



GOVERNMENT OF  
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

Department of Health and Community Services  
Office of the Minister

NOV 10 2004

EXE-4441

CODE # no code #

C.C. 1.          4.         

2.          5.         

3.          6.         

REGISTRY

Honourable Carolyn Bennett  
Minister of State for Public Health  
Government of Canada  
House of Commons  
Parliament Hill 655D Centre Block  
Ottawa, ON  
K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Bennett: *Caroline*

It was a pleasure to see you again at the recent Health Ministers' meeting in Vancouver. It was also very informative to receive the information and updates you provided on Canada's new Public Health Agency.

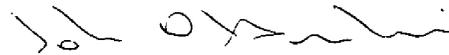
I was especially pleased to have an opportunity to have an informal discussion with you regarding the communities of Natuashish and Sheshatshiu and the significant health and social issues which continue to challenge these Innu communities. You will recall that I outlined some of my concerns at the meeting of Ministers, specifically my concerns regarding Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), addictions and the high rate of youth suicide. You indicated your willingness to assist us with this issue as our resources and capacity to deal with these issues is somewhat limited. I believe there is a significant promotion and prevention component to successfully dealing with these issues. My Department officials are collaborating with the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch of Health Canada and with the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. It is important in this regard that the Federal Government move forward with the second phase of the Innu Healing Strategy. We are also anxious to hear specifics regarding how jurisdictions will access the federal dollars for aboriginal health announced in the recent Health Accord.

I would certainly appreciate your assistance with this matter either directly in terms of what the new Public Health Agency may be able to do or through existing programs within the Federal Government, specifically with Health Canada. Healing will be a long-term process for these Innu communities. Supporting the next generation of Innu children to get off to the best start possible

2

must be our collective priority. I look forward to our continued collaboration to ensure that quality health and community services are delivered to the Labrador Innu now and in the future.

Sincerely,



**JOHN OTTENHEIMER, Q.C., M.H.A.**  
**St. John's East District**  
**Minister**

cc: Office of the Premier  
Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh, Minister of Health, Government of Canada  
Hon. Tom Rideout, Minister, Labrador & Aboriginal Affairs  
Mr. Lloyd Wicks, Child & Youth Advocate