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**Innu Round Table Meeting #14**  
**September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015 Holiday Inn, St John's, NL**

**Parties in Attendance:**

**Innu:** Deputy Grand Chief Innu Nation, Simeon Tshakapesh  
Chief Eugene Hart, SIFN  
Chief Gregory Rich, MIFN

**Canada:** Christopher McDonell, AANDC Atlantic Region  
Debra Keays-White, HC/FNIH Atlantic  
Isabelle Gaetan, AANDC  
Ray Andrews, FSR

**Province:** Ron Bowles, NL/Labrador & Aboriginal Affairs  
Donna O'Brien, NL/CYFS  
Rick Healey, NL/CYFS  
Karen Stone/NL HCS

Note: a complete list of participants is attached

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**1. INTRODUCTIONS**

The Interim Chair, Steve Joudry convened the meeting @9:30. On behalf of the IRT, Steve extended condolences to the community and family members in Sheshatshiu for the passing of Eric Penunsi. He congratulated Eugene Hart on his recent election as Chief of SIFN. Kylie Rose was introduced as new Income Support – Client Service Manager with the IRT Secretariat. The table acknowledged Chris McDonell and his recent permanent appointment as the Regional Director General for AANDC/Atlantic.

All parties were present, members/participants identified themselves (see list attached).

**2. REVIEW AGENDA**

The proposed agenda was reviewed and approved.

### **3. REVIEW NOTES/DECISIONS/ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

The action item document (attached) was reviewed and it was noted that there are now updates to the status on a few items (ie: Prote Poker will be the justice contact for Natuashish now. The Innu-NL/CYFS MOU -working relationship agreement has been finalized and will be signed at lunchtime today with the NL/Minister CYFS and Chiefs).

### **4. OPENING COMMENTS FROM THE IRT MEMBERS**

DGC Simeon Tshakapesh mentioned how health care, CYFS, policing and social problems continue to be challenges. He believes more Innu language, culturally based programs and traditions need to be implemented as part of the education system. He supports the aim of respectful relationships with governments, but the Innu are not fully empowered as partners yet.

Chief Rich expressed condolences to Sheshatshiu and the Penunsi family for their loss. He congratulated Chief Hart on his recent election and acknowledged that both communities have similar issues. By working together he believes they can make positive changes. He believes sober leadership is key to achieving results. Gas sniffing in Natuashish is being addressed, and the MIFN Council has received positive feedback. He acknowledges the political differences in the community, but remains committed to make improvements. Good working relationships with other levels of government and service providers/departments will help achieve this change. Chief Rich also informed the group that he would be leaving the meeting for most of the afternoon for another important meeting.

Chief Hart also expressed condolences to the family of Eric Penunsi. As a new chief he is looking forward to working with everyone at the IRT. He plans to continue the efforts of previous leaders in advancing important initiatives started in the past. The goal is to put everything on the table and try to change important things. Chief Hart noted the challenges with dealing with problems that plague both communities, including suicide, and drugs & alcohol. He supports the goal to make both communities healthy.

Debra Keays-White (HC) welcomed Chief Hart and offered to provide an overview of HC programs & services as part of the orientation for the new Council in Sheshatshiu. She feels that everyone pulled together with the Natuashish community recently and that the inter-agency meeting was a positive step that should be a good foundation for further work.

Chris McDonnell (AANDC) said he is honored to be assigned to Atlantic Canada on a permanent basis as the RDG. He is looking forward to learning more about the Innu communities and their priorities. He will continue to work in collaboration on major issues and hopes to make progress on all areas within the parameters of AANDC programs and budgets.

Ron Bowles/LAA noted that Tony Wakeham/LGH was not able to attend the meeting. Ron mentioned the province is aware there is a lot of work to be done. He noted it's a great step that the MOU on CYFS will be signed today.

Donna O'Brien/NL-CYFS mentioned the pre-CYFS meeting on Sep 29<sup>th</sup> was very productive. She suggested this approach of a CYFS Meeting before the main IRT meetings should continue. She also offered to brief Chief Hart separately on CYFS operations.

Ray Andrews (FSR) also congratulated Chief Hart on his new appointment. Ray mentioned how the government and communities have been working together and making great steps. He noted the progress on establishing a Justice Sub-committee is encouraging.

