
For Immediate Release

Choices for Youth Hosting Event on Integrated Youth Services in Newfoundland & Labrador (NL)

The Impact and Potential of Regional Integrated Youth Services in NL

April 27, 2023 (St. John's, NL) – Today, Thursday, April 27, [Choices for Youth](#) (CFY) is partnering with [The Harris Centre](#) (Memorial University of NL) to host an event to highlight the international best practice model of Integrated Youth Services (IYS) and its potential for driving better outcomes for youth and young families in NL. This event will highlight the ongoing work happening in our province and nationally to expand the reach of this innovative model of mental health and wrap-around services delivery for youth, ages 12-29.

As a proven model in addressing the needs of youth and young families, CFY is pleased to see an IYS network either operational or in development in every province and territory in Canada. The growth of IYS is being further propelled by strong federal policy alignment through the federal health transfers which focus on integrated services, mental health supports, and substance use. In NL, IYS is directly aligned with key health policies, including the Health Accord 10-year action plan for health transformation in NL. CFY has worked with 1,000+ youth and 300+ service providers across 32 communities over the last five years to inform a provincial model of IYS. This event will be an opportunity to share the power and potential of this model in NL while leveraging key learnings from across Canada.

The event will include opening remarks from both the federal and provincial government.

“As we work to improve Canada’s universal health care system, children, youth and young adults deserve access to the highest quality of mental health and substance use care no matter where they live in Canada. We are committed to ensuring that the national mental health and substance use service standards that are being developed with provinces and territories are grounded in evidence,” says The Honourable Carolyn Bennett, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Government of Canada.

The Honourable Tom Osborne, Minister of Health and Community Services, Newfoundland and Labrador says, “As we continue to implement recommendations from Health Accord NL to improve the health and well-being of residents in the province, the Provincial Government is proud to support Choices For Youth and the wrap-around services it offers to the youth of Newfoundland and Labrador. Improving the social determinants of health, including access to mental health and addictions services, remains a top priority for our Government.”

Experts from across the country will gather for an important discussion on the role of IYS delivery and the potential of this emerging national and provincial model.

“It is terrific to see the expansion of Integrated Youth Services (IYS) in Newfoundland and Labrador. Choices for Youth has been a leader in Canada in meeting the needs of youth for more than a decade with engagement and innovation. I am thrilled to be a part of this event and look forward to continuing to partner with IYS in Newfoundland and Labrador to ensure more youth throughout Canada have access to services they need and deserve,” says Dr. Jo Henderson, Executive Director, Youth Wellness Hubs Ontario.

Matthew Piercey, Director of Integrated Youth Services, Choices for Youth, has played a large role in the expansions of IYS in NL and says “The implementation of Integrated Youth Services (IYS) 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. IYS is a highly effective model that will allow us to support youth and young families closer to the place they call home.”

“The Graham Boeckh Foundation is pleased 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 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 across the country,” says Ian Boeckh, President, Graham Boeckh Foundation.

Event Speakers include:

- **The Honourable Carolyn Bennett**, *Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Government of Canada*
- **Gillian Sweeney**, *Assistant Deputy Minister (Population Health and Wellness), Government of NL*
- **Dr. Rob Greenwood**, *Associate Vice-President, Public Engagement and External Relations, and Director of the Harris Centre, Memorial University of NL (Moderator)*
- **Dr. Jo Henderson**, *Executive Director, Youth Wellness Hubs Ontario*
- **Ian Boeckh**, *President and Director, Graham Boeckh Foundation*
- **Sheldon Pollett**, *Executive Director, Choices for Youth.*
- **Matthew Piercey**, *Director, Integrated Youth Services, Choices for Youth*
- See all speakers on the agenda -> <https://bit.ly/41Nkq2C>

This event will take place on **Thursday, April 27, 2023, at the Emera Innovation Exchange (100 Signal Hill Road)**. Dr. Jo Henderson, Ian Boeckh, Sheldon Pollett, and Matthew Piercey will be **available for media interviews at 8:00am before the event starts at 8:30am**. Media are welcome to attend some of/all the sessions. To register for this free (invitation-only) event, please contact kkeats@choicesforyouth.ca.

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For more information or to register to attend please contact:

Katie Keats
Manager of Fund Development & Communications
Choices for Youth
(709) 597-2401
kkeats@choicesforyouth.ca

For media requests with The Honourable Carolyn Bennett please contact:

Maja Staka
Senior Communications Advisor and Press Secretary
Office of the Honourable Carolyn Bennett
Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health
maja.staka@hc-sc.gc.ca

For media requests with Government of Newfoundland and Labrador please contact:

Jennifer Konieczny

Media Relations Manager

709-729-5315; 709-327-7540

jenniferkonieczny@gov.nl.ca