

Media Backgrounder

Aboriginal Health Transition Fund (AHTF) – support for seven new projects in Saskatchewan

Information

April 2009

Following are details of the initiatives announced by Minister of Health, Leona Aglukkaq, and Saskatchewan Minister of Health Don McMorris on April 28, 2009.

The Aboriginal Health Transition Fund (AHTF) is a five-year initiative (2005/06 to 2009/10) which seeks to improve the integration of Federal, Provincial and Territorial funded health systems, adapt existing health programs and services to serve better the needs of Aboriginal peoples (First Nations, Inuit and Métis), improve access to health services, and increase the participation of Aboriginal peoples in the design, delivery, and evaluation of health programs and services.

The AHTF provides transitional funding to Provincial and Territorial governments and First Nations, Inuit and Métis organizations and communities in three areas:

Integration - to support First Nations and Inuit communities to improve the coordination and integration between provincial and territorial health systems and health systems within First Nations and Inuit communities;

Adaptation - to support provincial and territorial governments to adapt their existing health programs to the unique needs of all Aboriginal peoples including First Nations, Inuit and Métis; and

Pan-Canadian - to support cross-jurisdictional integration and adaptation initiatives in three streams: First Nations, Inuit and Métis; capacity funding to national Aboriginal organizations; workshops; evaluation activities; and overall administration of the AHTF.

The projects in the Province of Saskatchewan announced in March 2009 fall into the Adaptation category.

Adaptation Projects:

1) Adapting the Provincial Health System to Better Meet the Needs of Métis People - \$558,000

This project, undertaken by the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, will create a means for Métis and the provincial government to discuss their health needs; improve the capacity of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan to analyze existing health services, address gaps and find new ways of providing health services; and undertake a feasibility study of the merits of a Métis Health and Wellness Strategy for Métis, by Métis, including prevention, health promotion and health education.

2) Cumberland House Health Community Project - \$212,800

The Kelsey Trail Regional Health Authority (KTRHA) will enhance three core areas to better meet the needs of the community of Cumberland House: mental health

services; alcohol and drug addiction services; and community education and information. The community is primarily First Nation and Métis.

3) First Nation Families First Maternal Child Health Initiatives - \$163,810

The Sunrise Health Region will strengthen Maternal Child Health services through involvement of Elders and other measures to make services more culturally-appropriate and accessible in the Kamsack area for First Nations. The funding will help to increase the capacity of home visits, to deliver a parenting curriculum to families, to link mental health and addiction services, to develop and implement strategies for earlier access to resources for prenatal women, and to develop and implement incentives for breast feeding.

4) Prairie North Health Region - Partnership for Change - \$317,000

The Prairie North Health Region along with BTC Indian Health Services, Inc., First Nations and Meadow Lake Tribal Council will partner and work together to adapt and improve quality health services that promote and support healthy living among diverse populations. Specifically, working together for seamless client services, improving access to health services through better cross agency communication, improved planning, service provision, problem solving and evaluation of services, developing inter-organizational service teams and developing opportunities for shared staff and client education.

5) Ensuring Culturally-Appropriate Home Care Services to Aboriginal People within the Regina-Qu'Appelle Health Region - \$392,000

This project, undertaken by the Regina-Qu'Appelle Health Region, will adapt current services to make them more culturally appropriate for Aboriginal peoples' needs.

6) Métis Community Health Coordinator Initiative, \$368,000

The Regina-Qu'Appelle Health Region will support redesigning health services for Métis, assist them to access health services, and improve coordination of health service delivery.

7) Strengthening the Circle: Partnering for Improved Health for Aboriginal People in the Saskatoon Region - \$377,000

The Kinistin First Nation, the Saskatoon Health Region, and the Central Urban Métis Federation will work together to coordinate the various services through a formal health council and secretariat that will offer support with activities such as planning, recruitment, and gathering health data.