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Ms. Lisa Lapointe
Chief Coroner
Province of British Columbia
BC Coroners Service
Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General
PO Box 9259 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9J4

Dear Ms. Lapointe:

Thank you for your letter of November 8, 2017, regarding the British Columbia Coroners Service Death Review Panel Report and Recommendations.

We have received the report, and are committed to working with the First Nations Health Authority and the other ministries mentioned to identify the steps we need to take in order to address the recommendations outlined within it.

These are sobering findings, and it is clear that too many young Indigenous people are dying from preventable accidents. Each of the deaths included in your analysis is a tragedy, and is a loss deeply felt by family, friends and their community.

As we endeavor to define the components of our corresponding response to your report, it will be critical that we work with Indigenous people and partners to identify actions across the health system that will have the greatest impact. This will help to ensure that Indigenous youth may benefit from the culturally safe support and services they require. Our efforts will include a focus on prevention and early intervention, as well as active consideration of the root causes of physical and psychological pain. Any prevention strategies we consider will need to account for the unique cultural diversity of Indigenous peoples, along with the specific community strengths and protective factors that bolster resilience.

This scoping and planning work will build on a range of important foundational initiatives already underway. For example, the Ministry of Health's commitment to building a culturally responsive health system – a joint undertaking across the First Nations Health Authority, Health Canada and the BC Ministry of Health – has resulted in some significant accomplishments including:

- A Declaration of Commitment was signed by the BC Health System Leadership Council in July 2015, in support of cultural safety and humility in health care delivery for Indigenous people – in March 2017, 23 health regulatory bodies signed on to the Declaration, including the colleges of psychology, registered nurses and social workers of BC.

- Over 23,000 people have completed the San'Yas Indigenous Cultural Safety training across the health authorities, Ministry of Health, the First Nations Health Authority, the Provincial Health Services Authority, and the five regional health authorities.
- Action plans are under way in every health authority to increase cultural safety, respect and trust within our health care system. For example:
 - Indigenous patient advocates in regional health authorities help families connect with health care professionals to access culturally safe care.
 - Cultural safety co-ordinators with Island Health enhance capacity to deliver culturally appropriate services to Indigenous people.
 - All health authorities are looking at advancing cultural safety practices, including Island Health's new online cultural safety training and Interior Health's new Aboriginal human resources plan to support a culturally competent workforce.

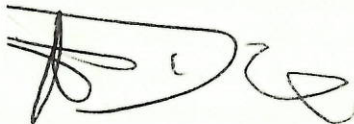
In addition, the Ministry of Health is supporting a number of policy initiatives intended to address the needs of vulnerable youth that are aligned with the recommendations in this report:

- Supporting cross-government planning work led by the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions to address youth mental health.
- Supporting the Ministry of Education with their work to develop a school mental health and addictions framework that will better support the needs of both students and staff.
- Collaborating with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Children and Family Development to review current trauma-informed practices and curriculum across BC.

Leveraging these accomplishments, and the partnerships and relationships that support them, we will work with our public sector partners and key representatives of Indigenous communities and organizations to address the recommendations that you have raised in your report. More specifically, as per Recommendation number two, we will commit to working with our partners to develop a plan to deliver trauma-informed training to staff working/delivering services to First Nations young people, and will ensure that such a plan is developed by December 31, 2018.

Again, thank you for this important report and your related recommendations. I appreciate the opportunity to respond.

Sincerely,



Adrian Dix
Minister

pc: Michael Egilson, Chair, Child Death Review Unit, Island Region Coroners Office