## **5. ACTION LIST UPDATE**

### **a. IRT Secretariat/Board**

Steve noted that several board members were not able to attend the scheduled Board Meeting Sep 28<sup>th</sup>, so the meeting was postponed. However, the time was used to provide a detailed briefing to Chief Hart. Steve also went over the IRT Sec Annual Workplan and the revenue/expenditure plan. Not all forecasted funding from HC and AANDC has been confirmed for 2015/16. Both documents are attached and also posted on the IRT Website.

#### **Action Items**

- **The IRT Sec Board Meeting will be rescheduled.**

### **b. Income Support Devolution Plan**

Steve noted that in an effort to finalize changes to the devolution strategy/plan the parties recently conducted bilateral meetings/teleconferences. While there is general agreement for the outline plan and agreement-in-principle on a start date of April 1<sup>st</sup> 2016, the details require further work. In the meantime, funding from AANDC is now in place with the IRT Sec to complete devolution preparedness, including training of front line staff and setup of IT and financial systems.

John Higham provided a brief history of Income Support Devolution work with the Federal and Provincial officials and Innu. Kylie then presented an update (slide presentation attached) on the Income Support Devolution Plan and the Implementation Schedule for the devolved program. The Implementation Plan highlights the major activities for each month. Policies & procedures are being finalized, including adaptation of forms for use by the IRT Sec. She mentioned the Client Services Officer (CSO) training is scheduled for October and all staff will be involved.

#### **Action Items**

- **AANDC will provide a consolidated (Region/HQ) review of the Income Support Devolution Plan, as amended by the IRT Sec and NL/AES and then a tripartite teleconf/meeting will be held to finalize/approve the plan.**

### **c. Justice Sub-Committee Update**

The updated third draft Terms of Reference was tabled for information. As requested by Chief Rich, the IRT Sec has engaged a consultant to help prepare a MIFN proposal to the province to establish community Justice Workers in Natuashish. In collaboration with the SIFN Justice rep, the consultant will meet with the MIFN reps in the next few weeks to

finalize the proposal. Following this work, community justice forums can be conducted in MIFN to compare to the priorities in Sheshatshiu.

#### **Action Items**

- **IRT Sec will coordinate with SIFN and MIFN Justice representatives to establish the Justice Committee.**

#### d. Child Youth & Family Services

As noted in previous IRT Meetings, the Child Welfare League of Canada (CWLC) was engaged by the IRT Sec to conduct a CYFS Needs Assessment in SIFN and MIFN. This work will help inform the Innu and federal/provincial partners on the nature and scope of strategies and priorities to incorporate in a go-forward plan, including enhanced prevention. Funding to support the project is outstanding; however a decision from AANDC is expected soon.

Gord Phaneuf, CEO CWLC, was introduced and presented an overview (slide presentation attached) of their work and interim report. The key recommendations include:

- A coordinated support strategy to bring Innu children and youth home from out-of-community placements.
- A reintegration plan for the children and youth in their communities.
- Secure homes and facilities are needed
- Plans must include a balance of risk reduction and wellness promotion initiatives focused on protection.
- Application of the Innu Healing Strategy needs to be put in place
- Alternative care and placement options are needed to address a shortage of foster parents/homes.
- Technical expertise may be needed to build strong partnerships
- IT infrastructure must be capable of supporting contemporary methods and practices of remote service delivery for specialized support.

The CWLC Final Report on the needs assessment will be submitted in December, 2015.

There were several comments and questions on areas of the presentation. Debra Keays-White noted that HC had put a telepresence robot in Nain, Labrador six years ago and that maybe this was originally planned for Natuashish as well, but even now the current state of internet access and cell phone connectivity do not support the use of this technology.

Donna O'Brien mentioned that the CYFS MOU (Working Relationship Agreement) will be signed today and that by the end of October there will be a Service Delivery Handbook in place. She mentioned the agreement provides for the creation & funding of a community liaison position at the IRT Sec as pilot project. She also notified the group that the province has established a separate CYFS Zone Manager position for Natuashish and that Dana Downey, working out of the Labrador City office, was appointed to the position. Her orientation will begin in the coming days.

