



ARNBC Statement on the Release of the Truth and Reconciliation Report

The final report on the historic *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* was released in Ottawa earlier today, amidst hopes that the stories and lessons learned from the five year Commission will lead all Canadians to a better understanding and acceptance of the role Canada has played in this 'cultural genocide' of aboriginal people – and help us all move from words to action as we seek to transform the present and future for those who have been harmed.

ARNBC stands in support of all survivors of Canada's residential school system, recognizing that the long-term impacts of this program have been devastating to aboriginal families and communities. We applaud the Commission's acknowledgement that the current state of aboriginal health is a direct result of these previous government policies. ARNBC not only supports the need for implementation of healthcare rights for aboriginal people, but will work with partners and stakeholders to ensure this work remains a high priority to all Canadians.

Aboriginal health is one of ARNBC's key policy development areas, and the 94 recommendations included in the report will provide guidance and insight into our ongoing policy work. To start, ARNBC has recently added a new Regional Director, First Nations, as a permanent seat on the Board of Directors. As Commission Chair Murray Sinclair pointed out, "words are not enough" and it is our responsibility as an association to press for necessary changes in the system that will strengthen the social determinants of health in all aboriginal communities and ensure equitable access to healthcare for all Canadians.