it is available.
- Practice empathy towards anyone who is suffering from an addiction.
- Reflect and remember those who have died from an overdose in our communities by creating an art piece, planting a tree, or simply taking a moment to reflect and remember.
- Join the online conversation via social media by sharing a personal story and using the hashtags #StopOverdose and #EndStigma – the more we share our personal stories, the more we will end the stigma surrounding overdose and addiction.

"We must stop the problem before it starts by educating our youth on the dangers and realities of drug use. These conversations need to happen at home with family members, in the classrooms and throughout our communities.



The more love, empathy and understanding we can provide to those impacted by addiction or overdose, the better our communities will be." Concludes Deputy Grand Chief McLean.

For more information, please contact:

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About the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

The AMC was formed in 1988 by the Chiefs in Manitoba to advocate on issues that commonly affect First Nations in Manitoba. AMC is an authorized representative of 62 of the 63 First Nations in Manitoba with a total of more than 151,000 First Nation citizens in the province, accounting for approximately 12 percent of the provincial population. AMC represents a diversity of Anishinaabe (Ojibway), Nehetho / Inineew (Cree), Anishininew (Ojibwe-Cree), Denesuline (Dene) and Dakota Oyate (Dakota) people.