

Celebrating National Social Work Month

Mr. Speaker, March is National Social Work Month, and I am taking this opportunity to recognize the valuable contributions made by social workers in improving the health and wellbeing of individuals, families, and communities in the Northwest Territories. This year's theme is Social Work Breaks Barriers. It is important to acknowledge that social work helps break down the barriers that prevent people and communities from thriving. This theme showcases how social workers support the empowerment of individuals, families, and communities to overcome difficulties that may prevent them from reaching their full potential, safety, and good overall health.

Social workers are crucial to the wellbeing of communities. They provide essential services to those in need. They work in many different settings such as schools, health centres, and community organizations. They support individuals and families facing challenges such as those caused by the pandemic and floods, and they assist by providing essential services to support children and families in emergency situations. They help residents navigate health care, income support, and legal systems. They also advocate for the rights and needs of residents to ensure that everyone has equal opportunities to succeed.

Mr. Speaker, in the NWT we have 134 licensed social workers. Their work can be incredibly challenging as they often deal with emotional situations and individuals or families in crisis. Social workers possess a combination of compassion, empathy, and resilience. A strong desire to support others and make society a better place draws many social workers to the profession. They share common principles of belief in equality, social justice, as well as recognition that everyone has the right to reach their full potential.

The work being advanced by social workers in the Government of the Northwest Territories' Child and Family Services system includes improving integration of diverse programs that support children, youth, and families such as access to safe housing, mental wellness supports and recreational opportunities. They are also available to connect families and individuals to resources and services for prenatal and postnatal care.

Mr. Speaker, social work is an essential profession to our residents and the Health and Social Services system. I want to acknowledge each social worker, as well as all other staff who provide supports within our social services system for their commitment to the work they do, and, more importantly, for their compassion and devotion to the people of the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Cabinet and NWT residents, I thank all social workers for their continued dedication. National Social Work Month serves as a reminder of the important role that social workers play in our communities and in the general wellness and health of our territory. I hope it will also inspire residents to consider a career in social work.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.