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### **INDIGENOUS-LED 24/7 HOLISTIC EMERGENCY WELLNESS CENTER PILOT IN SASKATOON**

The Government of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon Tribal Council (STC) and the City of Saskatoon are partnering to pilot a 24/7 Emergency Wellness Centre in Saskatoon to provide holistic supports and services to meet cultural, mental health, addictions and supportive housing needs of people experiencing homelessness.

"The province is pleased to partner with Saskatoon Tribal Council in this Indigenous-led, community-based pilot to support people in need with more than just a safe place to stay," Social Services Minister Lori Carr said. "The Emergency Wellness Centre will provide wrap-around services through on-site support, connecting individuals to the programs and services they need, and when appropriate, facilitating transitions to other housing options."

STC will lead the pilot implementation and delivery of a 24/7 Emergency Wellness Centre providing services on the continuum of supportive housing, including three daily meals, and shower and laundry facilities in a communal living setting. In addition, the Emergency Wellness Centre will provide cultural supports, security and health and wellness counselling.

"Today is a historic day for the Saskatoon Tribal Council and the Province of Saskatchewan as we celebrate a partnership agreement on the STC Emergency Wellness Center," STC Chief Mark Arcand said. "This is an opportunity for STC to have an Indigenous-led program to support Indigenous people and all people to have a quality of life. This funding will help us build a foundation to address homelessness in Saskatoon. In the past four and a half months, we have been very transparent, accountable, and accomplished outcomes that have supported individuals and families. These outcomes are not possible without the help of several partners and organizations committed to supporting STC in this important initiative."

The Government of Saskatchewan will provide up to \$3.5 million as its contribution to the 12-month pilot. The City of Saskatoon has committed to fund the Emergency Wellness Centre lease and utility costs.

"This announcement is a significant step in breaking the cycle of homelessness, a growing crisis in our community," Saskatoon Mayor Charlie Clark said. The Provincial Government's support for both shelter and wraparound supports in this pilot project with the Saskatoon Tribal Council is the more comprehensive approach we need. This will help people stabilize and find hope again. With Reconciliation, we continue to learn how to turn words into action. This partnership-based approach helps build solutions together, between the Indigenous and Non-Indigenous community, to support

all people to live a good life. I am proud that the city is a partner in this work and am grateful for everyone who has made this possible.”

Government ministries working together with STC and the City of Saskatoon to provide integrated services and supports include Social Services, Health, Justice and Corrections, Policing and Public Safety, and the Saskatchewan Health Authority.

The pilot follows an agreement between the province and STC to provide interim stable shelter and support services to individuals in Saskatoon over the past winter months. The experience and ongoing collaboration among all partners in the coming months, including reaching out to the federal government, will guide the development of longer-term solutions to better support the complex needs of individuals experiencing chronic homelessness.

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