



# a foundation for change

BUILDING A HEALTHY FUTURE FOR THE NWT 2009-2012



# a foundation for change

BUILDING A HEALTHY FUTURE FOR THE NWT 2009-2012



# minister's message

'A Foundation for Change' is about making changes to our system now, to ensure our children have affordable, quality health care and social services in the future.

We are not alone in this need. Across Canada and the world, organizations are reviewing and renewing how they provide health care and social services to people in order to meet the challenge of sustainability in the 21st century.

In the Northwest Territories, we are fortunate to be in the situation that we can maintain or improve the level of services we are providing through this process. The health and wellness of Northerners remains our priority.

We must work together with Northern people, communities, governments and agencies, to meet health and wellness challenges. Northerners need to recognize their responsibility in making healthy choices. We have to help them by providing clear information about how to access programs and services, and being responsive to community realities. We also need to ensure our buildings and systems are appropriate and aligned with community needs.

Key to any movement forward are the men and women who dedicate themselves to working in the health and social services system. This plan continues to evolve how we support our staff in providing these vital services.

This document has two parts. The first is a brief summary of our vision for the future of Health and Social Services in the NWT. The second is a three year plan which will form the blueprint to guide us towards our vision. Many of the actions we are taking in areas such as infrastructure and technology will form a foundation that will help us move forward well beyond 2012.

Accountability is essential to our success. Northerners need to be assured of the quality of our system. As a Health and Social Services system we are committed to achieving the goals and actions set out in this plan. The Health and Social Services Annual Report will provide annual updates based on 'A Foundation for Change'. As we move forward, we commit to open, timely communication about the actions, and what they will mean for Northerners.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sandy Lee". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sandy Lee  
Minister of Health and Social Services  
November 2009

# about the plan

## **Our Vision for the Future of Health and Social Services in the Northwest Territories**

Our vision is a Northwest Territories where our children will be born healthy and raised in a safe family and community environment, which supports them in leading long, productive, and self-reliant lives.

We see us achieving this vision through a health and social services system where:

- Northern people have the resources and knowledge to be well, and the health care and social services supports to help them with challenges.
- Wellness is driven from within Northern communities and is led by community members. Community leadership, care and services promote healthy choices and families, and prevent avoidable illness. We recognize that the wellness of a community is not determined by the scale of health facilities or the number of professionals.
- Partners in health and social services work together as one seamless and efficient system, with community-delivered services. Everyone is clear about their roles and responsibilities, from Government of the Northwest Territories departments, to Health and Social Services Authorities, Non-governmental Organizations, Aboriginal Governments and individuals.
- All partners in this system are accountable for their roles and responsibilities.
- This seamless system is coordinated around the needs of the client.
- We work with interested Aboriginal governments to proactively plan for future service delivery.
- We will use Northern facilities and caregivers whenever possible before using southern travel and agreements.

# OUR PLAN

This vision further focuses and builds on our strategic direction:

Our Mission is to promote, protect and provide for the health and wellbeing of the people of the NWT. In this plan, three basic goals have been broken out from our mission:

## Wellness

Communities, families and individuals make healthy choices and are protected from disease

## Accessibility

People get the care they need, and know where and how to find it

## Sustainability

Resources are used effectively and innovatively to ensure the health and social services system will be sustained for future generations

## We are committed to certain principles that will guide our actions:

### Universality

All residents of the NWT should have access to the services they need, and should be treated fairly and with respect.

### Basic Needs

Publicly-funded programs and services should address basic health and social needs when those cannot be met by an individual or family.

### People-Oriented System

All activities of the health and social services system should support an approach that puts people first.

### Culture and Tradition

The cultures and traditions of the people of the NWT should be represented and respected throughout the service delivery system, including staffing.

### Personal Responsibility

Individuals and families should recognize their personal responsibilities to address their own health and social needs

### Appreciation of Staff

The knowledge, experience and contribution of Health and Social Services staff should be valued and respected

### Prevention-Oriented System

All activities of the health and social services system should support the maintenance of physical, social and mental health, in addition to the treatment of illness and injury.

### Continuum of Care

Programs and services should fit together as seamlessly as possible and will be integrated with other GNWT services wherever possible.

