

Information Note
Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs (LAA)

Title: LAA role in Natuashish service delivery coordination

Issue: The purpose of this Note is to provide an overview of LAA's role in Government's provision of programs and services to the Mushuau Innu First Nation at Natuashish to the Deputy Ministers' Steering Committee on Aboriginal Initiatives and for the information of the Minister.

Background and Current Status:

Innu Round Table

- The Labrador Innu Comprehensive Healing Strategy (LICHS) was initiated by Canada in 2000 as a federal-provincial-Innu strategy designed to improve health and social outcomes in Davis Inlet (now Natuashish) and Sheshatshiu; LICHS dissolved upon the Innu's withdrawal in 2011. The Innu subsequently proposed replacing LICHS with the Innu Round Table (IRT). While the proposal did not request additional funds, it did depend upon Canada's willingness to flow funds to the IRT that had previously been flowed to LICHS for administration. The Innu asserted an Innu-led IRT would be an improvement on the "government-led" LICHS, as it would be based on comprehensive community-based healing plans; gather data and provide measures of success; and require Innu accountability for administration, in addition to preserving collaborative intergovernmental decision-making, workplans and budgets. The federal and provincial governments accepted the Innu's proposal.
- The IRT is made up of members from the Labrador Innu (Innu Nation, Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation (SIFN) and MIFN); the federal government (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) and Health Canada (HC)); and the provincial government (LAA, supported as appropriate by the Departments of Advanced Education and Skills (AES), Education (EDU), Child, Youth and Family Services (CYFS), Health and Community Services (HCS), and Justice (JUS)). The IRT's main functions include: healing plans and services; capacity development; devolution of Income Support and Child, Youth & Family Services, and Policing and Justice.
- The IRT is designed to feature five sub-committees (Income Support, CYFS, Health, Capacity Development and Justice and Policing). LAA sits on the Income Support Devolution committee and the CYFS Devolution committee, as these are carryovers from LICHS. None of the other three subcommittees have yet been constituted, nor have the Innu yet shared a draft Terms of Reference for those subcommittees.
- The Innu may face challenges in the coming years given Health Canada invests significant resources in the two communities each year; such funding will lapse in 2015, and federal officials have not expressed optimism at the potential for its renewal. Contributing to this negative outlook is that neither of the two communities have yet prepared a community healing plan, despite the 2012 Health Canada renewal of funding to 2015 was contingent on such community healing plans being finalised in 2012.

Enhance Prevention Focused Approach (EPFA)

- Child, youth and family services in NL is administered by CYFS.

- The federal government provides certain health and social programs and funding directly to the Innu of Labrador through the Mushuau Innu Health Commission and the Sheshatshiu Innu Social Health Division. It also provides direct funding to the GNL to deliver certain services in the two communities, primarily Income Support and Child and Family Services. In 2012, CYFS signed Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with the Mushuau Innu First Nation (MIFN) and the Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation (SIFN) to improve planning around the safety and well-being of children and youth, as well as enhance service coordination and delivery in the two Innu communities. CYFS endeavours not to remove Innu children from their communities or culture unless absolutely necessary.
- In a newspaper article of October 1, 2013 entitled "We want to die – nobody's listening to us" Chief Tshakapesh of Natuashish is stating the need for increasing parenting skills. The Chief is quoted as stating "Parents have to start doing something. On top of that they also need help being parents; being taught how to parent." The community's mental health therapist is quoted as citing the need for parenting improvements to support treatment as follows "For the past 20 years, the kids go out for treatment, do brilliantly out in treatment, come back home, and are gas sniffing that night because things haven't changed at home." Enhanced Prevention Funding would likely help this situation.
- The Provinces' three First Nations, MIFN, SIFN and the Miawpukek First Nation (MFN), have expressed an interest to enter into a partnership with the federal and provincial governments to implement a community-led Enhanced Prevention Focused Approach (EPFA). The EPFA would provide First Nations with improved capacity to provide services to on-reserve First Nations children on a proactive basis through increased funding.
- On June 14, 2013, AANDC wrote the Province to propose tripartite meetings to begin discussion to develop a province-specific EPFA. The three groups have begun drafting a Tripartite Accountability Framework, which is anticipated to be finalized in the coming months.
- Final steps to EPFA approval include developing a costing model to establish a formula for the funding recipient(s), development of a Business Plan by the First Nations, implementation and ongoing monitoring and compliance reviews.
- NL is hopeful that the federal government will facilitate the provision of EPFA funding to First Nations in the province.

Support and Advice

- LAA continues to work cooperatively with Aboriginal organizations and governments to improve the social and economic well-being of the Aboriginal people in the province. LAA continues to ensure the unique social, cultural, and linguistic attributes of the Aboriginal people of the province are appropriately taken into consideration in policy formulation, and the delivery of programs and services. This is accomplished through the provision of departmental advice, insights, and participation in horizontal policy/program processes.

Prepared / Reviewed by: C. Downey, LAA / B. Harvey, LAA, A. Gover, LAA

Approved by:

Date: November 4, 2013

