

## Mohawk Medbuy: Honouring our Namesake

Mohawk Medbuy Corporation (MMC) began as Mohawk Hospital Linen Services in 1970. Our understanding is that the use of Mohawk in the company name was chosen to reflect the linen facility's proximity to Mohawk Road in Hamilton, Ontario and to pay homage to the Indigenous heritage of the region it served.

As MMC has grown and evolved, so too has our organization's knowledge of Indigenous Peoples and histories. In 2021, members of our Executive Leadership Team consulted with Chief Mark Hill of Six Nations of the Grand River to seek his guidance on our organization's name. At this meeting, Chief Hill shared his perspective that MMC's use of Mohawk was a "positive tribute," and that we should continue our Reconciliation Journey.

Since that meeting, MMC has been striving towards the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Call to Action #92 for Economic Reconciliation by partnering and supporting the work of MSS Ltd. This Hay River, NWT-based medical supply distribution company is owned by James Hiebert – a proud Mohawk entrepreneur from Six Nations. In 2022, MMC created a new Director of Indigenous Partnerships & Strategies role to lead our organization's Reconciliation initiatives internally and externally – and to assist and support our Member hospitals in their related activities.

In addition to continued education for all MMC staff on the history and ongoing realities of colonization, MMC's Reconciliation Journey includes supporting Indigenous owned-and-led businesses. We've onboarded various organizations, including the 13 Indigenous Child and Family Wellbeing agencies in Ontario, the Association of Native Child and Family Services Agencies of Ontario, Oshki-Pimache-O-Win, Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win and the Weeneebayko Area Health Authority.

MMC is partnering with organizations to help close the health disparities experienced by many Indigenous Peoples on and off reserve in Ontario. We're also in discussions with the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne to explore how MMC can further support their procurement and redevelopment projects.

Our Reconciliation work was recognized in April 2023 by the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business with MMC's designation as an *Aboriginal Procurement Champion*. Since then, we've further developed our Reconciliation Action Plan corporately and for our Membership. We worked with MSS Ltd. in their creation of an Indigenous Community Giveback Program, through which they provide proceeds from sales of co-branded personal protective equipment (PPE) to local First Nations communities, Indigenous health care centres, and scholarships for Indigenous students. The first recipient of the Giveback Program was Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, on whose traditional territory MMC's Burlington, Ontario head office is located.

Mohawk Medbuy is dedicated to the TRC's Calls to Action and is actively working to support change that fosters economic Reconciliation, addresses disparity gaps and helps Indigenize the health care supply chain. We'll continue to seek the advice and support of local First Nations to guide all Reconciliation work and ensure that we're genuinely and materially demonstrating our commitment and reverence to our Mohawk namesake.