



MAR 18 2019

MR. DANIEL MCNEELY  
MLA, SAHTU

**Oral Question 600-18(3):Regional Wellness Councils**

This letter is in follow up to the Oral Question you raised on February 22, 2019 regarding Regional Wellness Councils and Traditional Healing in the Health and Social Services System.

For the last four years the Sahtu Health and Social Services Authority has collaborated with the Deline Got'ine Government to support traditional wellness and healing in Deline. In May 2018, an Indigenous Healing Coordinator was hired to oversee the development of an Indigenous Wellness Program.

Two weeks ago, staff from the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority – Sahtu Region held a teleconference with the Chief Executive Officer of the Deline Got'ine Government, Indigenous Healing Coordinator and Chief Andre to discuss the progress of the project. The Department of Health and Social Services has committed to investing \$240,000 in this project over three years, from 2018-19 to 2020/21.

One of the four objectives in the recently tabled document “Caring for Our People: Cultural Safety Action Plan 2018-2020” is the honouring of traditional knowledge and healing approaches in care. This objective was included in response to the clear feedback heard during the engagement phase of the action plan that Indigenous residents want access to traditional healing methods.

Several actions under this objective speak to working with Indigenous stakeholders and leaders. For example, one of the actions identified for 2019 is to facilitate a gathering of knowledge holders to develop strategies on ways to incorporate traditional healing practices alongside programs and services.

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Another example from the action plan is to conduct a scan on existing traditional healing practices and service in the Northwest Territories (NWT), including a review of best practices in other jurisdictions in the year 2020. A final report will be produced on the findings including gaps, challenges and opportunities. This action will be completed with guidance from the Indigenous Advisory Body which was established to provide the NWT health and social services system with advice on how to incorporate Indigenous tradition, culture and healing practices. Indigenous Advisory Body members are comprised of representatives from the Indigenous governments.

I am committed to exploring ways traditional healing can be respectfully incorporated alongside NWT health and social services programs and services.

Thank you.



Glen Abernethy  
Minister of Health and Social Services

- c Mr. Tim Mercer  
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly
  
- Mr. David Hastings  
Legislative Coordinator, Executive