

**INNU ROUND TABLE SECRETARIAT
ENHANCED PREVENTION SERVICES TRANSITIONAL WORKPLAN
SEPTEMBER 2014 - MARCH 2015**

DATE: JULY 23, 2014

BACKGROUND

The Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation (SIFN) and Mushuau Innu First Nation (MIFN) have made it a priority to negotiate and exert Innu influence over the delivery of Child, Youth and Family Services in a manner comparable to, or better than other First Nations across Canada.

Child and Family Services delivery on Indian Act reserves involves a complex mix of federal and provincial jurisdictions, funding, standards, accountabilities and organizations. In most provinces, jurisdiction is provincial and funding is federal while separate agencies/organizations that focus on on-reserve children are mandated to deliver provincial services funded by a federal formula.

In July 2013, a tripartite enhanced prevention focused approach (EPFA) working group comprised of Innu, Conne River, provincial and federal representatives was established. Their role was to oversee the completion and submission of an accountability framework and costing model to the Federal Cabinet in order to pursue enhanced prevention funding in the 2014-2015 federal budget.

Throughout these tripartite discussions, Innu leadership, provincial and federal delegates were regularly updated through the Innu Round Table. In early April 2014, these representatives were officially notified that EPFA funds were not made available to Newfoundland and Labrador. Several EPFA working group members later discussed next steps regarding enhanced prevention services, which included the development of a draft business plan to address strategies, services and measures of success to meet identified prevention goals. This draft has since received by AANDC.

Despite this stumbling block, Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Canada (AANDC) suggested the Innu complete a document outlining the basis of supporting prevention activities that could help reduce maintenance/protection costs, which could be considered by AANDC HQ for initial funding (bypassing Treasury Board). Upon further dialogue, AANDC later requested the Innu capture the preliminary startup operations and costing model of an enhanced prevention services organization in a transitional "workplan" to reflect its necessary developmental, operational and functional elements.

ISSUE

In a letter addressed to the Honourable Bernard Valcourt, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, dated February 7th, Jeremy Andrew, Former Innu Nation Deputy Grand Chief, stated, "For many years, Canada has worked with the Innu of Labrador to find ways to address the multiple and complex issues facing the Innu, one of the most significant being child welfare. An unfortunate fact is that every Innu

family has been impacted by child protection services. To date, the Innu have had very little influence on child welfare practices or services in Newfoundland and Labrador. The Innu continue to face many healing challenges and require prevention funding as soon as possible. Canada's acceptance of the Innu Round Table, which has replaced the Main Table, has led to a new approach to these challenges and some promising results. However, the transfer of enhanced prevention funds to the Innu would be a significant step. We will be able to recruit and train new staff, work through case plans, provide services that can lower the risk to children and youth, lessen their time in care and ensure children who do enter care remain connected to their kin, community and culture."

There are approximately 2000 Labrador Innu living in Sheshatshiu and Natuashish. Prior to being permanently settled in these two communities by the mid 1960's (Sheshatshiu and Davis Inlet), the Innu were a nomadic people roaming throughout the Quebec-Labrador interior, spending most of the year hunting inland and travelling to the coast during the summer months to visit trading posts. In 2003, Davis Inlet was relocated to the new community of Natuashish. Despite this move, multiple and complex issues still face the Innu in these communities.

Both Sheshatshiu and Natuashish have exhibited disproportionately high incidences of referrals of Innu children and youth to CYFS for protective intervention programs and services. While CYFS endeavours not to remove Innu children from their communities or culture unless absolutely necessary to avail of treatment or residential programs to address mental health and addictions issues, many of these children are often referred to CYFS again at some point after treatment is completed and they return to their respective communities.

PROBLEM DEFINITION

Problem Statement

The Sheshatshiu and Mushuau Innu First Nations wish to implement a community-based enhanced prevention focused approach (EPFA) to Innu children, youth and families living on reserve in Sheshatshiu and Natuashish. Under an EPFA model, legislatively mandated protection for vulnerable children and families are complemented by incremental federal funding to support the implementation and leveraging of community driven, culturally appropriate activities intended to enable these families to remain together safely in their homes and communities.

PROJECT OVERVIEW AND DESCRIPTION

Today, AANDC reports the enhanced prevention focused approach is underway in six provinces – Alberta, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia, Quebec, Prince Edward Island and Manitoba. AANDC describe this new approach to funding that would ensure enhanced prevention services were brought to First Nations reserves.