### Sustainability

The health and social services system should operate in a way that does not threaten its ability to meet basic needs over the long-term.

# summary of goals and priorities

'A Foundation for Change' is a blueprint for action. It breaks out the actions that we and our partners will need to take, before 2012, in order to ensure we achieve our goals:

Goal	Wellness	Accessibility	Sustainability
Description	Communities, families and individuals make healthy choices and are protected from disease	People get the care they need, and know where and how to find it	Resources are used effectively and innovatively to ensure the health and social services system will be sustained for future generations
Priorities	<p>Improve community services</p> <p>Improve services for children in care</p> <p>Promote healthy living and wellness</p> <p>Increase supports and services for people who experience family violence</p> <p>Work with partners and stakeholders to improve the quality of life for Northerners with disabilities</p> <p>Work with partners and stakeholders to develop policies and programs for future senior and elder services</p> <p>Focus on Early Childhood Development</p> <p>Deliver vaccines programs and improve communication around diseases</p> <p>Reduce the gap in health and wellness status between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Northerners</p> <p>Address the issue of homelessness in the NWT</p> <p>Raise awareness of the importance of safe, clean drinking water</p>	<p>Provide the right services, through the right providers, in the right places</p> <p>Manage chronic disease</p> <p>Enhance and customize continuing care, while ensuring access and administration is optimized</p> <p>Work with Public Works and Services to ensure facilities are modern, effective and aligned with current and future service delivery</p> <p>Use information technologies to bring timely, quality services to Northerners</p> <p>Maximize resources and streamline medical facilities</p> <p>Provide supported and assisted living in smaller communities</p> <p>Manage physician services at a territorial level</p> <p>Create a client navigator office</p> <p>Provide clear communication about when, how and where to access the programs and services we provide</p>	<p>Improve governance, financial management and accountability for programs and services</p> <p>Develop ongoing system of evaluation and reporting to Northerners</p> <p>Require accreditation for quality improvement and risk management of health authorities</p> <p>Use new and innovative information technologies to support delivery of Health and Social Services in all communities</p> <p>Innovative, maximized use of Human Resources</p> <p>Modernize legislation to ensure change is possible</p>

The goals and priorities above are further broken down into actions and timelines by GNWT fiscal year (April 1-March 31) in the sections on actions that follow.

## OUR SYSTEM OF DELIVERING HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

In 2004, the Department of Health and Social Services and the eight authorities moved to an Integrated Service Delivery Model (ISDM), a team-based, client-focused approach to providing health and social services. The ISDM was developed to ensure that people across the NWT had better and more equal access to services, and that Health and Social Services Authorities had more consistent policies and procedures and standards. The ISDM combines 3 key elements:

Use a primary  
community care  
approach

Ensure all  
caregivers and their  
organizations are  
connected

Work together  
to describe and  
strengthen core  
services

'A Foundation for Change' continues to work within this model as the most sustainable system to provide Northerners with access quality health and social services programs and services. For more information about the ISDM, see 'Integrated Services Delivery Model for the NWT Health and Social Services System', available online from the Department of Health and Social Services website.

## CONSULTATION

In order to follow our own principles and ensure our Health and Social Services system meets the needs of Northerners, it is essential that we have clear lines of communication and opportunities for consultation. The Department and the Health and Social Services Authorities will be working together to begin Community Assessments in late 2009. Through these, we will share information, and find out the services and programs that are needed in each community and region.

Additionally, many of the Priorities and Actions in this plan are the result of past consultations and plans developed with our partners, including:

- Family Violence Framework Phase II - Family Violence Action Plan Phase II
- Framework for the GNWT Response to Homelessness
- Action Plan for Persons with Disabilities
- NWT Tobacco Strategy
- Early Childhood Development Framework for Action
- NWT Injury Prevention Strategy



# the plan

## GOAL 1: WELLNESS

We see our goal of wellness being achieved when Communities, families and individuals make healthy choices and are protected from disease. Wellness is more than physical health; it is also mental, emotional and social wellbeing. To build the Northwest Territories' future, we need healthy residents that are able to participate positively in community life. Northerners need to be well in order to go to school, to work and to keep cultures and languages strong.

