

NEWS RELEASE

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Northern Health unveils new companion name for G.R. Baker Memorial Hospital ED/ICU Addition

This week, representatives from nearby Indigenous communities toured the new ED/ICU addition for G.R. Baker Memorial Hospital for the unveiling of a new Indigenous companion name.

This companion name was developed in partnership and consultation with neighbouring Indigenous communities including Nazko First Nation, Lhtako Dene Nation, ?Esdilagh First Nation, and Lhoosk'uz Dene First Nation and it serves to reflect the region and traditional territory on which the hospital was built.

The new addition will be known as:

Dune Soonunakehududzuk
Deni Belh ?Ats'enanx
The People are Healing

In recognition of the languages used in the region, the companion name for the addition is composed of three lines. The first line in Carrier, the second line in Chilcotin and the third line in English.

To reach this point, Northern Health formed a naming working group with representation from nearby Indigenous communities consisting of local community members and Elders. Over a period of several months, naming options were discussed and shared back with the communities before a final decision was reached.

“It was great to be able to share our language (Southern Carrier). We are the people that came a long way. Our voices are very strong and so are our knowledge keepers of our land. Everything comes from the heart and mind and our voice,” said Ellie Peters, one of the Elders from Lhtako Dene who sat on the naming working group for the new addition to the hospital. “Now, to see our welcome sign (Dune Soonunakehududzuk), I feel happy to walk down the hall and be part of the hospital.”

The addition of a companion name is an important step in reconciliation within the health care system and furthering Northern Health’s goal of creating a culturally-safe and welcoming environment in our facilities.

“For generations, there have been traditional names given to the various areas and spaces within this province by the First People. Seeing and hearing our languages is a form of healing and provides an immediate sense of welcome,” said Nicole Cross | Noxs Niisyuus, Vice President, Indigenous Health. “I’m inspired and encouraged by the leadership of the communities and the partnership we are building.”

The Northern Health Board of Directors also had the opportunity to tour the newly re-developed space and see the new companion name signage during their recent regular meeting in Quesnel.

“This new companion name is just one step in what must be a sustained and thoughtful journey towards reconciliation and cultural safety in the health care system,” said Colleen Nyce, Board Chair. “I am grateful for the work of the Naming Working Group and the participants who dedicated their time to get us to this milestone.”

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Pronunciation Guide:

Dune Soonunakehududzuk

Carrier

Pronunciation: Du Neh Soo nuh nah keh hud ud zuk

Deni Belh ?Ats’enanx

Chilcotin

Pronunciation: Deneh beth ats enal