

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **NorWest Community Health Centres initiates “Care Bus” to connect individuals to needed services**

Thunder Bay, ON, March 4, 2021 - Today, community partners are coming together as the needs of people experiencing homelessness and the vulnerably housed in our community continue to grow. N1MD (Not 1 More Death), a grassroots organization, raised concerns about the growing needs of individuals in our community who are at risk of death due to having limited and at times no access to warm spaces to temporarily get out of the cold. Getting out of the cold and being provided with information and supports to connect to services available in the city, at a time when many services continue to be offered virtually, is critical to creating opportunities for everyone in the community to achieve health. As Emergency and Isolation Shelters are at capacity, the CARE BUS will commence on Thursday March 4, 2021 from 9 am- 9 pm.

The Care Bus will be a conventional transit bus with a predetermined route, staffed with harm reduction workers and community health workers. The Care Bus will support connecting individuals to emergency shelters, warming centres, addiction, mental health services, harm reduction services, and health supports in the community. Supplies such as personal protective equipment, warm clothing, harm reduction supplies, snacks, water and hygiene supplies will be provided. The use of a City bus allows for sufficient space for physical distancing during Covid 19.

The implementation of the Care Bus was recommended by grassroots organization N1MD when it made a deputation to City Council on February 8, 2021.

NorWest Community Health Centres, CEO, Juanita Lawson states:

“Our community organizations continue to work together in an effort to ensure timely and innovative responses to the significant unmet needs of individuals who are vulnerably in our community. COVID 19 continues to shine a light on the significant challenges that individuals in our community are facing”.



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