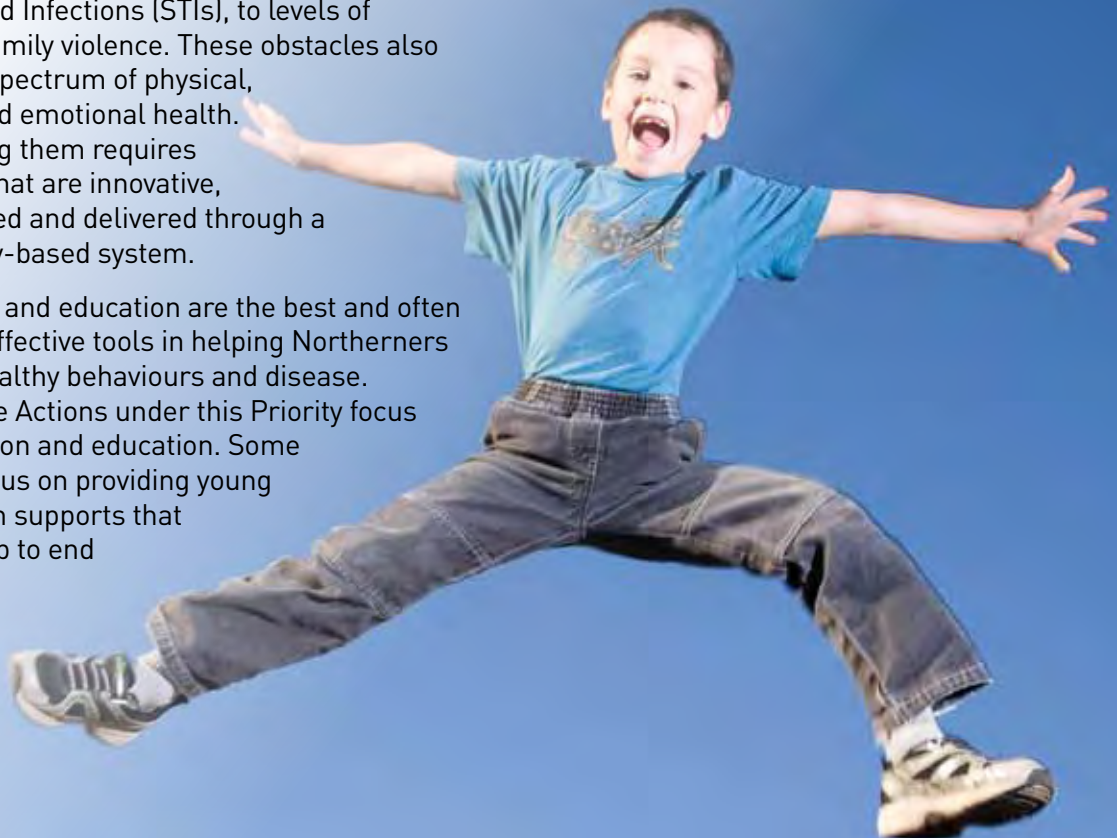
There are several signs of improvement in the health of Northerners. Life expectancy has increased in the last two decades. From recent surveys, Northerners are happy with the quality of health care and social services available to them in the NWT. However, there are still a number of obstacles to overcome. These obstacles include everything from high prevalence of diabetes, to incidence of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), to levels of reported family violence. These obstacles also cross the spectrum of physical, mental, and emotional health. Overcoming them requires solutions that are innovative, broad-based and delivered through a community-based system.

Prevention and education are the best and often the most effective tools in helping Northerners avoid unhealthy behaviours and disease. Many of the Actions under this Priority focus on promotion and education. Some Actions focus on providing young people with supports that should help to end

cycles of abuse or poverty. Other Actions will help to prevent the spread of avoidable diseases. Prevention also means early intervention and detection.

One key development in the area of prevention and education is the development of the Healthy Choices Framework. It is a partnership between Government of the Northwest Territories departments that share an interest in health promotion in the NWT, in 6 pillar areas, including healthy eating, physical activity, mental health and addictions, injury prevention, tobacco control, and healthy sexuality. Through this partnership, the resources available to help Northerners to make healthy choices are maximized.

