



JUN 10 2020

JACKSON LAFFERTY
MLA, MONFWI

Oral Question 275-19(2): Northwest Territories Addictions Treatment Facilities

This letter is in follow up to the Oral Question you raised on June 2, 2020 regarding Northwest Territories Health Addictions Treatment Facilities.

In researching the Nechi program that took place in the Tłı̨chǫ in 2000, I have gathered that this effort focused on training residents to be alcohol and drug counsellors. I agree that this program demonstrates a creative solution to our health system's recruitment and retention challenges, and exemplifies the value of building resources in the Northwest Territories (NWT).

During our exchange in the House, I spoke of the Request for Proposal (RFP) the Department of Health and Social Services (the Department) will be issuing to identify Southern treatment facilities interested in providing facility-based addictions treatment to NWT residents. The Request for Proposal is specific to the provision of facility based addictions treatment. It does not focus on the delivery of on the land or mobile programming, or programming within the NWT. That being said, Poundmakers is able to provide mobile treatment in the NWT and have done so in the past. This can be supported with On the Land healing funds provided to Indigenous Governments.

On that note, I want to highlight the Dene Wellness Warriors' efforts to bring a professional counsellor diploma program to the NWT. This is a partnership with Rhodes Wellness College, with the goal to train 25 Indigenous counsellors from across the NWT. Going forward, there is a great deal of potential with a program like the Dene Wellness Warriors/Rhodes College partnership. Graduates of the Professional Counsellor diploma would be well positioned to support community members struggling with mental health and addictions challenges but also the delivery of land based addictions healing. The Department is watching this initiative closely and providing some financial support.

Thank you.

Diane Thom
Minister of Health and Social Services

c Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Legislative Coordinator
Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs