

**FILE NAME:**

"Communities in Crisis" Disk: SYMPOS.NOT

**SECURITY CLASSIFICATION:****BRIEFING FOR:**

ADM, Policy and Consultation

**PURPOSE:**

Update on status

**DATE OF MEETING:****SUBJECT:**

Status of Symposium on "Facilitating Change in  
Aboriginal Communities: Healing From Within"  
(Formerly "Communities in Crisis")

**Originator:**

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**Date Prepared:**May 19, 1993**Last Update:**April 22, 1993**DIAND Sectors Consulted:**

Consultation Directorate

**Recommended:**

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**Approved:**

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John Graham  
Director General  
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**KEY WORDS:**Communities in Crisis; Symposium; Facilitating Change in  
Aboriginal Communities**SHELF LIFE:**

2 months

**ISSUE:** Status of the Symposium on Facilitating Change in Aboriginal Communities.

**BACKGROUND:**

The Symposium on "Facilitating Change in Aboriginal Communities: Healing From Within" is on hold pending a decision from the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) on how and when to proceed.

The project was first discussed in the summer of 1992 by AFN Health Commission and DIAND's Consultation Directorate and planning began in December 1992. A proposal was drafted on behalf of the Consultation Directorate by the Policy Research and Analysis Directorate. A meeting was held on January 27, 1993 to confirm agreement to proceed with the initiative between AFN (Health Commission), Health and Welfare (Indian & Northern Health Services) and DIAND (Consultation and Policy Research & Analysis Directorates). Following this agreement, the first Symposium planning meeting was held on March 3, 1993 to discuss the proposal. There was brief mention of the fact that other projects related to healthy communities were underway at AFN and HWC. Some changes and clarifications were made to the proposal and the committee came to general agreement on the objective and structure of the symposium.

A second meeting was held on March 23, 1993 to continue planning and to allocate tasks. The AFN was unable to attend the meeting but agreed that the meeting should continue due to rescheduling difficulties. There were several new representatives at the meeting from both DIAND and HWC. Much discussion took place on the objective of the symposium and there appeared to be an interest in changing the proposal to increase the number and type of participants and to focus the Symposium objective on programs, intervention and resolving specific community problems. Further concerns about duplication were raised, specifically on the similarity of the objectives of the proposed Symposium to those of a conference on Community Health Planning in April, 1993 and a Healing Conference planned for the Fall of 1993. This discussion changed the direction and understanding of the Symposium's objectives considerably.

In order to clarify the intentions of the Symposium and to re-affirm interest and availability of resources (financial and human) in planning, it was agreed that the AFN and DIAND partners needed to discuss the issues at a senior level. A discussion between the original two partners (Consultation Directorate and AFN Health Commission) took place on April 9, 1993 and it was agreed that the focus of the Symposium should be on **information sharing and future planning for change** in order to support and sustain the overall health of Aboriginal communities.

The Policy Research and Analysis Directorate attempted to organize a trilateral meeting (HWC-AFN-DIAND) to confirm this focus for several weeks in late April and early May with no success. At the same time, each of the partners had several bilateral discussions on the concern that the Symposium would be a duplication of other planned and ongoing conferences on "healthy communities". There was no resolution of this discussion and because of the difficulty in bringing all three partners together, it was agreed that the Symposium should be put on hold.

All three partners agreed that the AFN's lead was critical to the progress and success of this initiative.

#### CURRENT STATUS

~~On May 7, 1993, letters confirming the decision to put the initiative on hold were sent by the Policy Research and Analysis Directorate to HWC and the AFN. The letters also indicated DIAND's interest and availability for involvement in other activities with each group.~~

The Social Development Directorate is now the focal point of contact with Health and Welfare on "communities at risk" initiatives. As such, they invited the Policy Research and Analysis Directorate to attend a meeting on May 17, 1993 at Health and Welfare to discuss a pilot project on "healthy communities". The Directorate confirmed that the Symposium was on hold pending AFN decisions, and that it is available to assist in other related conferences.

The Policy Research and Analysis Directorate will wait for the AFN to clarify its intentions for a Symposium and at the same time, will maintain regular contact with both HWC and AFN.