This plan sets out nine priorities and the corresponding actions that need to be taken in order to move towards the goal of Wellness.



## 1.1 Priority - Improve community services by developing community wellness plans

Actions	Timeline	Expected Results
Complete Community Assessments of priorities and resources through consultation and research	2009-11	Services and programs are better balanced based on local resources and priorities
Survey program staff, RCMP and health care professionals to evaluate current service  Document full scope of services currently delivered in each community and region  Identify service integration challenges between community, regional, Stanton and other facility staff and recommend solutions	2009-10	Mental health and addictions programs (Community Counselling programs) provide consistent, quality services that meet local needs
Develop recommendations based on survey, scope analysis and community assessments  Identify right mix of services for communities and the appropriate staff model to deliver them	2010-2011	
Consult with communities on appropriateness of recommendations	2011-2012	
Fully implement final recommendations		
Expand respite care for families of children and youth with special needs	2009-10	Families and caregivers are provided with relief time
Enhance services for children with disabilities	2009-12	Better supports and resources are available to families and caregivers
Develop community wellness plans, based on the community assessments and reviews	2010-12	Unique service needs and areas for improvement are used to make effective wellness plans for each NWT community  There are greater opportunities to partner with communities on issues of wellness
Increase supports for FASD prevention	2010-12	New and better information and supports are provided to Northerners
Implement community wellness plans	2011-12	The right services are provided in the right places to help Northerners with wellness

## 1.2 Priority - Improve services for children in care

Actions	Timeline	Expected Results
Implement the next phase in standardizing Foster Care rates and expenditures	2010-11	All children in care receive funding that is equitable and based on cost of living in a community
Expand and promote the existing extended family care model	2009-10	Foster children remain with extended family, close to their own culture and community
Strengthen policies and practices to support children who are permanently in care	2009-10	Children in permanent care are well-supported to be successful
Establish a territory-wide system for Foster Care training	2010-11	Improved access and training for NWT Foster Caregivers
Improve transition services including mentoring and life skills instruction for older youth in foster care	2010-11	Youth are equipped to make a more successful transition to adulthood and independence
Update and distribute revised adoption standards to all adoption workers	2009-10	All Northerners receive the same level of service and support in the NWT adoption process
Increase community involvement in planning for children in care	2010-11	Establish Child and Family Services Committees

### 1.3 Priority - Promote healthy living and wellness

Actions	Timeline	Expected Results
Update and promote the Healthy Choices Framework partnership to the public	2009-10	Ensure health promotion is delivered effectively across NWT
Expand the Health Promotion Fund to provide funding for more smaller-scale community-driven health promotion projects	2009-10	More communities will be able to access funding for community-based health promotion projects
Expand the Healthy Foods North project which coordinates community awareness and access to nutritious foods	2009-11	Northerners have better access and information about healthy food choices
Increase funding and supports around nutrition promotion and food security	2009-ongoing	
Promote breastfeeding and healthy pregnancies	2010-12	Northerners are encouraged to choose breastfeeding as the healthiest choice  Northern women are empowered to make healthy choices during pregnancy
Develop and implement the Tobacco Strategy	2009-11	Communities are consulted and a NWT tobacco advisory committee is formed  New strategy actions are implemented.
Provide mental health programs targeted to youth that focus on addictions, suicide prevention, self-awareness and self-esteem	2009-11	Provide young people with additional supports to help them make positive choices
Develop a social marketing campaign around mental health and addictions	2010-11	Northerners have current information about the realities and supports available for those suffering from addictions or mental health issues
Work with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment to ensure resources on comprehensive school health and curriculum are maximized	2010-11	Young people have the information they need around health and wellness
Promote injury prevention to targeted audiences	2009-ongoing	Northerners are encouraged to take action to avoid preventable injury

**1.4 Priority - Increase supports and services for people who experience family violence through the Family Violence Framework partnership**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Expected Results</b>
Provide financial assistance to family violence shelters to address staff retention issues and operations and maintenance costs	2010-12	Family violence shelters are able to meet the needs of victims of violence
Expand family violence outreach services to three regions without shelters	2009-10	Clients are provided with better support and preparation when returning to their home community from a regional shelter
Support provision of programming for children who witness family violence in partnership with the YWCA	2009-11	Children are provided with programs to assist them with their experiences with family violence

