

**THE HONOURABLE GLEN ABERNETHY
MINISTER OF HEALTH AND
SOCIAL SERVICES**

No.: 33-18(3)

Date: February 21, 2018

**New Investments in
Mental Health and in Home and Community Care**

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that the Government of Northwest Territories has signed a bilateral agreement with the federal government to invest new resources into mental health and addictions services, as well as home and community care.

This investment will provide approximately \$6 million over the next five years, including \$2.4 million for mental health and addictions services, and \$3.6 million for home and community care services.

Not only do these investments support key objectives in both our Child and Youth Mental Wellness Action Plan and our Continuing Care Services Action Plan, they also align with the Mandate of the 18th Legislative Assembly.

Our government is has made a commitment in the mandate to support Elders to live in their homes as long as possible and to providing quality long-term care when this option is no longer available.

The investments for home and community care will be used to develop a paid family/community caregiver option for residents who manage their own care. This initiative will provide individuals with an option to meet their care needs and access home supports currently not available to them through an existing home and community care program.

It will also support the implementation of an updated, evidence-based assessment tool for home and community care, called the International Resident Assessment Instrument. This new tool will ensure individuals receive home and community care services based on their assessed care needs, with the goal of supporting Seniors and Elders in their own homes and communities for as long as possible.

Mr. Speaker, the Northwest Territories has a history of resilience, strength and a strong commitment to helping one another. However, the impacts of colonization and residential schools continue to challenge the wellness of our people and communities.

One area where we can see evidence of these impacts is the issue of suicide. Currently, there are a number of services available across the NWT to assist residents facing mental health challenges, including the Community Counselling Program, the NWT Help Line, the On the Land Healing Fund, Mental Health First Aid and Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training.

While these services and supports are already in place, we know that we can do more to support communities and our government has made a commitment in its mandate to enhance access to culturally appropriate programs and services. One of the ways we will be doing this for suicide prevention is by targeting investments for mental health and addictions to the development and implementation of a Territorial Suicide Prevention and Crisis Support Network.

Mr. Speaker, this initiative will enhance culturally appropriate approaches to suicide prevention, provide support to communities to build a sense of hope and meaning while also improving our ability to provide a timely response to community needs in the event of a crisis.

This support network will complement our existing mental health and addictions options and is in line with the Strategic Framework for Mental Health and Addictions Recovery and with the recently released Child and Youth Mental Wellness Action Plan.

I would like to thank the Government of Canada for their 10-year commitment to strengthen supports for home and community care and mental health and addictions in the Northwest Territories. These investments will improve key services for residents of the Northwest Territories.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.