CYFS is ultimately responsible for child protection in NL, including establishing policy, delivering programs and services, and administering the CYCPA. NL does not reference prevention in their legislation and is based on the best interest of the child. The administration of child, youth and family services in NL is guided by the Children and Youth Care and Protection Act (CYCPA) whose objective is established at section 8: "to

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promote the safety and well-being of children and youth who are in need of protective intervention." Having prevention clauses in the provincial legislation is not a prerequisite for a province to implement EPFA.

The need to join the two ends of the spectrum – prevention services at one end, and protective intervention services at the other – is viewed as critical to ensuring prevention services can be effective and tailored to the unique needs of an Innu child, youth and their family.

SIFN and MIFN are uniquely positioned to provide such prevention services, as they are experts in respect of the needs of the communities and children and youth of Sheshatshiu and Natuashish, and the level and nature of required programming and supports. This expertise must be used to address the underlying causes of children being referred to child protection for intervention. As stated in the EPFA Tripartite Accountability Framework, the parties agree that building and relying upon this expertise is essential for the development and delivery of effective prevention services, to First Nations by First Nations in First Nations communities. Furthermore, these parties also recognize a significant need for proactive programs, services and supports for children and parents to pre-emptively address risks to an Innu child and youth's health, safety and well-being.

The Innu vision of a prevention services agency resembles that of the Mi'kmaq Family PRIDE (Prevention, Respect, Intervention, Development and Education) Program in Prince Edward Island (PEI), which provides prevention services and supports the protection of First Nations children. They do not provide protection services, as the legal mandate for all child protection concerns is the responsibility of the PEI Dept. of Child and Family Services. Prevention services they offer are voluntary and include the following:

- In home support (home visits)
- Groups (support and educational)
- Connections to community programs and services
- Immediate support for families when child protection social workers are investigating a referral.
- Family Group Conferencing
- Outreach Services
- Designated Band Representative
- Foster Home Recruitment

In November 2012, SIFN and MIFN Innu leadership signed Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's) with CYFS to create planning circles for each community. The goal of the MOU's "is to improve planning with respect to the safety and placement of children and youth, as well as to enhance service delivery coordination between the parties." Identified planning circle members meet at least four times per year to fulfill the MOU's. The development of enhanced prevention services have been identified as a significant component of the SIFN and MIFN planning circles and will continue to be discussed at these gatherings.

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As with any new initiative, the development and implementation of a new prevention services organization can be an overwhelming task but conceptualization can be aided by breaking it down in phases to achieve the following:

- Ensure that deliverables produced at the end of each phase meet their purpose
- Demonstrate that project's goals can be achieved within the required timelines
- Prepare for the project to "go live"

The EPFA transitional work plan contained in this document also contains the elements of organization, management, direction, monitoring, and evaluation.

ENHANCED PREVENTION PILOT PROJECT

The enhanced prevention pilot project will be an integral piece of the EPFA transitional workplan. It will be conducted in a phased approach that will encompass its design, implementation and completion. The purpose of this project will be to:

- Demonstrate in both communities what an enhanced prevention services program would look like
- Gather baseline data for the EPFA business plan
- Prepare an enhanced prevention services program "go live"
- Identify any gaps in current community programs and services to improve service delivery model
- Assess capacity building needs
- Utilize organizational forms
- Obtain client participation and staff feedback
- Complete an evaluation

CONCLUSION

Every Innu family has been impacted by child welfare services and Sheshatshiu and Natuashish have exhibited disproportionately high levels of referrals of Innu children and youth to CYFS for protection intervention.

The Innu want to implement an enhanced prevention services organization where Innu children, youth and families can obtain pro-active programs, services and supports that pre-emptively address risks to children's health, safety and well-being. To date, they have had very little influence on child welfare practices or services in NL but have shown the ability to deliver a range of social programs and services which are community-based and community-led.

NL was not successful in obtaining enhanced prevention funding in the 2014-2015 federal budget. Therefore, the Innu are counting on new funding resources to begin the transitional process of developing enhanced prevention services – services that have never been part of past Innu healing efforts led by Canada. If funds are not made available, the process to implement services that can lower the risk to Innu children, youth and their families will be delayed and the possibility exists that operations and maintenance costs will continue to increase.