Note: All of these actions are described in further detail in the Family Violence Framework

**1.5 Priority - Work with partners and stakeholders to improve the quality of life for Northerners with disabilities**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Expected Results</b>
Consult with stakeholders to develop a plan that ensures a spectrum of programs and services that improve the quality of life for persons with disabilities	2009-10	Persons with disabilities have access to coordinated, appropriate programs and services

**1.6 Priority - Work with partners and stakeholders to develop Policies and Programs for future senior and elder services**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Expected Results</b>
Determine needs and service gaps through consultation with seniors and other stakeholders and develop policies and programs to ensure needs are met appropriately and seamlessly	2010-11	Seniors and elders have access to coordinated, appropriate programs and services



## 1.7 Priority – Focus on Healthy Child Development

Actions	Timeline	Expected Results
Ensure parents have a coordinated array of supports and education to assist them in raising safe, healthy children through the Early Childhood Framework for Action	2009-12	Healthy child development

## 1.8 Priority - Deliver vaccine programs and improve communication around diseases

Actions	Timeline	Expected Results
Update the NWT Pandemic Plan as part of updated Territorial Emergency Response planning	2009-12	Coordinated response to pandemic illnesses reflects best current practices
Implement the Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) Strategy	2009-2012	Promotion and education around STIs is increased, allowing Northerners to make better choices and avoid spreading disease  Human Papilloma Virus vaccine program is implemented
Review the immunization information system, including reporting requirements and legislate improvements	2011-12	Improve capacity to monitor vaccine coverage and assess population vulnerability to vaccine-preventable infectious disease outbreaks
Increase surveillance and education around antibiotic-resistant organisms and infections	2009-10	Limit the spread of antibiotic-resistant organisms and infections

## 1.9 Priority - Reduce the gap in health and wellness between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Northerners

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Expected Results</b>
Collaborate with Aboriginal organizations to reduce the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal health status and overall wellbeing	ongoing	Improved health status of Aboriginal Northerners through increased partnership and collaboration
Work with NWT Aboriginal organizations at a community level to implement Child and Family Service Committees (See also priority 1.2)	2009-12	Communities are more involved and take ownership of decisions made for children and their families
Collaborate with Aboriginal governments to pilot culturally appropriate programs and services	2009-11	Our Northern cultures are a living part of our health and wellness programs

## 1.10 Priority - Address the issue of homelessness in the NWT

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Expected Results</b>
Continue to implement the NWT Homelessness Framework to ensure efficient and effective use of resources to address homelessness	2010-12	<p>Persons experiencing homelessness in all NWT regions and communities will have access to emergency funding and shelter</p> <p>Best practices from our experiences are incorporated in new communities and situations</p> <p>A day shelter in Yellowknife for the homeless is established in partnership with the City of Yellowknife, Yellowknife Health and Social Services Authority and BHP Billiton</p>

## 1.11 Priority - Raise Awareness about the importance of safe, clean drinking water

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Expected Results</b>
Raise awareness of the steps that can be taken to ensure water supplies are safe for drinking	2009-10	Northerners are better informed about what they can do to ensure water is safe to drink

## GOAL 2: ACCESSIBILITY

Northerners need to be able to access the right health care, and know where and how to find it. We want to ensure that care provided is high quality, dependable, and timely. Toward this goal, we have adopted a Primary Community Care (PCC) model for providing health care.

Primary Community Care is working for Northerners, and many of the actions listed below will work to expand and enhance this model, including planning upgrades and replacements of health care buildings throughout the NWT.

This model places the client at the centre of the model, and to be successful in Northern communities, Health and Social Services Authorities and the government need to understand community priorities.

Technology is one of the most exciting and innovative ways we are increasing accessibility and quality care in the Northwest Territories. New technologies will allow records, tests, and images to be shared electronically. Electronic records will ensure tests are not lost. There will be the need for less repetition of testing as

Northerners move through the system, from one caregiver to another. Use of Telehealth services is being expanded to ensure children across the North have access to speech language pathology when they need it.

