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MEDIA RELEASE

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THOROLD, Ontario – A lot has happened at the Indigenous Diabetes Health Circle (IDHC) over the past 25 years and especially since the onset of COVID-19. The work in Indigenous diabetes wellness went digital, deepened and expanded exponentially in reach. This year, on Thursday, October 27 and Friday, October 28, 2022, the IDHC is hosting a virtual international conference to which all are invited and all are welcome.

“This conference marks 25 years of work invoking the return of Indigenous diabetes wellness” points out Roslynn Baird, Executive Director, IDHC. Past themes of IDHC conferences were Elders’ teachings, Western and Traditional medicine, youth culture, gestational diabetes programming, men’s health, water teachings, and Traditional foods and food sovereignty, proving IDHC was forward thinking and well ahead of its time utilizing Indigenous ways and knowledge.

Diabetes was virtually unknown among Indigenous peoples in Canada until the 1940s. Between 2001/02 and 2014/15, First Nations people had a higher incidence of diabetes compared with other people in Ontario. Incidence rates were similar among First Nations people living in and outside of First Nations communities. IDHC has contributed its share to carve out a wellness pathway. Some encouraging trends are emerging, including a slowing rate of growth in the incidence of diabetes and declines in the risk of major complications. However, gaps in outcomes between First Nations and other people persist. These gaps require addressing the social determinants of health that fuel the epidemic, stress the need for continued service and highlight the important work of the IDHC.

“We are proud to sponsor IDHC for its 2022 Conference, and in particular Dr. Cynthia Wesley-Esquimaux as a Keynote Speaker. Cynthia has worked with us over the years in areas of healing, and more recently child welfare. IDHC is a strong province-wide diabetes-prevention organization headquartered in Niagara that has served literally thousands and thousands of our Indigenous families, on and off reserve for decades. The Niagara Chapter–Native Women Inc. and the IDHC have partnered on numerous occasions. Countless Indigenous lives have benefited and been saved due to both organization's educational and hands-on prevention services. Chi-Miigwetch, Nya;Weh and thank you to IDHC for always having the health and wellbeing of the Indigenous population at the centre of their services. Wishing the IDHC all success with this conference” affirms Wendy Sturgeon, Executive Director, Niagara Chapter Native Women Inc.

Event Takeaways Include:

- Celebrating 25 Years of Collaborations, Partnerships and Community
- Highlighting Diabetes and Wellness Research in Communities
- Making Research Accessible to Communities

- Equating Indigenous Knowledge Alongside Research
- Transforming Knowledge into Practice

First Sponsor to Step Up to the Plate

The IDHC is thrilled to have received an immediate sponsorship response from the Niagara Chapter-Native Women Inc. for $2,500 — specifically to honour renowned Keynote Speaker Dr. Cynthia Wesley-Esquimaux and to acknowledge her widely recognized and respected work related to Medicine Wheel Teachings. This support represents the 'Land' sponsorship level.

Conference Sponsorship

Sponsors at any level support capacity building in Indigenous communities and gain international visibility with peers. The IDHC will be gifting Wellness Bundles comprised of Traditional food, medicines, tea and educational information pertaining to diabetes awareness and prevention to the first 250 conference attendees having submitted event evaluations.

The IDHC invites all to follow the lead of the Niagara Chapter of Native Women and participate in, or be a sponsor of, this strategic conference. Sponsorships will support IDHC Wellness Bundles and more. Read all about the conference on the IDHC website at https://idhc.life/about-our-organization/annual-conference/.

Be a part of this exciting conference that profiles relevant and timely research for frontline workers in health programs and services!

About the Niagara Chapter-Native Women Inc.

The Niagara Chapter-Native Women Inc. will celebrate its 40th anniversary in 2023. Over the years, the corporation led work with Indigenous children in the care of Children's Aid Society and their families. The corporation also developed Indigenous approaches to Indigenous youth in transition, Family Wellness work, alternative dispute resolution and other first-in-kind programs — not only for Niagara Region, but also across Ontario. The organization continues to contribute greatly to the Aboriginal child welfare surge in the province and to grow and evolve. To find out more about the Niagara Chapter-Native Women Inc. click here: https://ncnw.ca/.

About the IDHC

The IDHC provides programs focusing on diabetes education, prevention and management in Indigenous communities in Ontario, both on and off-reserve — serving First Nation, Métis and Inuit communities. Facilitating community capacity-building, building upon Traditional strengths and supporting community-driven programming are the IDHC's core concerns.

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