The research and planning continues to be refined on options for increased placement resources in Natuashish and Sheshatshiu. The Innu planners met with NL/CYFS representatives on Sep 29<sup>th</sup> and will be visiting some level 4 Placement facilities in St John's

in the next few days. An outline plan will be presented to the SIFN and SIFN Chief & Councils before a proposal is finalized.

#### **Action Items**

- **NL/CYFS will complete the draft Service Delivery Handbook (Innu Zone) in collaboration with the Innu representatives to help guide the MOU implementation.**
- **NL/CYFS and IRT Sec will coordinate the establishment of the community liaison function (pilot project) including the arrangements for provincial funding support for 2015/16.**
- **AANDC will respond to the IRT Sec funding request for the CYFS Needs Assessment work by the CWLC.**
- **IRT Sec will continue to coordinate the CYFS placement resources planning and present options for consideration.**
- **Innu Leaders and Minister Collins will sign the CYFS MOU.**  
***NOTE: The NL-INNU CYFS MOU/Working Relationship Agreement was signed by the parties over the lunch break. The document and photos are posted to the IRT Website under the CYFS tab. A press release was issued Oct 5<sup>th</sup>.***

#### **6. HEALTH UPDATE**

##### **a. LITHP Funding Renewal**

The June 2015 HC letter (attached) confirmed the \$5.5M funding for healing funding (LITHP, previously called LICHS) had been renewed for three years (until March 2018). Debra Keays-White noted that the bulk of the funding continues to be directed to support community-based programs. She also mentioned that the approval process and departmental management includes a system of terms & conditions aimed to ensure the funding has been successful in addressing the needs. Meeting these expectations is particularly important if HC is to seek renewal of these incremental funds beyond 2018. There are 4 areas where HC and Innu need to undertake work over the next couple of years:

- First, at the next meeting of the IRT, HC will present on the second health status report. This will be a follow up to the baseline report in 2011. The second report will allow the parties to report on progress and assess trends in health status indicators over time (3-5 year intervals). By working in partnership with the Innu, HC will be able to assemble a variety of key health status indicators from a variety of data sources including data collected by the province.
- Second, by September of 2017, we need to follow-up to the 2011 Labrador Innu Health System Capacity Assessment to assess the extent to which the capacity development activities are meeting the needs of the communities.
- Third, also by September of 2017, HC will work with the Innu to have evaluations completed of the community programs funded under the LIHP – these are the mental health and addictions programs as well as the maternal and child health programs. This area of evaluation is also a priority for the Innu, and part of the IRT Sec Capacity Development Proposal for 2015/16.

- Finally, Health Canada's will be conducting a nationwide evaluation of its First Nations and Inuit Health mental wellness programming next fiscal year. At the moment, HC does not know how the Innu communities may be specifically requested to be involved. HC national office will be working out the methodology and contacting communities across the country in the coming months.

Steve noted this will be important work and it will be important to clarify the purpose of the evaluations as soon as possible and establish roles and responsibilities.

#### **Action Items**

- **HC will work with the community Health Directors, IRT Health Staff and the Health Information/data Management Working Group on the health status report.**
- **HC and the IRT Sec health staff will collaborate on a process for coordination with the health Directors on the follow up plans for a capacity assessment and program evaluations.**

#### b. Capacity Development Initiatives

The status of the IRT Capacity Development Initiatives was reviewed (attached). As of today, HC has approved all project proposals except for the Leadership Certificate in Community Governance & Management. AANDC was not able to contribute joint funding to support the projects this year, so the second intake of the LCCM and the Advanced LCCM will be limited to Innu health staff. The second annual IMC Health Planning Forum is being planned in Goose Bay 19-21 January 2016. Several projects will have to be adjusted due to late notice of funding approval.

#### **Action Items**

- **The LCCM Coordinator and UPEI coaches will be coordinating candidates for the LCCM2 and Advanced LCCM Programs in the coming weeks.**
- **HC will expedite funding for the capacity development projects under IRT Sec coordination and management.**
- **The IRT Sec will provide monthly status reports to HC on all projects.**

#### c. Inter-Agency Response to Support Natuashish

HC reported that two staff travelled to Natuashish and had a very productive meeting. Patrick Small Legs-Nagge said they had good attendance at the meeting for chief and council and the community. Patrick provided a summary report of the Inter-agency meeting. The inter-agency discussion included gas sniffing, recreation, enforcement of the intoxicant bylaw, FASD, restorative justice, housing and funding. All parties agreed to a list of action items to be worked on in preparation for a follow up meeting. The group may meet on a regular basis.

