

# **Embracing Life: Northern Saskatchewan Working Together**



## **Frequently Asked Questions and Answers**

### **1. Where did the idea for an Embracing Life Workshop come from?**

Regional health authorities in Saskatchewan are required to have an approved policy suicide prevention policy by March 31, 2014. As such, in early summer of 2013, the Population Health Unit and health regions in northern Saskatchewan began discussions about working together on a Northern Suicide Prevention Strategy. The Ministries of Justice, Social Services, Government Relations and the Northern Lights School Division joined the discussion. At a meeting on June 3, 2013, the idea of a workshop was proposed for a number of reasons including: suicide rates and suicide ideation in the North are high and a workshop would be timely given the number of initiatives underway in this area. On June 17, 2013, a teleconference was held with a wide variety of stakeholders to determine if there was support to have a workshop and to begin to scope out objectives. During this teleconference, individuals volunteered to be part of a smaller, functional, representative Planning Committee.

### **2. Who is organizing and leading the Embracing Life Workshop?**

The Embracing Life Committee is composed of members representing human service government and non-government organizations and ministries including:

Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations	Ministry of Justice
First Nations University of Canada	New North SANC Services Inc.
Health Canada	Northern Human Services Partnership
Keewatin Yatthé Health Region	Northern Inter-Tribal Health Authority
Mamawetan Churchill River Health Region	Northern Lights School Division
Ministry of Government Relations	Population Health Unit
	Prince Albert Grand Council

### **3. Why are you using the term “Embracing Life”?**

The Embracing Life Committee has chosen to use the term “embracing life” in order to reflect that the work is not just about suicide prevention, but along the whole suicide prevention continuum: health promotion; suicide prevention; suicide intervention; and post-vention. It is also meant to encourage Northerners to “embrace life” in a holistic manner and is consistent with advice Elders have provided in this regard. The term “suicide” will still be used throughout the work of the Committee as appropriate.

#### **4. What is the purpose of the Embracing Life Workshop and what are the tangible outcomes and goals?**

The Embracing Life Workshop will bring together northern community members, youth, human service organizations, and government, to collaborate on current suicide prevention initiatives and related services. Participants will identify: strengths and best practices; needs and gaps; areas for potential collaboration in health promotion, and suicide prevention, intervention and post-vention.

Facilitators will engage participants to develop recommendations and guide future initiatives and projects related to embracing life, suicide prevention and youth development. Participants will also have the opportunity during the final break-out session to brainstorm actions and develop goals for their communities and regions as a first step in the process of embracing life and suicide prevention planning activities.

Other work stemming from the workshop will include the development of a *Training and Resource List*; and a *Literature Review*.

#### **5. Whose responsibility is it to address the issue of suicide?**

All sectors and each individual play an essential role in addressing suicide and finding positive solutions. The Embracing Life Workshop will draw upon the strengths and experiences of northern human service organizations, governments, educational institutions, community members and youth to collectively identify gaps, find solutions and map out a plan to move forward.

#### **6. Who will benefit from attending the Embracing Life Workshop?**

The Embracing Life Workshop will benefit: northern Elders; youth; northern municipal, First Nations and Métis communities; northern human service organizations; front line workers; and government officials in human service ministries.

#### **7. How will this workshop be different than other northern suicide prevention workshops that were held in the past?**

The organizations and ministries represented on the Planning Committee are committed to build upon the 2009 Northern Saskatchewan Suicide Prevention Forum, as well as follow-up and support future work of northern communities as they develop and implement plans and activities for embracing life, suicide prevention and youth development.

#### **8. Who is paying for the Embracing Life Workshop and how is the administration being handled?**

The Ministry of Government Relations provided a \$48K grant to New North SANC Services Inc. to administer funding on behalf of the Embracing Life Committee in support of the workshop.