We know that a large portion of hospitalizations (at least 70%) in the NWT are related to chronic disease, so there are actions that support early detection of cancer.

Many of the actions under accessibility are related to programs that are preventative, such as increased dental health care for children, and that could also have been included under the goal of Wellness.

Nine priorities and the corresponding actions are listed under the goal of Accessibility.





## 2.1 Priority - Provide the right services, through the right providers, in the right places

Actions	Timeline	Expected Results
Complete Community Assessments of priorities and resources through consultation and research (See 1.1 as well)	2009-11	Services and programs are better balanced based on local resources and priorities
Review utilization information of NWT Health Care Facilities	2009-10	Expand and continue to innovate around the primary care model in Hay River, Yellowknife and Fort Smith
Adjust the primary community care model using information gathered	2010-12	A more efficient and responsive health care system that is available when community members need it
Expand the Midwifery Program	2009-12	Families have access to pregnancy and birthing supports closer to home
Adjust staffing models to include nurse practitioners effectively	2009-12	Nurse practitioners are used to their full scope of practice
Enhance oral health promotion to young children	2010-12	Better dental health amongst younger Northerners
Pilot community treatment options and educate Northerners about addiction aftercare services available in Beaufort-Delta communities	2009-12	Northerners are supported to receive treatment for addictions at home or to return home successfully after treatment in the Beaufort-Delta region

## 2.2 Priority - Manage Chronic Disease

Actions	Timeline	Expected Results
Establish a Chronic Disease Management model for the NWT	2009-12	Decreases in the severity of, and incidence of a broad range of chronic diseases including diabetes, heart disease, and cancers  When chronic disease does occur, reduce the impacts of the disease
Promote nutrition, physical activity and other preventative healthy choices (also see 1.3)	2009-2012	Prevent chronic disease (such as cancer, diabetes, etc)
Address Colorectal Cancer through staged screening of stool samples	2009-12	Screening program is effective in the early detection of colorectal cancer
Implement a territorial screening mammography program and increase education about modifiable risk factors and screening	2009-12	Prevention and early detection

**2.3 Priority - Enhance and customize continuing care, while ensuring access and administration is optimized**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Expected Results</b>
Ensure continuing care clients enter into care through a coordinated referral and assessment process	2009-13	Clients across the NWT receive consistent, quality care, and enter the continuum of care through a coordinated referral and assessment process
Increase accessibility to Home Care in the NWT	2009-12	Northerners have access to Home Care where they need it
Establish a territorial admission committee to develop and manage access to long-term care	2009-ongoing	Northerners have fair and consistent access to long-term care no matter where they are in the NWT
Standardize the delivery of Continuing Care Services across NWT	2009-11	Northerners receive fair and consistent care across the NWT
Standardize models of care, direct care hours and staffing so that they are consistent across the NWT	2009-11	Northerners have access to consistent, quality long-term care

**2.4 Priority - Work with Public Works and Services to ensure facilities are modern, effective and aligned with current and future service delivery**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Expected Results</b>
Develop 5 year medical equipment plan and 20 year facility plan	2009-10	Facilities are planned appropriately and efficiently, and are aligned with current and future health and social services needs
	2009-10	Standardized, efficient facility planning



