



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

May 6, 2026  
For Immediate Release

### **Nunatsiavut Government, Innu Nation commend Minister Evans for advancing health equity in Labrador**

The Nunatsiavut Government and the Innu Nation recognize the leadership of provincial Health and Community Services Minister Lela Evans, whose commitment to improving health services in Labrador has led to major progress and stronger regional partnerships. Since taking on the health portfolio last fall, Minister Evans has driven “a major shift” in the recognition and support for health priorities in Labrador, helping deep-rooted challenges receive the coordinated action they have long required.

Minister Evans has supported redesigning medical transportation services based on Indigenous priorities and community input, ensuring future systems reflect the realities of northern and remote communities. She has facilitated consistent leadership with a strong presence in Labrador through the Chief Operating Officer of NL Health Services (Labrador-Grenfell Zone) who understands reconciliation, the importance of co-development of programs and services and true partnership with Indigenous Governments and community partners. This has enabled movement on issues that had been stalled for years.

Under Minister Evans’ leadership, effective mechanisms for action on chronic systemic issues are being established. The Labrador Task Force, co-chaired by the Chief Executive Officer of NL Health Services and the Nunatsiavut Government’s Deputy Minister of Health and Social Development, brings together NL Health Services, Indigenous governments, provincial leaders and other community partners to address challenges with transportation; hospital overcapacity; rural and remote access; primary care gaps; mental health and addictions services; communicable disease management; and, data and information sharing. She has also championed the Labrador Leaders Forum, where Inuit and Innu leaders work as equal partners with NL Health Services. The Forum is advancing health, wellness, and reconciliation by embedding Indigenous knowledge, languages, and



lived experience into health planning and operational service delivery, while also addressing barriers rooted in geography, workforce shortages, and impacts of colonization.

For the first time in the province’s history, Indigenous governments co-developed a dedicated Indigenous Health and Wellness strategic indicator for the NL Health Services 2026–29 Strategic Plan. Internal documentation notes that “all Indigenous groups in the province supported” the draft, marking a historic shift toward accountability, culturally-safe care, trauma-informed approaches, Indigenous language interpretation pathways, and mandatory Indigenous education for staff and leadership.

The Nunatsiavut Government and the Innu Nation recognize that for too long we have seen health inequities in access to services for our people, and we deeply appreciate the meaningful progress we have seen in advancing shared priorities under Minister Evans, and we look forward to this work continuing under her leadership.

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