



APR 05 2018

MR. SHANE THOMPSON  
MLA, NAHENDEH

**Oral Question 259-18(3): Mental Health Challenges in Nahendeh**

This letter is in follow up to the Oral Question you raised on March 14, 2018, regarding Mental Health Challenges in Nahendeh.

In response to a number of tragedies in the Dehcho region in 2017, the Department of Health and Social Services (Department) and the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA) have continued to work together to address immediate needs and mental health supports for residents. The Department and NTHSSA staff have reached out to local regional Indigenous leadership to better understand how the Government of the Northwest Territories can better address their needs and supports. Initial collaboration took place in July 2017, and is ongoing.

Utilizing new federal funding for mental health, the Department will be working with the NTHSSA to establish a Suicide Prevention and Crisis Support Network. This work will focus on three key areas:

- Community based and designed prevention activities;
- Targeted supports for individuals identified to be at risk via the implementation of a seamless care pathway model of service delivery; and,
- Enhanced approach and capacity for responding to community need in the wake of a crisis.

The Department, as part of a joint initiative with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, will also be implementing 42 Child and Youth Care Counsellor positions and seven clinical supervisor positions, to be added to our existing core mental health services. This initiative will allow for a holistic, integrated and therapeutic approach to better meet the needs of children and youth in the Northwest Territories.

.../2

Child and Youth Care Counsellors will be available in both school and community settings and will provide specialized mental health care and support to young people. They will also be available to act as a resource for teachers and school staff, as well as family members and adults who play an important role in the lives of children and youth.

As part of the implementation of the Child and Youth Mental Wellness Action Plan and the Mental Health and Addictions Recovery Action Plans, the Department will be developing creative and consistent communications activities to ensure residents are aware of available services and how to access them.

Thank you.



Glen Abernethy  
Minister of Health and Social Services

c Mr. Tim Mercer  
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Mr. David Hastings  
Legislative Coordinator  
Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs