

Press release



Native Montréal  
Montréal Autochtone

# Montreal's first culturally safe family health clinic for Natives opens

**Montreal, April 12, 2024** – Native Montreal today officially opened the first culturally secure family healthcare clinic in the metropolis region, with the aim of providing holistic, culturally appropriate services that will complement the existing public services.

Quebec's Minister of Health, Christian Dubé, the Minister responsible for Relations with First Nations and Inuit and MNA for Vachon, Ian Lafrenière and Ms. Gracia Kasoki Katahwa, member of the executive committee and borough mayor of Côte-des-Neiges-Notre-Dame-de-Grâce were all on hand as Native Montreal celebrated this major milestone in the project initiated in 2021. Its inauguration represents the expansion, growth and sustainability of health and social services adapted to the needs, identities and characteristics of local and/or travelling native populations in the Montreal region. It includes members of all the Native nations of Quebec, but is mainly represented by Eeyou (Cree), Innu, Kanien:keha'ka (Mohawk), Mi'gmaq, Inuit, Atikamekw, W8banaki et Anishinaabe nations.

Deployed in collaboration with numerous partners, particularly from the health and social services network, including the CIUSSS du Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal and the GMFU Verdun, the family health clinic supported by Native Montreal offers a range of front-line services, with a focus on promoting health and wellness and prevention. This is complemented by a holistic wellness program, including integrated traditional healing care, that is flexible and ecosystemic for children, families, adults and seniors.

With 10 years of expertise in serving urban native communities, in navigation services and in social services, this native-governed organization contributed to the vaccination of native citizens during the pandemic, having coordinated the campaign to provide the first dose.

## Key figures

- A collaborative and shared responsibility model between CIUSSS du Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal, Native Montreal and other partners to improve access to culturally safe front-line services for Montreal's urban native population, in complementarity with existing public services.
- Health care that meets the needs of native communities, provided in a place that integrates a holistic and culturally safe vision for those belonging to native communities.
  - Services will be provided for families, children, adults and seniors.
  - Front-line services will be adapted to meet the needs of the client base, with a particular focus on promoting health and prevention.
  - A health navigation service managed by Native Montreal and recognized by the health and social services network to ensure culturally secure secondary continuity of care.
  - A health and wellness care centre integrated with the services of Native Montreal, managed by members of Montreal's urban native community.
  - Health professionals specially trained to meet the needs and realities of native communities.
- With over 35,000 people of native origin living in the Montreal metropolitan area, including 13,000 on the island, the clinic operates in the heart of one of Quebec's largest urban native communities. It joins other culturally secure health clinics already in place across the province.
- An additional offering that makes Native Montreal a secure and culturally relevant multiservice hub.

The creation of this clinic was made possible thanks to the financial support of the Quebec government, as part of its Action Plan for the Social and Cultural Well-Being of First Nations and Inuit People *J'ai espoir*.

## Quotes

"I am very pleased with the inauguration of this clinic, which reflects our government's commitment to continuing its efforts to improve front-line care and culturally adapted service for Native citizens in urban areas, taking into account their specific needs. This project, which is the fruit of our collective efforts and the work accomplished by the RCAAQ and Native Montreal, will contribute to improving the living conditions of First Nations and Inuit members who are living in or visiting urban areas. I would like to thank all the partners who are working with us on these challenges."

–Christian Dubé, Quebec Minister of Health and MNA for La Prairie

"The joint construction of this project proves that we can work together to offer culturally adapted services to Native people in urban centers. I hope this initiative will be replicated in other major cities in Quebec. Yet another concrete way of implementing my *J'ai espoir* plan in response to the Viens Commission."

–Ian Lafrenière, Minister responsible for Relations with First Nations and Inuit and Inuit Relations and MNA for Vachon

" I would like to congratulate Native Montreal and all its partners on the successful achievement of this important and necessary project. For Montreal, it's a concrete example of our commitment, with our partners from the Native community, the health and social services network and other levels of government, to put in place culturally appropriate and secure resources for vulnerable and people facing homelessness who are of Native origin. Our priority is to ensure support for projects that take an approach centered on openness, listening and respect, and this is appreciated by the groups. Congratulations again! "

– Gracia Kasoki Katahwa, Responsible for human resources, the fight against racism and systemic discrimination and delegate for reconciliation with Native peoples on the Executive Committee of the Ville de Montréal and borough mayor of Côte-des-Neiges-Notre-Dame-de-Grâce

"It was clear to Native Montreal that, given our successful experience with the COVID-19 pandemic, we too wanted to contribute to improving access to health services for a population that is sometimes excluded from the public system. The family health clinic we created had to be a supportive place, offering an environment that reflected the needs and shared values of this community. Since November, when we opened our doors, we have been testing services, facilities and the system to ensure that our mission and vision are reflected in a place that brings hope to many members of Montreal's native community."

–Philippe Meilleur, Executive Director of Native Montreal

## About Native Montreal

Founded in 2014 to meet the needs of native families, youth and elders, Native Montreal is a 2000-member friendship center. Its mission is to support the holistic health, cultural pride and community success for families, individuals and the Native community living in the Greater Montreal area. Its services include cultural awareness, community development, sports and recreation, learning and personal development, community justice, and health and wellness.

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## Source

Native Montreal

## Information

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