

FAQ – TRIPARTITE PARTNERSHIP TO IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS SERVICES AND ACHIEVE PROGRESS ON THE DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS

What is this new agreement with Canada and BC?

On July 26, 2018, the Government of Canada, the Province of BC and the First Nations Health Council (FNHC) signed a tripartite agreement to improve mental health and wellness services.

This tripartite agreement confirms the commitment of Canada and BC to work with BC First Nations in designing a new and more flexible approach for funding mental health and wellness services.

Is there new funding available to support implementation?

Yes – Canada, BC and the FNHA will each contribute \$10 million over the next two years for a total funding commitment of \$30 million. There are two purposes for the funding:

- To provide funding for demonstration sites and promising practices that support enhanced service delivery models for mental health and wellness.
- To provide funding for First Nation communities and Nations to develop, renew or redesign health and wellness plans that reflect a holistic vision of health and wellness and that improve the coordination of community-based services and supports.

This funding is for BC First Nations. The FNHA has committed that this funding will flow directly to First Nations and that no funding will be used for administration.

What is the ‘new funding approach’ referenced in the announcement?

We have heard common challenges with the way Canada and BC provide funding for community-based services.

A key feature of this new funding is flexibility. We want to make it easier for communities to access funding for mental health and wellness services and prevention. Through this new approach, we will be able to pool federal and provincial resources and create flexible funding arrangements that focus on outcomes determined by the community – not the terms and conditions of a funding agreement. The new funding approach will provide Nations the flexibility to align resources with their unique health and wellness plans and priorities.

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What is the commitment for treatment centers about?

We have heard that access to timely and culturally safe treatment services can be challenging. We have heard that many treatment centers are in need of urgent repair.

The FNHC and FNHA have agreed to work with Canada and BC to develop a long-term plan to build, renovate, replace and expand a number of First Nation treatment centres in BC. This discussion is ongoing and the funds required for this work will be identified in the coming months. This funding is distinct from the \$30 million committed by Canada, BC and the FNHA for planning and service delivery.

Is this new funding?

Yes – Canada and BC are committing new funding for this initiative. This will not impact any current funding agreements communities may have with BC or Canada.

Is this one-time funding?

No – this is an initial investment by Canada and BC. As part of this process, the FNHC, Canada and BC will work together and with BC First Nations to secure funding for the long-term.

When will this new funding be available?

As set out in the tripartite agreement, the next step in the process is to develop an implementation plan by October 2018 that sets out an approach for allocating the funding over the two-year period. It is expected that the first phase of this funding will be available in the fall of this year.

Will the implementation plan be public?

Yes – the tripartite partners have committed to make this plan public to make sure we can track and report on progress to BC First Nations.

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How do First Nations access this new funding?

The FNHA will develop funding guidelines for First Nations in BC to access this new funding. Based on recommendations from the Regional Caucuses, there will be no 'call for proposals' as part of this new funding approach. A key part of this process is to explore approaches that make it easier for communities to access funding for mental health and wellness services.

Who will administer this new funding?

The FNHA will administer this funding. A key feature of this new funding approach is creating a pool of federal and provincial funding that can be administered through a single flexible funding arrangement.

What is the reference to 'innovative partnership arrangements' in the agreement?

A key feature of this partnership is supporting Nations to build plans and partnership arrangements through which all services, supports and partners can enhance the coordination of responses to mental health and wellness. We have heard that Nations want to build partnerships directly with Canada and BC. Through this agreement, Canada and BC have committed to work directly with the Nations at the local level to support the implementation of Nation-based health and wellness plans.

How did the FNHC determine that mental health and wellness is a priority?

Each Regional Health and Wellness Plan identifies mental health and substance use as the top priority.

Through engagement on the social determinants of health, issues related to mental health, substance use and trauma emerged as a high priority across all regions. In the spring of this year, the FNHC engaged First Nations on a proposal for a new tripartite partnership to improve mental health and wellness services. This new approach and partnership for mental health and wellness is a direct reflection of those discussions.

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Why is the FNHC leading a discussion on mental health and wellness?

Through engagement at Regional Caucus, BC First Nations have been clear that making progress on mental health and wellness is a key part of health transformation. Chiefs have been clear that we must continue to make progress on health transformation as we start to look at the social determinants of health.

This new approach and partnership for mental health and wellness will support a government-wide approach. This means that all parts of the federal and provincial government with a mandate for mental health and wellness need to be part of health transformation. By improving mental health and wellness services, we will support health systems transformation and take small steps to make progress on the social determinants of health.