



For Immediate Release
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Permanent future for Kenora's emergency shelter

The Kenora District Services Board (KDSB) is pleased to announce the completed integration efforts and partnerships with Knox United Church and the Ne-Chee Friendship Centre for the Kenora emergency shelter. A lease agreement has been finalized and the shelter will reside permanently at the Knox United Church.

The 20-year lease agreement and partnership will establish long-term sustainability for the emergency shelter, something that has been unobtainable for the past two years. The shelter will operate 24/7 and will provide comprehensive services for Kenora's most vulnerable people who need access to care and support.

The Ne-Chee Friendship Centre will continue to operate ongoing programming. "The new shelter will now be able to provide the patrons with more than just a place to sleep at night. The Friendship Centre has 21 programs that cover everything from pre-birth to the elderly, health, employment/training, education, culture and social service programs which allows us to work with people in a holistic manner," says Patti Fairfield, Executive Director of the Ne-Chee Friendship Centre. She continues, "We will not only be able to draw on all of our programs but also the expertise of outside agencies, programs and services."

Nelson Architecture has been awarded a design contract and tendering for the construction is anticipated to begin mid-May. An expected completion date has been set for October of 2018. During the proposed renovation period the temporary emergency shelter will continue to operate out of its current location at the Northwestern Health Unit.

"We are thankful to Knox United Church for opening its doors in a way that will allow the community of Kenora to come together and develop a place that will be focused on providing care and support to people," says Henry Wall, Chief Administrative Officer of the KDSB. "Over the coming months, we will support the Ne-Chee Friendship Centre in developing a program and service model that will be culturally sensitive and based on healing as opposed to one based simply on providing shelter."

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