



Press Release

For immediate distribution



CPSS to assist FNIHB in addressing First Nations addictions issues

SASKATOON, April 15, 2015 – The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan (“the College”) is pleased to confirm its future role in assisting the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB) in its work to address the ongoing issues related to prescription drug abuse (PDA) in First Nations Communities and among First Nations individuals. The news follows a special funding announcement by Honourable Rona Ambrose, Minister of Health, yesterday in Fort Qu’Appelle, SK, to enhance access to addictions supports for prescription drug abuse for First Nations living on-reserve across the country.

The role of the College will primarily consist of educating, gathering information and assisting in improving the PDA approaches in Saskatchewan in the following areas:

- Providing critical assistance in establishing linkages to provincial mental health, treatment and after care services;
- Partnering with others to develop community-based prescription drug abuse planning, education and capacity development. This will be done by providing educational opportunities for physicians, First Nations addictions counselors, First Nations officials and First Nations community members;
- Supporting prescription drug abuse responses on a more national scale through sharing knowledge and best practice in First Nations prescription drug abuse treatments and supports;
- Facilitating interaction between First Nations and Regional Health Authorities to address prescription drug abuse;
- Working towards a more ready sharing of prescription drug abuse data between Saskatchewan and the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch and overcoming limitations in privacy legislation for this to occur;
- Working towards regional capacity development through physician education to facilitate physician approval to prescribe Suboxone and Methadone;
- Sharing guidelines, data, best practice and existing models of support to address prescription drug abuse;
- Collecting and analyzing data related to prescription drug abuse by First Nations persons.

"The funding provided by the Government of Canada is very welcome and, we are convinced, will make a difference in Saskatchewan. We look forward to partnering with other individuals and agencies to make that difference," said Dr. Karen Shaw, Registrar for the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan.

The project also complements the existing Prescription Review Program and the Methadone Program, initiatives already in place at the College, and will build on the expertise gained through the operation of these programs. The new collaboration agreement will remain in effect until it reaches its conclusion in 2019.

*The mission of the **College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan** is to serve the public by regulating the practice of medicine and guiding the profession to achieve the highest standards of care. It currently issues licenses to more than 2,500 physicians and surgeons in the province, as well as over 1,500 corporate permits.*

Information:

Caro Gareau
Communications Officer || *Agente des communications*
College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan
1 306 667-4638 or 1 306 244-7355
communications@cps.sk.ca