

For Immediate Release

\$4.3 million investment announced in Budget 2024 for implementation of a provincial Integrated Youth Services model

March 26, 2024 (Newfoundland and Labrador) – Choices for Youth (CFY) and Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) Health Services are pleased that the Government of NL’s Budget 2024 includes a \$4.3 million investment in a provincial model of Integrated Youth Services (IYS).

After five years of community engagement and developmental work, CFY and NL Health Services are thrilled to see investment in a provincial model of mental health and wrap-around supports for youth and young families in our province. The development of this model in NL has been informed through engagement with eight (8) steering committees, including 65+ community partners, who have been engaged in this work since 2019, with support from philanthropic partners including the Bell-GBF Partnership, RBC, and Medavie.

As a proven model in addressing the needs of youth and young families, CFY is pleased to see NL continue to be a part of the leadership in a national model that is in operation, or development, in every province and territory in Canada. Through this investment, we will join a growing movement of IYS across Canada and internationally.

CFY has been operating a nationally recognized IYS site since 2004. Along with partners through NL Health Services, CFY operates an integrated hub which offers mental health, housing, basic needs, food security, primary care, and family and natural supports, all under one roof. CFY supports 1,300+ young people annually and is looking forward to the opportunity to scale the impact of this model to other regions across the province through partnerships with other community agencies and NL Health Services.

This investment will be used to open two (2) initial sites, operating in two (2) rural, regional hubs. Following an established national best practice, a Request for Proposals process will follow for interested community agencies to apply through.

“The implementation of Integrated Youth Services in Newfoundland and Labrador will help ensure that youth in our province are supported more efficiently using approaches that are effective, comprehensive, and appropriately targeted to their needs and developmental stages. Integrated Youth Services is a highly effective model that will allow us to support youth and young families closer to the place they call home. Choices for Youth is thrilled to act as the backbone agency that will work hand in hand with partners across the province to build a provincial network of Integrated Youth Services.” – *Sheldon Pollett, Executive Director, Choices for Youth*

“Following many years of developmental work with 65+ community agencies and hundreds of young people across the province, I am thrilled to see this commitment to Integrated Youth Services by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. This investment will propel the impact of Choices for Youth’s innovative, evidence-based model of clinical, mental health, and wrap-around supports for children, youth, and young families. Through this provincial model of Integrated Youth Services, we will see more youth supported closer to the places they call home, leading to better outcomes for young people across our province.” – *Geoff Davis, Chair, Board of Directors, Choices for Youth*

“An investment in Integrated Youth Services is an investment in the youth of our province. We are pleased to partner with Choices for Youth as they work with communities across the province to scale the evidence-based model of Integrated Youth Services to rural, regional hubs. We appreciate Choices for Youth’s commitment to supporting young people and facing their challenges with them, and as we continue to work with them in the future, we look forward to improving the lives and creating brighter futures for our youth even further.” – *Honourable Tom Osborne, Minister of Health and Community Services*

“NL Health Services welcomes this important funding so that, along with Choices for Youth, we can expand the Integrated Youth Services model in Newfoundland and Labrador. We will work within our Family Care Team model and leverage primary care, mental health and addictions and public health services to support new Integrated Youth Services sites so that more youth and young families will benefit from evidence-based services. We are confident that our collaboration will build on our collective strengths to address the needs of youth and young families to provide equitable health care that will also transform their well-being.” – *David Diamond, CEO, NL Health Services*

“The Bell-Graham Boeckh Foundation Partnership is pleased to continue to support the development of Integrated Youth Services (IYS) in Newfoundland and Labrador which will allow young people to have increased and barrier-free access to the mental health services they need, when and where they need them. IYS initiatives have been successfully established or are in development in most provinces and territories in Canada. We look forward to continuing to work together with government, philanthropy, community partners and youth and families to help transform the youth mental healthcare system in Newfoundland and Labrador, and in other provinces and territories.” – *Ian Boeckh, President, Graham Boeckh Foundation and Mary Deacon, Chair, Bell Let’s Talk*

“Having a place for the youth of today to better themselves and forge new connections, will help them grow into the adults of tomorrow.” – *Dylan Lopes, Barachois Brook – Provincial Youth Advisory Council Member*

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