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Your file *Votre référence*

Our file *Notre référence*

December 19, 2011

Community & Tribal Council Health Directors;
Ontario First Nations, First Nations Organizations;
Ontario Local Health Integration Networks;
Ontario Ministry of Health & Long-Term Care

Dear Partners:

THE HEALTH SERVICES INTEGRATION FUND (HSIF)

I am pleased to provide information regarding Health Canada's HSIF to assist you in preparations for developing proposals for health service integration partnerships to advance the integration of First Nations health services. As you know, HSIF is a five-year, \$80 million National initiative supporting collaborative planning among First Nations communities/organizations, provincial ministries/agencies and Health Canada through multi-year projects aimed at better meeting the health care needs of First Nations and Inuit.

It is important to note that while HSIF is the successor program to the Aboriginal Health Transition Fund (AHTF), it is not a renewal of AHTF or a roll-over of funding to support the continuation of activities undertaken under AHTF. HSIF is intended to enhance existing First Nations health services by building on successful partnerships established under AHTF. In Ontario Region, our HSIF Advisory Committee agreed that it will fund First Nations led projects that improve the integration of health services.

It is also important to note that in contrast to the majority of programs funded by the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch of Health Canada, HSIF is not intended to be community based universal funding. It is not a source of funds for community programs, capital projects, e-health infrastructure, permanent staff or service contracts to sustain HSIF.

The key objectives of HSIF are to improve the integration of federally and provincially funded health services; build multi-party partnerships to advance the integration of health services that are better-suited to the health needs of First Nations peoples; improve access to health services; and improve the participation of First Nations peoples in the design, delivery and evaluation of health programs and services.

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In order for a project to be eligible for funding under HSIF it must be supported by partnerships between First Nations communities or organizations and provincial and federal government representatives. The Ontario HSIF Trilateral Advisory Committee comprising participants from First Nations organizations and provincial and federal governments will be accepting, reviewing and recommending HSIF proposals for approval.

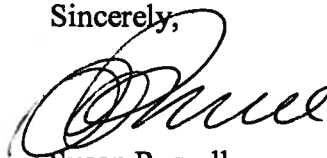
I am pleased to advise that you have the following opportunities to obtain additional information regarding HSIF:

- An invitation from FNIHB-OR will follow regarding information sessions to be conducted in January 2012 in Thunder Bay and Toronto on HSIF goals, objectives and processes for accessing funding. More details to follow.
- A call for Letters of Intent will be issued on December 19, 2011.
- Key HSIF background documents will be accessible through <http://ourtimeourhealth.ca> and <http://www.lhins.on.ca> and <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/services/acces/index-eng.php> and <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/services/acces/oll-rlr-eng.php>

I hope this information is helpful to you in developing health service integration partnerships in anticipation of submitting a joint proposal led by First Nations.

For any additional information, please feel free to contact Yeshodara Naidoo, HSIF Regional Coordinator, at yeshodara.naidoo@hc-sc.gc.ca (613-946-8981). I wish you success!

Sincerely,



Susan Russell
A/Regional Director
First Nations & Inuit Health Branch
Ontario Region