



news release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mainline Needle Exchange Introduces New Program

HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA — The Mainline Needle Exchange Program today introduced a new program to further deal with problems of addiction with the help of \$175,667 in funding from the Government of Canada, through the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI).

Geoff Regan, Member of Parliament for Halifax West, on behalf of the Honourable Claudette Bradshaw, Minister of Labour and Federal Coordinator on Homelessness, attended an open house hosted by The Mainline Needle Exchange Program.

Funding will enable The Mainline Needle Exchange to help reduce the harm associated with injection drug-use by improving access to the methadone program, primary health-care and community-based services, including housing.

“I commend The Mainline Needle Exchange Program for providing quality and much-needed services which will empower their clients to take the necessary steps to make positive adjustments in their lives,” said Regan. “The new program is among one of the many services provided by The Mainline Needle Exchange.”

The Mainline Needle Exchange, sponsored by the MicMac Native Friendship Centre, works to reduce the spread of blood-borne diseases among populations engaging in high-risk behaviours. Services provided by The Mainline Needle Exchange include: needle and condom distribution, referrals to detoxification, long-term treatment and methadone program, advocacy to agencies, anonymous HIV and AIDS testing, metro food bank distribution, and Hepatitis A and B immunization outreach clinic. Core funding for The Mainline Needle Exchange Program is provided by the Nova Scotia Department of Health.

“I have been on several committees since 1994, working towards a methadone program such as the one we have, so you can imagine my enthusiasm with the introduction of the new methadone program,” said Diane Bailey with the Mainline Needle Exchange Program.

This project was reviewed and recommended by the Community Action on Homelessness Steering Committee, a working group comprising community organizations dedicated to reducing homelessness in the area.

Since the launch of the Homelessness Initiative in December 1999, the Government of Canada has approved more than \$5.2 million for youth, Aboriginal and SCPI projects in Nova Scotia. For SCPI alone, communities in Nova Scotia will receive more than \$6.4 million, until 2003, to help prevent and alleviate homelessness.

SCPI enables communities to bring together partners to develop local solutions to their particular homelessness needs and issues. SCPI is a key component of the Government of Canada's Homelessness Initiative, which also includes expansion of existing programs for youth and Aboriginal peoples, enhancement of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's renovations and shelter programs, and making surplus federal properties available for homelessness-related activities.

Funding these projects was provided for in the February 2000 budget and is therefore built into existing financial framework.

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