

**Improving Access to Services for Residents of the Northwest Territories**

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Justice, under the Community Justice and Policing Division, has been leading an innovative 'whole of government' pilot program in Yellowknife called Integrated Case Management or ICM. This program has been designed to understand and fundamentally reform the way social envelope services are accessed and delivered in the NWT by identifying the barriers and challenges residents face when obtaining services. ICM works from a person-centered, strength-based approach, with strong equity-based principles that acknowledge that not all members of our community start from the same place. This means we may need to use different approaches to reach the goal of equal access to services for all community members.

Throughout the life of the ICM pilot program our government has learned various lessons and identified systemic barriers to service provision in Yellowknife. In 2017 a third party program evaluation was conducted that found success in the provision of person-centered services with significant individual positive outcomes for program participants. The ICM program is currently undergoing a second evaluation that includes a robust analysis of system level impacts including targeted data analytics and a social return on investment analysis. Although we know system change takes time, we are looking forward to this evaluation shedding some light on early indicators of success and providing recommendations for moving forward in our efforts to improve service integration and access in the NWT.

Mr. Speaker, one of the biggest lessons learned from the ICM program and its 'whole of government' approach is that complex social challenges cannot be addressed in a siloed, system-centered service provision environment. It is not enough that our services are available. They must be accessible and delivered in a timely and supportive manner that ensures all members of our community feel respected and are treated with dignity. We need to do things differently. We need to work together to provide integrated, person centered services that facilitate wellbeing and self-sufficiency for all community members that create better opportunities for people to succeed.

To this end, I wish to advise Members of the Legislative Assembly that Deputy Ministers from the social envelope departments have committed to working together to look at the feasibility of reforming service delivery throughout the NWT through the development of a territory-wide Integrated Service Delivery model. This initiative will look at the findings, recommendations and lessons learned from the ICM program, while also incorporating various service reform efforts currently underway. The initiative will focus on addressing systemic and structural issues across all government departments, and work to enhance the capacity of the system to respond in a timely, effective, integrated manner that meets the needs of all residents of the NWT.

It is time to commit to acting on a common agenda that puts the needs of our residents at its core. In fact, Mr. Speaker this is the role of government. Officials are prepared to embrace the challenges that come with this commitment and present the next government with the road map for service delivery reform.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.