

News Release – Manitoba

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MANITOBA GOVERNMENT INVESTS IN ANIMAL HEALTH IN REMOTE AND INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

New \$1.5-Million Program to Address Barriers and Build Healthier Communities: Lagimodiere

The Manitoba government is providing \$750,000 in funding to the new One Health Program, a five-year veterinary outreach program to address animal health gaps and create opportunities for improved and accessible care in remote and Indigenous communities across Manitoba, Indigenous Reconciliation and Northern Relations Minister Alan Lagimodiere announced today.

“This funding recognizes additional support is needed to address the barriers faced by communities in accessing veterinary care and other animal health interventions,” said Lagimodiere. “Our investment will help ensure Manitoba remains a leader in animal health across Canada with improved preventative and educational measures.”

Manitoba’s grant funding is being matched by an equal contribution from the Winnipeg Humane Society for a total of \$1.5 million over five years. Lead donors include Bob Williams, Naomi Levine and Arthur Mauro. The One Health Program will work collaboratively with Manitoba communities to develop sustainable, culturally sensitive strategies that support animal care, health and well-being practices for humans and their companion animals that include dogs and cats.

“We strive to build long-term relationships with communities across Manitoba; our goal is to build trust, learn and reconcile, and co-create and deliver community-engaged One Health programming,” said Jessica Miller, CEO, Winnipeg Humane Society. “It is important we focus on the link between animal and human health and well-being. Launching a program like this is not something one organization can do alone. It is only through our many allies and partners we have been able to bring this to fruition.”

The minister noted the new program recognizes the interconnectedness of animal health, human well-being, biodiversity and the environment. It also operates from a community-engaged and reconciliation framework, working with Indigenous communities to provide access to affordable veterinary care in communities and addresses the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action* number 19 (health) to “close the gaps in health outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.”

“The health of animals and people is interconnected, perhaps more than many people realize,” said Dr. Scott Zaari, Manitoba’s chief veterinary officer. “This program will support the best outcomes possible

for companion animals in remote communities, which also supports the health and safety of the people and the community.”

The minister noted the One Health Program is being developed in collaboration with Manitoba’s Office of the Chief Veterinarian, Winnipeg Humane Society, Manitoba Veterinary Medical Association and other partners. The Winnipeg Humane Society will administer the program, building on its expertise in companion animal health care, community outreach and a strong veterinary network.

To learn more about the program, visit <https://winnipeghumanesociety.ca/your-family-pet/remote-community-partnerships/>.

For more information:

- Public information, contact Manitoba Government Inquiry: 1-866-626-4862 or 204-945-3744.
- Media requests for general information, contact Communications and Engagement: newsroom@gov.mb.ca.
- Media requests for ministerial comment, contact Communications and Stakeholder Relations: 204-451-7109.