



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Tsilhqot'in Nation Calls for Independent Investigation at Cariboo Memorial Hospital (CMH) in Williams Lake, B.C.

Williams Lake, BC: The Tsilhqot'in Nation is calling for an independent investigation at the Cariboo Memorial Hospital (CMH) in Williams Lake, B.C. Recently, Cariboo-Chilcotin MLA Lorne Doerkson addressed the crisis during Question Period in the B.C. Legislature citing a letter of non-confidence in the administrators overseeing the operating room unit at CMH.

The mounting issues at CMH continue to go unaddressed by the B.C. Government. Not only do these issues include a toxic work environment, the undermining of surgeons and physicians and others cited by the CMH operating nurses and physicians, but they also include the issue of systemic racism and discrimination which takes place at CMH.

All government officials and representatives are aware that systemic racism and discrimination are issues within B.C. healthcare, which was revealed in the Turpel-Lafond Report, *In Plain Sight: Addressing Indigenous-specific Racism and Discrimination in B.C. Health Care* back in December 2020. However; very little has been done by any level of government or political party to address the issue and implement the recommendations from that report. In the case of CMH, the urgency for change is immediate, and an independent investigation is needed to hold both public health and the B.C. Government accountable.

Quote:

Nits'il?in (Chief) Joe Alphonse, O.B.C, Tsilhqot'in National Government

"We need to get to the bottom of what is happening at CMH and there needs to be an independent investigation. There is no transparency on the situation from the B.C. government – we need more information on what is being done to fix the problems. While we may not agree with MLA Lorne Doerkson on every issue, we agree that CMH is in a crisis situation and that lives are at stake. If Doerkson wants to raise the issue and be progressive about it, then he should meet with the Tsilhqot'in – he never has before. Our people have had to contend with the dysfunction and systemic racism at CMH for too long. To the point where I have had members in my community stay home and pass away on the

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couch, rather than seek medical care at CMH. Further in-action is too costly, we need our hospitals and operating units to work. Enough is enough.”

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