



Anishinabek Family Care

Media Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dilico Anishinabek Family Care Applauds Historic Agreement to Reform First Nations Child and Family Services

THUNDER BAY, ON | April 9, 2026 – Dilico Anishinabek Family Care (Dilico) welcomes the landmark approval of the Ontario Final Agreement (OFA) by the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal. This historic agreement represents a monumental step forward in recognizing First Nations sovereignty and strengthening outcomes for Indigenous children, youth, and families.

“This is a watershed moment for the communities,” said Natalie Paavola, CEO of Dilico Anishinabek Family Care. “As an organization built by and for First Nations, we support this path toward sovereignty. It honours the inherent right of our people to care for children in ways that reflect Anishinabek culture, values, and a shared future. We recognize the dedication of all who contributed to this milestone—including the First Nations Child & Family Caring Society and the First Nation community leaders who have worked tirelessly, with great care and foresight, to ensure this transformation truly serves the well-being of our future generations.”

The OFA provides a long-awaited framework for reform and investment in First Nations Child and Family Services. As this transition begins, Dilico is committed to working alongside First Nations leadership and communities to ensure the vision of the agreement is realized on the ground.

“Dilico’s focus remains on the quality of care and continuity of support for children, youth, and families,” continued Paavola. “Through Dilico’s integrated model of care, we are ready to work alongside the leadership of the communities to support implementation in a way that reflects culture, community, and long-term wellbeing.”

A significant component for Dilico under the OFA is the development of Community Wellness Plans. Dilico has already begun the work of engaging with community leadership to support implementation planning and provide the technical and frontline expertise required to meet these new standards. A primary goal is to ensure that access to the vital services that families and young people need continues without interruption throughout this transition.

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“Sovereignty is the destination, and Dilico is here to provide the support to get there,” said Paavola. “We are focused on transparency and collaboration. No community should have to navigate these changes alone, and no client should see a disruption in their care. Our message to our partners and our clients is simple: we are with you. We will move forward together, in a good way.”

First Nations leadership, partners, and clients with questions regarding the implementation process or service transitions are encouraged to reach out to Dilico for support and information.

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About Dilico Anishinabek Family Care:

Dilico Anishinabek Family Care (Dilico) is a First Nations-governed organization providing a continuous model of care for children, families, and communities. For over 30 years, Dilico has delivered a comprehensive range of child welfare, mental health and addiction, and health services. Owned and created by the First Nations it serves, Dilico is committed to a "healing first" approach through its Mikinaak model, ensuring that services are culturally grounded, family-centered, and community-driven. Dilico serves 13 member First Nations and Indigenous people within the District of Thunder Bay.

For more information, visit dilico.com