

*Nov. 26 Memo to the***FOR INFORMATION****MEMORANDUM TO THE MINISTER**

SUBJECT: Youth Solvent Abuse in Davis Inlet

PURPOSE: To provide an update on the current situation in Davis Inlet, Labrador

BACKGROUND:

There has been increased media interest over the past several days on the situation of youth solvent abuse in Davis Inlet. This interest follows the build-up of media interest in the Labrador Innu community of Sheshatshiu. The new Chief of Davis Inlet, Simeon Tshakapesh, has been quoted in the media saying the situation in Davis Inlet is even worse than in Sheshatshiu, that 80 children need to be apprehended and removed from the community, and that Health Canada has done nothing for his community for the past decade.

Current Situation:

On November 24, 2000, Health Canada officials were informed that Chief Tshakapesh had plans to charter a plane to take a number of gas-sniffing children from Davis Inlet to Toronto. The purpose was to attempt a meeting with the Prime Minister and to request increased federal investment in the community.

Following discussions with Minister Tobin, Chief Tshakapesh has agreed to instead meet with to discuss the current situation at Davis Inlet. The meeting is to be held on November 26, 2000 in Goose Bay and Chief Tshakapesh, Peter Penashue, President of the Innu Nation, Shirley Serafini, Deputy Minister, DIAND, and Ian Potter, Assistant Deputy Minister, First Nations and Inuit Health will be attending.

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Health Canada is working jointly with DIAND and with the Province to ensure that the immediate needs of solvent addicted youth in Davis Inlet are assessed and that appropriate treatment and services are jointly provided.

The Regional office of Health Canada will continue efforts to work with community leaders in Davis Inlet in order to jointly address the community's needs.

David Dodge