## 2.5 Priority - Use information technologies to bring timely, quality services to Northerners

Actions	Timeline	Expected Results
Update and provide Telehealth equipment in health centres and schools	2009-11	Improved access to Speech Language Pathology services across the Northwest Territories
<p>Develop and implement a spectrum of electronic technologies to improve connections between Northerners and service providers, and maintain records and medical information.</p> <p>This spectrum will include the Electronic Health Record System, Electronic Medical Records, Digital Imaging/Picture Archiving and Communications, the Lab Information System, and the Internet Public Health Information System</p>	2009-12	<p>Medical professionals can share and analyze tests and images faster and more efficiently</p> <p>Patients have faster access to their results</p> <p>The duplication of tests and images is reduced because the records are available electronically across the NWT</p> <p>Easier retrieval of previous exams/images/tests for comparison</p> <p>Allows online consultation between referring health care providers and specialists</p>
Implement and continue to evolve the Electronic Health Record system (iEHR) across the territory. This will allow sharing of information that includes text reports from all 4 NWT hospitals and laboratory results from Stanton, Hay River and Inuvik laboratories as well as those referred by NWT to out-of-territory laboratories	2009-10	<p>Providing services at the right place, the right time and the right provider, means images can be taken and viewed remotely to support decision making</p> <p>Practitioners have secure, efficient access to information that will improve patient care and safety</p>
Implement Electronic Medical Records (EMR) where services are required	2009-12	An upgraded Lab Information System to improve future service delivery
Implement Diagnostic Imaging/Picture Archiving and Communications System (DI/PACS) at Stanton, Hay River, Inuvik, and Fort Smith	2009-11	An upgraded Public Health Information system to improve future service delivery
Install Computed Radiography readers in the 18 community health centres that currently provide diagnostic imaging services and connect to PACS	2009-11	
Replace Lab Information System	2009-11	
Plan iPHIS (internet Public Health Information System) replacement	2009-11	

## 2.6 Priority - Maximize resources and streamline medical facilities

Actions	Timeline	Expected Results
Coordinate services between regional authorities and Stanton Hospital	2010-11	Maximize efficiencies of existing medical facilities
Model service delivery to match utilization and demand, using the Primary Community Care model	2009-12	System is efficient and effective at delivering the appropriate programs and services

## 2.7 Priority - Provide supported and assisted living in smaller communities

Actions	Timeline	Expected Results
Implement a Supported Living program in Hay River for residents of the NWT with moderate to severe disabilities	2009-11	Northerners are able to remain in the NWT and receive Supported Living services that were previously not available in the NWT  Services provided meet national quality standards and are delivered in the most efficient manner with a focus on community inclusion and participation

## 2.8 Priority - Manage physician services at a territorial level

Actions	Timeline	Expected Results
Establish a single medical staff structure for the NWT	2009-10	Long-term, coordinated and efficient planning and support of physicians that provides consistent, high quality care
Recruit a Medical Director for the NWT	2009-10	
Better define the roles of specialists and family practitioners	2010-11	

## 2.9 Priority - Create a client navigator office

Actions	Timeline	Expected Results
Create a central point for questions and problem-solving related to health and social services	2010-11	Improved client experience and access to health and social services

## 2.10 Priority - Provide clear communication about when, how and where to access the programs and services we provide

Actions	Timeline	Expected Results
Work with Northerners to identify gaps in understanding of programs and services	2009-12	Northerners have a better understanding of the programs and services that exist and how to access them
Develop communication tools and fill gaps and promote programs and services that help Northerners		

## GOAL 3 - SUSTAINABILITY

The third goal of this action plan is about sustainability – making sure our resources are used effectively and innovatively to ensure the health care system will be sustained for future generations.

Sustainability of the system means that we are able to continue to deliver quality services that are focused on patient safety and positive health outcomes today and into the future. It is important for all of us to have a sustainable, accessible, and community-based health care system that provides quality care and is affordable.

The priorities under the goal of Sustainability concentrate on ensuring our administrative systems, legislation and reporting are efficient, meet the needs of the public, and remain cost effective.

Sustainability is first and foremost about wellness – reducing and preventing illness and injuries and promoting good physical and mental health. Our health care system is the second most expensive per-capita in Canada. The pressure of the cost of health and social services in the NWT on our government is beginning to effect important programs outside of Health and Social Services. We need to make changes to the way that we do business, so that we have a strong sense of where we are headed and what our resource needs will be in the future.



