



## PRESS RELEASE



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### **New Facility for Aboriginal Women's Shelter in Winnipeg**

**WINNIPEG, Manitoba, March 28, 2002** — Ikwe-Widdjiitiwin Inc. (Ikwe), an Aboriginal women's shelter for victims of family violence, held a ceremony for its new facility which will open in Winnipeg in the coming weeks.

Participating at the event were the Honourable John Manley, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Infrastructure and Crown Corporations; Tim Sale, Manitoba Minister of Family Services and Housing; and Jackie Lavallee, President of Ikwe's Board of Directors.

With the assistance of \$1.49 million from the Shelter Enhancement Program, which is cost-shared by the Government of Canada (\$1.12 million) through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), and the Province of Manitoba (\$373,151), Ikwe is renovating an existing building and will amalgamate services from two sites at the new facility.

The new facility will be wheel-chair accessible and will provide space for on-site counselling services, an expanded residential area, a children's play facility, and an area for spiritual and healing needs of the women and children accessing the shelter and its programs.

Ikwe also received a \$136,000 contribution from the Government of Canada's Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI) toward the purchase of furniture and equipment required for the safety and comfort of Ikwe residents. Ikwe provided \$100,000 in capital costs. As well, the Manitoba government contributed \$20,000 through the Neighbourhoods Alive! initiative toward furnishings for the new facility.

"This shelter demonstrates the Government of Canada's commitment to work closely with Manitoba to address housing for at-risk groups," said Deputy Prime Minister Manley. "Federal strategies dealing with family violence and homelessness are helping those most in need at the community level, and this project is a prime example." "Funding for this important facility is key as communities and governments work together as part of a comprehensive strategy to address the difficult challenges created by family violence," said Minister Sale. "The new site will be a catalyst for Ikwe and they will be better able to meet the significant challenge of providing shelter for women and children but also preventative and follow-up services, in a more suitable environment."

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"I am honoured to know, and am proud of, the many Aboriginal women who have contributed to making this new facility a reality," said Ms. Lavallee. "I am also pleased with the support we have received from our partners. The new facility will offer more services and interventions to the women and children who must use the crisis shelter. Ikwe will continue addressing the issues associated with family violence."

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Annual operating funds of approximately \$768,000 are provided by the Manitoba government's Family Violence Prevention Program. The building at the new site is owned by the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation and is being provided to Ikwe for its exclusive use.

Ikwe provides shelter facilities, outreach and support to women and children in a healthy, safe and culturally-sensitive setting. Located in Winnipeg, the shelter was incorporated in the Province of Manitoba in 1986 as a nonprofit organization. In 2000, it met the needs of 1,183 women and children, totalling 7,584 bed-nights and 2,282 crisis calls.

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