HC noted that the country-based treatment program in Natuashish is going well and they had 38 members attend. Donna O'Brien also noted that CYFS has been invited to also attend the family program and do some workshops in Natuashish.

## **Action Items**

- **HC and MIFN will collaborate on a follow up inter-agency meeting in October 2015.**

### **d. IMC Report**

Janet Gregoire presented the IMC report (attached) on behalf of Natasha Hurley (IRT Health Coord). At the last IMC Meeting (Sep 22<sup>nd</sup>), the group approved the 2015/16 Workplan and integrated approach guided by the Innu Healing Strategy. The Working Groups will now finalize their workplans as well.

The IMC has approved the Diabetes Wellness Working Group (DWWG) Workplan and adopted it as a model/template for other working groups. The DWWG is in the process of reviewing the 2014/15 Diabetes Assessment Report and will provide recommendations through the IMC. Their request for the IRT to consider one of the recommendations (agreement on sharing of health information) is deferred until all recommendations from the report are analyzed.

The Health Information/Data Management (HiM) Working Group recently held a workshop on "Expressing Innu Health Knowledge" (Sep 1-2, 2015). There was agreement to focus on MHA as the top priority in developing a new model which combines Innu strength with strength of others by embracing the best of two worlds.

The IMC has decided to suspend the Maternal Child Health (MCH) Working Group until the Health Directors can meet to discuss a new mandate, membership and operating protocols.

The IMC is planning its annual planning forum to be held in Goose Bay Jan 19-21, 2016.

Debra Keays-White noted that the report on how to improve the use of Labrador Health Secretariat (LHS) resources was completed, and the Innu priority recommendations are being considered.

## **Action Items**

- **IMC will present recommendations from the Diabetes Assessment Report**
- **IMC will coordinate a meeting of the Health Directors regarding the reorganization of the MCH Working Group**
- **IRT Sec will coordinate a meeting between HC officials and the Innu Health Directors to discuss implementation of the LHS Resources report.**

## **7. OTHER BUSINESS**

Chief Hart expressed a need for improvement of after-hours service in suicide response & prevention in Sheshatshiu. Jack Penashue noted that they now have employed a youth outreach worker who will be focused on youth issues of suicide prevention and bullying in collaboration with the school.

Jack also noted that children with mental or physical disabilities are having a hard time getting access to education in Sheshatshiu because of the lack of resources for special education

services. Ron Bowles indicated an interest in getting further information on the nature and scope of the issue.

It was noted that this issue is related to Special Education funding provided by AANDC. Chris McDonnell noted that the special education requirements in First Nation schools are a national issue and that the needs far outweigh financial resources. As an example, a recent report on the Special Needs Assessment (the Roche Report) in the Innu schools identified the need at nearly \$3m/year, while AANDC is currently providing \$300-400K. This item will be referred to the Innu Education Board (MTIE) for follow up as necessary.

## **8. NEXT MEETING**

The next full IRT meeting will take place in February, with Goose Bay as the preferred location. A final date will be determined later. The parties are considering a separate information-sharing session on the IRT work and Land Claim/Self-Government process. Although the original idea was to link the joint session with a planned IRT Meeting, the parties were asked to consider Jan 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016, in Goose Bay prior to the planned Main Table meeting.

### **Action Items**

- **IRT Sec will consult with the parties on possible dates in Feb/2016 for the next IRT.**
- **IRT Sec will consult with the parties regarding a plan for the joint information session.**

Prepared By: Alicia Penashue

Reviewed By: Steve Joudry

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### **ATTACHMENTS:**

List of participants

Meeting Agenda

Action Items from IRT Meeting June 2015

IRT Sec Workplan and Revenue/Expenditure Plan

Income Support Implementation Plan

CWLC Presentation – Interim Report on CYFS Needs Assessment

Draft3 – Terms of Reference IRT Justice & Policing Committee

HC Letter June 2015 on LITHP Funding Renewal

Status Report – Capacity Development Initiatives

IMC Report September 2015

**LIST of PARTICIPANTS – IRT MEETING SEP 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

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