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The Innu cannot wait another year for the inclusion of enhanced prevention funding in the 2015-2016 federal budget. While the planning circles via the MOU's between the Innu and CYFS have been implemented and recognize the importance of enhanced prevention services, this initiative is simply not feasible without a funding source to support it.

CYFS devolution to an Innu agency remains the long-term goal of the Innu and the provision of enhanced prevention services is a stepping-stone towards making this goal a reality.

EPFA Transitional Workplan

	Phase 1		Phase 2	Phase 3	
Date	September-October 2014	November-December 2014	January-March 2015	Status/Comments	
Goal	Coordinate the implementation of a basic enhanced prevention services organization	Coordinate the implementation of a basic enhanced prevention services organization	Build agency capacity to provide enhanced prevention services and promote best practices to Innu children, youth and families.		
Objective 1	Design the organizational framework	Design the organizational framework	Maintain the organizational framework		
Activities	• Draft vision, mandate and mission statement • Draft organizational chart • Draft policy and procedures guidelines • Draft service delivery model • Organize an enhanced prevention services forum • Maintain enhanced prevention services development via planning circles (MOU)	• Finalize vision, mandate and mission statement • Finalize organizational chart • Finalize policy and procedures guidelines • Finalize service delivery model • Organize a follow-up enhanced prevention services forum • Maintain enhanced prevention services development via planning circles (MOU)	• Prepare EPFA 2015-16 workplan • Prepare a report on the enhanced prevention services forum		
Objective 2	Develop enhanced prevention services organization functions and operations	Develop enhanced prevention services organization functions and operations	Maintain enhanced prevention services organization functions and operations		
Activities	• Secure office space • Organize office admin procedures, supplies and services (phone, fax, filing system, inventory etc.) • Establish flow of funding through IRT Secretariat/SIFN Finance	• Finalize organizational forms • Finalize job descriptions • Define roles and responsibilities • Identify staff development/training needs	• Monitor policies and procedures • Monitor vision, mandate and mission statement • Identify areas that need improvement to maintain effective organization functions and operations		

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	• Draft organizational forms • Assess community/resources • Identify service gaps • Hire EPFA Project Coordinator/Planner • Develop staffing model • Draft job descriptions			• Implement staff development/training needs • Submit 2015-1016 operational budget • Submit 2015-1016 capacity building plan	
Objective 4	• Establish accountability framework for enhanced prevention services organization • Develop operational budget • Brief Innu leadership, IRT Secretariat staff and provincial federal representatives as required through the IRT	• Maintain accountability framework for enhanced prevention services organization • Complete and submit scheduled reports as required according to federal funding agreement guidelines • Brief Innu leadership, IRT Secretariat staff and provincial and federal representatives as required through the IRT • Maintain operational budget	• Complete and submit scheduled reports as required according to federal funding agreement guidelines • Brief Innu leadership, IRT Secretariat staff and provincial and federal representatives as required through the IRT • Maintain operational budget	• Maintain accountability framework for enhanced prevention services organization	
Objective 5	• Develop enhanced prevention services pilot project • Research best practice service delivery models • Develop selection criteria and evaluation model • Design and finalize pilot project • Design data collection template • Seek Innu leadership approval to proceed • Train staff in implementing pilot project	• Develop enhanced prevention services pilot project • Secure pilot project case files • Conduct test run of pilot project • Implement pilot project	• Implement enhanced prevention services pilot project • Complete pilot project • Begin preliminary evaluation of enhanced prevention services project		

EPFA TRANSITIONAL WORKPLAN COSTING FACTORS

BUDGET ITEM	AMOUNT
EPFA Project Coordinator (wages & benefits)	40,000.00
Office Supplies	3,000.00
Meetings/Hospitality	5,000.00
Rent	1,500.00
Telephone	1,500.00
Travel	5,000.00
Professional Development	2,000.00
Legal/Professional Fees	5,000.00
Miscellaneous	2,000.00
EPFA Pilot Project Administration	5,000.00
TOTAL	70,000.00

THE REQUEST

The IRT Secretariat is seeking an alternative source of funding from AANDC to implement the EPFA transitional workplan. An alternative budget source of \$70,000 is necessary to not only initiate the EPFA transitional workplan but to also implement an enhanced prevention services pilot project.

Furthermore, this will allow the IRT Secretariat to hire an EPFA Project Coordinator to assist the CYFS Transition Coordinator with the preliminary stages of developing an enhanced prevention services organization; an important part of the Innu concept towards the of CYFS devolution.