

# Department Health & Social Development

## Minister's Statements

Assembly March 2026

- DHSD is hosting a Men's Healing Gathering in Nain from March 2–6, 2026 focusing on land based activities as healing. There will be approximately 40 participants.
- Clinical Therapist Lito Libres continues to provide in-person EMDR and Clinical Hypnosis sessions. His rotation includes two weeks in Nain, two weeks in Hopedale, one week alternating between Makkovik, Rigolet, and Postville, and several days in Goose Bay. Lito will begin his next six-week travel rotation on March 2, 2026, starting in Nain.
- Data Management System (DMS)
- Mental Wellness & Healing and Family Services, with support from IT, have awarded an RFP to identify a recommended Data Management System for Mental Health & Wellness and Family Services staff. The contract is now being reviewed by Legal and Finance before signing.
- MH&A staff in Hopedale and Nain are collaborating with Tina Davies, Founder of the Richard Legacy Project, to develop suicide-loss support groups. The project is being piloted in both communities, and this project has been a continuation from our work in 2025.
- Residential School Survivor Committee - led by Emiliann Gear and Vyann, the Regional Residential School Survivor Committee met face-to-face in Goose Bay from February 17–19, 2026, and has developed recommendations for ongoing work.
- Kristin Eddy, Harm Reduction Specialist, will depart her role on February 27, 2026. Funding has been secured to establish a Healing Hub in Nain, including hiring a Peer Support Worker and re-hiring a team lead a temporary site has been secured (old shelter).
- Child & Youth Mental Health (CYMH) The team became fully staffed in December 2025 and completed a face-to-face planning meeting in Hopedale during the week of January 26, 2026. Grant Gear, Clinical Lead; Allison Broomfield, C&Y MH Specialist; Denika Lyall, MSW Student; Georgia Abel, Neurodivergence Coordinator; Samira Kohlmeister, C&Y MH Worker; Jade Howell, C&Y MH Worker.

- Trauma & Addictions (T&A) We are in the process of rebuilding this team. Vacant T&A Team Lead; Peer Support Worker on leave; T&A Support Coordinator on leave; Hilary Blake, T&A Counsellor (new hire as of December 2025); Vacant T&A Counsellor (reposted February 24, 2026). Hilary is building her caseload and developing a regional presentation on substance use, types of drugs, and supportive approaches.
- The Youth Hope Fund has been approved for 2026–2027. Planning is underway for the Hebron/North Trip, and the Youth Symposium will take place in May in Rigolet.
- Justice Services - Jenny Oliver has been employed as the new Victim Services and will travel to Nain and Hopedale to introduce her role and engage with Elders. The Inuit Prison Liaison competition has closed and hiring will proceed.
- Community Health Plans (CHP): Happy Valley Goose Bay and North West River CHP sessions were held the week of February 9th. It was the continuation of regional support for communities in their planning process. Nain's and Hopedale's were completed in 2025. This process was a little different in that a facilitator, Kristeen McTavish, was contracted to lead the planning session. That allowed for full participation from all regional staff. Both planning sessions were very successful.
- We are pleased that a decision has been made to extend the Inuit Child First Initiative for the 2026-27 year which is great news. We do not have actual funding amounts for NG at this time.
- The Nain shelter has moved to their new home and have settled in. The building they vacated will become the Harm Reduction Hub in the short term until a more permanent location can be found.
- Myself and my staff met with the Minister Justice & Public Safety, Women & Gender Equity (Minister Conway-Ottenheimer) in HVGB on February 6<sup>th</sup>. It was an initial meeting but productive and set the stage for future meetings and work together.
- The new CEO NLHS (Ron Johnson) and COO Labrador Region (Cassie Chisholm) were in Labrador February 17-20<sup>th</sup>. We had a joint planning day with NLHS & Innu which was very productive – lots of issues raised and a plan developed for addressing.
- A meeting of the Labrador Task Force co – chaired by BM DHSD & NLHS CEO was held. Priority areas being addressed include: diversions, expanded long term care/personal care/transitional beds, mental health, (clinics – Xray, point of care testing), medivac/schedevac, recruitment/retention of health staff), etc...
- The portable x-ray (Fuji Xair) which was purchased with End TB Regional Action Plan funds was delivered to the Labrador Health Center yesterday. The machine still needs to be commissioned, and staff require training before it can be used, but we are hopeful that it will be ready for use in the near future.

- The community health aides are in HVGB together this week for position specific training. The highlight will be reviewing the Community Health Aide TB manual which was revised to reflect best practices, current standards and new language related to TB.
- We still have vacant nursing positions in Nain (Public health TB focus) and Hopedale (Home Care) despite multiple postings and changing the job description for the TB nurse position.
- We are engaging with NLHS and LGZ on the implementation of CorCare (new provincial electronic medical record) in Nunatsiavut.