### 3.1 Priority - Improve governance, and accountability to ensure the delivery of quality programs and services and consistent financial management

Actions	Timeline	Expected Results
Clarify roles and responsibilities through performance and service agreements with Health and Social Services Authorities	2009-12	<p>A consistent, NWT-wide system of reporting that allows for better financial planning, leading to increased financial sustainability</p> <p>An established, transparent model to allocate Health and Social Services funding within the GNWT financial framework</p> <p>Regional and community needs are better reflected and balanced within the territorial delivery model</p> <p>Accountability to Northerners about quality of programs and services</p>
Implement a funding model for Health Authorities		
Focus on the most effective and efficient use of funds for agreed upon programs and services		
Develop and maintain a system of reporting on performance at the authority and territorial level		

### 3.2 Priority - Develop ongoing system of reporting and evaluation

Actions	Timeline	Expected Results
Introduce a system-wide performance measurement and reporting system	2009-ongoing	Relevant statistics and information are regularly reported, providing all audiences with a clear and consistent picture of how we are doing
Develop capacity for delivering the performance measurement and reporting system	2009-11	
Regularly report on this plan, 'A Foundation for Change'	Ongoing	
Regularly evaluate client satisfaction	Ongoing	Regular feedback from Northerners to help us understand their needs

### 3.3 Priority - Require accreditation as a vehicle for quality improvement and risk management

Actions	Timeline	Expected Results
Develop a quality improvement framework	2009/10 and ongoing	Authorities have consistent accreditation and tools for demonstrating their level of quality
Develop a risk management framework		
Coordinate system-wide accreditation		

### 3.4 Priority – Effective Information Technologies support delivery of Health and Social Services

Actions	Timeline	Expected Results
Implement a Territorial Information Technology governance model for delivering services across the NWT	2009-11	A sustainable, coordinated structure for information technology services that support Health and Social Services  Improvement and future replacement of the Child and Family Services information system

### 3.5 Priority –Innovative, Maximized use of Human Resources

Actions	Timeline	Expected Results
Create staffing models for both Health and Social Services to maximize service delivery	2010-11	Staff are consistently trained, and compensated across the NWT  Northerners receive consistent services
Develop integrated teams to deliver the community wellness model (see 1.1, 2.1)	2010-11	Communities have access to the services and supports they need to address their wellness challenges and attain and maintain health and wellness
Develop innovative training programs with Aurora College and other partners	2011-ongoing	Ensures training programs link to actual jobs in communities and in team settings
Work with the Department of Human Resources to develop new ways to recruit and retain staff	2009-ongoing	Careers in Health and Social Services are promoted to Northerners  Professionals want to work and live in the North, and are prepared for the experience
Enable staff to work to their full scope of practice	2009-2012	Northerners are provided the maximum range of care and services available through existing staffing



### 3.6 Priority - Modernize legislation to ensure change is possible

Actions	Timeline	Expected Results
Propose updates to the <i>Medical Profession Act</i>	2009/10	Legislation will support current medical practice settings and education
Propose a <i>Social Worker Act</i>	2009/10	<i>The Act</i> will set educational and other licensing requirements and establish formal complaints and disciplinary processes
Propose amendments to the <i>Vital Statistics Act</i>	2009/10	Legislation will set new standards for collecting, keeping and disseminating the vital statistics of Northerners
Propose the <i>Health Information Act</i>	2010/11	The <i>Health Information Act</i> will provide up-to-date health-specific access and protection of privacy provisions that will apply to health providers, including private sectors, such as pharmacies
Propose changes to the <i>Child and Family Services Act</i>	2009	Clearer language and greater protection of client information
Propose a <i>Ground Ambulance Act</i>	2010	Clear policies and legislation around the delivery of ground ambulance services
Implement Public Health Regulations	2009	Regulations are in place to support the new <i>Public Health Act</i> that came into force September 14, 2009
Update additional <i>Acts</i> and regulations as required	Ongoing	Legislation is clear and reflects current and future HSS structure

## REPORTING AND EVALUATION

To make this plan accessible and meaningful to the public, we have provided long-term expected results. In addition, a reporting framework with specific, quantitative results is being developed. The Department of Health and Social Services commits to reporting on all of our results quarterly as we move forward with this plan. Our reporting will also provide clarity about planning in areas that are dependent on further consultation or research, such as the development of community wellness plans (Priority 1.1) and the development of funding and reporting models (Priority 3.1). Reports will be made available through [www.foundationforchange.ca](http://www.foundationforchange.ca).



Government of the Northwest Territories  
Department of Health and Social Services  
Box 1320  
Yellowknife, NT  
X1A 2L9

November 2009

All photos credited to Bill Braden Photo 2009.

ISBN 978-0-7708-0184-7

