



Employment and  
Social Development Canada    Emploi et  
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Saskatchewan  
Health Authority



Métis Nation  
Saskatchewan



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## MEDIA RELEASE

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OCTOBER 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **NURTURING OUR FUTURE MÉTIS PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES PROJECT**

#### ***New federal investment supports multi-stakeholder health services project to increase Métis capacity in the healthcare sector***

(SASKATOON, SK)— The Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) signed a new five-year agreement with Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) to create and deliver the *Nurturing our Future – Building Métis Public Health Services Project* that will increase Métis representation in the health employment sector, build sustainability across Métis public health services, and overall improve Saskatchewan patient outcomes. A special project announcement took place on October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at the Gabriel Dumont Institute Museum & Art Gallery.

Funded in part by the Government of Canada’s Skills and Partnership Fund, this project will work to address the major shortage of skilled labour in the health sector in Saskatchewan by implementing demand-driven skills development training programs. “By supporting this project through the Skills and Partnership Fund, we are able to address labour shortages in the health sector in Saskatchewan and ensure more Indigenous people are empowered with the training and resources they need to start their journeys in high-demand careers. This is how we will build a healthier, more equitable Canada – for everyone.” Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages, Randy Boissonnault. The total project contribution from ESDC is \$14.6 million.

Key project stakeholders include the Métis Nation—Saskatchewan (MN—S) and the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA). The Institute’s entities GDI Training and Employment and Dumont Technical Institute will also be major contributors to the project. “For over 25 years, GDI has been training students to be healthcare professionals in a wide variety of occupations.” said Brett Vandale, Acting GDI Executive Director “Our graduates leave us with the professional skills to provide a high standard of care and the ability to enhance the quality of care for Indigenous communities by ensuring graduates are also connected to their culture.”

The investment will expand health-related training programming to support Métis capacity in high-demand healthcare positions and fill employment vacancies with qualified Métis trainees with the support of our partners. The project aims to train approximately 600 Métis clients in healthcare programs over the next five years. This project is scheduled to run until January 21, 2028.

The SHA will support this innovative partnership by recruiting and supporting GDI’s qualified Métis healthcare program graduates. “We successfully partnered with Gabriel Dumont Institute to employ



Indigenous Birth Support Worker Program graduates in 2019, supporting Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Actions through increased support for Indigenous expectant mothers, families and communities,” said Thona Longneck, Executive Director of SHA First Nations and Métis Health. “The Nurturing Our Future Project expands this previous partnership between SHA and GDI to advance TRC Calls to Action 7, 20, 23, and 92. It will improve employment outcomes for Métis citizens, specifically increasing the number of Métis professionals working in the healthcare sector by providing equitable access to jobs, training and education opportunities.”

The MN—S has also partnered on this initiative to provide Métis students with additional sponsorship and employment opportunities in the health sector. MN—S President Glen McCallum said, “Distinctions-based programs and services are priorities for our government. To collaborate with Canada, the SHA, and GDI on this training program means more culturally appropriate care will be provided by Métis people within our healthcare system and the Métis patient experience will vastly improve. It’s important that our young Métis citizens know they can be a part of increasing Métis capacity by taking advantage of these career training opportunities in healthcare.” The partnership will work together to create more work experience programs, health entry programs, and meaningful employment opportunities for Métis that meet the needs of the SHA and MN—S labour market.

Beginning this fall, DTI has increased the number of available seats in its Licensed Practical Nursing and Continuing Care Assistant Programs, and applications are open now for the 2024/2025 Licensed Practical Nursing Program. GDI will continue to work with project partners to develop future training programs to support the Healthcare Industry across Saskatchewan, including more training in the areas of Phlebotomy, Mental Health and Wellness, and Indigenous Birth Support. For more information about upcoming GDI programs, [please visit our website.](#)

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**About Gabriel Dumont Institute:**

*Gabriel Dumont Institute (GDI) is a Métis-owned post-secondary and cultural institution in Saskatchewan. Since 1980, GDI has prided itself as a conservator of Métis culture and history. GDI's Training and Employment department was established in 2006 to assist Saskatchewan's Métis looking to improve their educational and employment outcomes. GDI Training and Employment aims to create a strong link between the training and sustained employment of Métis people. Each of our service delivery sites around the province is staffed by employment counsellors who provide services to Métis clients in their home communities.*

**About Employment and Social Development Canada's Skills and Partnership Fund:**

*As a complement to the Indigenous Skills and Employment Training program, the Skills and Partnership Fund (SPF) is a project-based fund that supports partnerships between Indigenous organizations and industry employers to provide skills training for Indigenous peoples linked to economic opportunities at the local, regional, and national level. By increasing access to training that is demand-driven, the SPF plays a key role in directly linking training efforts and Indigenous peoples to specific jobs to improve their employment outcomes.*

**About Métis Nation—Saskatchewan:**

*Métis Nation—Saskatchewan (MN–S) is built on a foundation of Métis identity, culture, values and language. Empowered by the Métis citizens of Saskatchewan, MN–S works to advance Métis rights and strengthen capacity. MN–S represents the political, socioeconomic, cultural and educational interests of more than 80,000 Métis in the province through an elected representative system at local, regional and provincial levels.*

**About the Saskatchewan Health Authority:**

*The Saskatchewan Health Authority is the largest organization in Saskatchewan, employing more than 40,000 employees and physicians. Together, we are responsible for the delivery of safe, high-quality health care for the entire province.*