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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 16, 2001

***\$250,000 WILL HELP CREATE TRANSITIONAL HOUSING
FOR PEOPLE SEEKING ADDICTIONS TREATMENT***

WINNIPEG-MANITOBA - The Behavioural Health Foundation Inc., with the help of a \$250,000 contribution from the Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative (WHHI), has acquired five transitional housing units in St. Norbert for people who, because of their situation, are at risk of becoming homeless. The funding is being provided under the Government of Canada's Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI), under the National Homelessness Initiative.

Participating in today's funding announcement were: Ms. Anita Neville, Member of Parliament for Winnipeg South Centre, on behalf of the Honourable Claudette Bradshaw, Minister of Labour and Federal Co-ordinator on Homelessness; Marianne Cerilli, MLA for Radisson and Legislative Assistant to Manitoba Minister of Family Services and Housing, on behalf of Minister Tim Sale; and John Angus, Councillor for St. Norbert Ward, on behalf of the City of Winnipeg.

"These residences will provide a safe and friendly environment that is vital to the healing process," said Ms. Neville. "More important, participants living off site and enrolled in the substance abuse prevention program will be able to take full advantage of the treatment and support services offered at the Foundation's main centre. Funding for this project is an example of the Government of Canada's commitment to working with our partners to alleviate homelessness in Canada."

"I am pleased as this support will foster community capacity and ensure the success of this valued program," said Cerilli. "People struggling with addictions face great difficulties and having the security of a safe place to live will allow them to focus on overcoming their addictions. Helping these people who are also homeless or at risk of being homeless, can only lead to stronger neighbourhoods."

"The City of Winnipeg is an active and supportive partner in making the WHHI work," said Councillor Angus. "Through the combined resources of the three levels of government, we achieve a greater impact on improving the housing and homelessness needs of our community. Supportive agencies like the Behavioural Health Foundation, provide our citizens in need with the opportunity to turn their lives around and integrate back into the community."

The Behavioural Health Foundation Inc., in St. Norbert, provides behavioural health services to men, women, youth and children who suffer from addictions. These services include addictions treatment, child-care services, skills training, and development of education opportunities.

The project involved purchasing five housing units that were converted into self-contained apartments for families and individuals wanting to live in a drug-and alcohol-free environment. Total project costs will amount to approximately \$460,000. The WHHI is contributing \$250,000, with the balance of the funding being provided by the Behavioural Health Foundation.

Eligible clients will have successfully completed the in-residence portion of the addictions program and be ready to re-enter the community either through school or employment upgrading prior to moving into the transitional housing units.

“Persons in the process of transitioning to the community after completion of any program designed to improve or enhance their quality of life, have to do so in a gradual fashion,” said Amanada Sansregret, President of the Behavioural Health Foundation Inc. “Stability and security are paramount. The acquisition of these housing units will provide exactly that.”

This transitional supportive housing will provide stable and supportive accommodations to people who might return to circumstances that would undermine their treatment progress. At the same time, the entire program at the Behavioural Health Foundation will foster the development of life and work skills, and the elimination of addictions. These benefits will, in turn, help facilitate a successful transition from treatment to a healthy independent lifestyle.

The Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative (WHHI) is a three-year, multi-million dollar tripartite partnership established by the governments of Canada, Manitoba and the City of Winnipeg to address declining housing stock, homelessness and the revitalization of Winnipeg's older neighbourhoods. To date, the WHHI has committed over \$9.8 million to help community groups rehabilitate houses and provide assistance to homeless individuals and families, or those at risk of being homeless.

Located at 233 Portage Avenue in the Curry Building, the WHHI Single Window office serves as a one-stop shop for community organizations to access information on government-funded housing and homelessness programs. This also helps foster improved co-operation and information sharing between the various levels of government and the community groups. Community groups wanting more information on the programs available can call the WHHI at (204) 940-3070.

Funding for the National Homelessness Initiative was provided for in the February 2000 budget and is therefore built into the existing financial framework.

For more information:

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BACKGROUND

Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative (WHHI) Funding

Government of Canada

Under the *National Homelessness Initiative (NHI)*, communities in Manitoba will receive approximately \$25 million:

- \$12.7 million through the *Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI)*, which includes \$10.8 million for homelessness projects in Winnipeg, and \$1.9 million for projects outside the city;

The SCPI is based on a community plan developed by the various partners to design and implement local solutions to their particular homelessness issues. The SCPI funds up to 50 per cent of the costs of implementing the community plan. The other 50 per cent is comprised of direct or in-kind contributions from a variety of partners, including other levels of government, community organizations, and the private and voluntary sectors.

Additional federal funding assistance is provided through the following programs:

- \$1.9 million for youth projects under *Youth-at-Risk-Homelessness (Youth Employment Strategy)*; and
- \$9.9 million for Aboriginal-specific projects under *Urban Aboriginal Strategy-Homelessness*.
- *Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP)*, to help low-income households and landlords make necessary repairs to bring their properties up to acceptable health and safety standards. RRAP is cost-shared 75/25 per cent respectively by the federal government through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), and by the provincial government through Manitoba Family Services and Housing. Manitoba is administering the program while the City of Winnipeg acts as the delivery agent.

Government of Manitoba

- \$8 million over four years for housing in Winnipeg neighbourhoods through the *Neighbourhood Housing Assistance (NHA)* program under the Neighbourhoods Alive! initiative. Neighbourhoods Alive! is a long-term development strategy aimed at providing community groups with the support they need for programs in the areas of housing and physical improvements, employment and training, education and recreation, and safety and crime prevention.
- The NHA will contribute to the revitalization of housing in declining neighbourhoods by supporting homeownership and renovation initiatives of community-based groups in designated neighbourhoods. Eligible community organizations and individuals may receive up to \$10,000 per residential dwelling unit for the purchase or renovation.

City of Winnipeg

\$7 million over five years under the *Winnipeg Housing Policy* to fund housing initiatives in targeted inner-city neighbourhoods. Funding is available through several programs:

- Winnipeg Municipal Cost Offsets Program provides financial assistance up to \$5,000 per housing unit through reimbursement of City fees and other eligible costs.
- Winnipeg Housing Revitalization Program provides financial assistance up to \$5,000 per housing unit for housing project pre-development costs.
- Winnipeg Neighbourhood Housing Plans and Advocacy Program provides financial assistance and other support to neighbourhood stakeholders to develop a Neighbourhood Housing Plan.
- Winnipeg Housing Demonstration Program provides financial assistance to proponents to encourage unique and innovative approaches to addressing inner city housing issues that result in quality, affordable housing.
- Winnipeg Minimum Home Repair Program provides financial assistance to owner-occupants to undertake minor necessary repairs required for continued healthy and safe occupancy of homes.