



News Release

Infoway Investment to Increase Access to Telehealth in Nunavut

Nunavut and Manitoba collaborate on \$2 million project

IQALUIT, Nunavut (September 10, 2008) – With the goal of increasing access to quality patient care, Minister of Health and Social Services Leona Aglukkaq and Richard Alvarez, President and CEO, Canada Health Infoway (*Infoway*) today announced a \$2 million dollar investment by *Infoway* to expand access to Telehealth for Nunavut residents.

“Through the investment in this project, we are able to upgrade our current Telehealth sites and add supplementary sites in the Chesterfield Inlet Naja Isabelle Home and all our southern boarding homes,” said Aglukkaq. “This partnership directly assists Nunavut’s Telehealth team. The idea is to increase the capacity of our community facilitators, develop a train-the-trainer program, and build a clinically based program for the Kivalliq and Kitikmeot regions.”

A key component of the Nunavut Telehealth Network Expansion and Change Management project is the collaboration with the MBTelehealth Network in Manitoba. MBTelehealth will share processes and knowledge with Nunavut Telehealth by providing training, peer support and increasing capacity to deliver 256 consultations each month, which is an increase of five per cent. As part of the project, a new Telehealth site will be developed at the boarding home in Winnipeg that hosts patients from Nunavut who seek medical care not available locally. This will help connect Nunavut families separated by long distances.

“We look forward to building on our existing relationship with the Telehealth program in Nunavut and working together to develop sustainable processes and tools to support increased use of Telehealth in Nunavut,” said Liz Loewen, MBTelehealth Director.

“Today’s Telehealth expansion is rooted in innovation and collaboration between Nunavut and Manitoba. We’re proud to invest \$2 million in this worthwhile project as part of federal government’s investments in technologies that are increasing access to quality patient care across Canada,” said Alvarez. “Like so many of Canada’s 250 other electronic health record projects, today’s expansion will remove barriers to patient care, save costs, and uncover vast health system efficiencies.”

The partnership between Manitoba and Nunavut will assist the Kivalliq and Kitikmeot programs by focusing on the following areas:

- Increasing use of Telehealth for consultations between providers and patients who live far away
- Improving discharge planning between southern facilities and Nunavut communities
- Increasing family connections for those in the boarding homes

Nunavut has been providing Telehealth services across the territory for a number of years. The Nunavut Telehealth Network Expansion and Change Management Initiative project is 100 per cent funded by *Infoway*.

About Canada Health Infoway

Canada Health Infoway is an independent, not-for-profit organization funded by the Federal government. *Infoway* jointly invests in projects with every province and territory to accelerate the development and adoption of electronic health record systems in Canada. Fully respecting patient confidentiality, this network of systems will provide clinicians and patients with a faster way to manage, access, share and safeguard patient health information. Accessing this vital information quickly will foster a more modern and sustainable health care system for all Canadians.

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