

**BRIEFING NOTE**

**Title:** Innu Healing

**Issue:**

- Update on issues being addressed with the Innu Healing Strategy for the communities of Sheshatshiu and Davis Inlet.

**Background:**

- On November 26, 2000, representatives from the federal and provincial governments and Health Labrador Corporation (HLC) met with Innu Community leaders. The discussions focussed on addressing the ongoing solvent abuse and family healing needs for Davis Inlet and Sheshatshiu.
- The federal and provincial governments agreed to work cooperatively with the communities to seek appropriate treatment options for the gas sniffing youth. They also agreed to work together with the Innu to fully explore long term initiatives to restore the cultural and social fabric of the communities.

**Current Status:**

- The Province continues to work with the federal government and the Innu Band Councils to assist with developing long term healing strategies in the Innu communities. The social issues identified in these communities are complex in nature and have developed over an extended period of time. Therefore, the strategies will have to focus on long term solutions to have any real impact.
- On November 8, 2001, the Federal Treasury Board approved a Health Canada healing strategy for the Innu of Labrador.
  - This strategy will cost approximately \$20M through to March 31, 2003. It incorporates current program funding and expands some services currently being provided to the Innu.
  - The funding also includes the \$6.1M spent by the Province at the Grace Hospital, \$1.2M to operate the family treatment program in Sheshatshui, and \$1.2M to operate the mobile treatment program in Davis Inlet.
  - This strategy will also see 22 professional staff situated in Happy Valley-Goose Bay to deliver mental health/addictions, community/public health and community development programs in both Innu communities. It is expected hiring will be completed within six months.
- The Province purchased Lobstick Lodge and transferred ownership to the Sheshatshiu Band Council to be used as a family treatment centre.

- The Federal government is contributing all of the \$153M required to relocate the Mushuau Innu to Natuashish.
- The Federal government has confirmed its commitment to register the Innu under the Indian Act and establish reserves at Sheshatshiu and Natuashish.
- The Province continues to work with the federal government and the Innu on the creation of reserves and related issues, specifically in the program areas of Child, Youth and Family Services and Education.
- The Innu have established the Innu Healing Foundation for the purpose of raising funds for recreational facilities in both Innu communities. The estimated total cost to fund the project is \$12.5M. The Province has provided \$250,000, with an additional \$750,000 to be disbursed when the Innu have raised all the other required funds.
- The Mushuau Innu submitted a proposal to Health Canada in December 2001 to fund a family treatment program based within Natuashish. It is anticipated this issue will be discussed at the next Mushuau Innu Healing Strategy Meeting. A meeting has not yet been scheduled.
- The Province and the federal government agreed to discuss the establishment of a detoxification center in Labrador. To date, no meeting has been arranged to discuss this issue, although it is understood that Health Canada has allocated funding towards this initiative.

Prepared by: Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs  
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