



Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Throne Speech Addresses Mental Health and Addictions**

SUMA is pleased with the Government of Saskatchewan's focus on homelessness, mental health, and addictions in yesterday's Throne Speech. Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association (SUMA) has advocated government for more action on the mental health and addictions crisis, going so far as to declare this crisis a cornerstone in our advocacy. We have also continually advocated for more action on the homelessness crisis and the shortage of healthcare professionals in our province. We are glad to see each of these important files being addressed in some way.

"Issues related to mental health and addictions have left clear scars in many municipalities across the province," said Randy Goulden, President of SUMA. "If we are to work our way collectively toward finding a sustainable solution, we all must take responsibility, and the first step is acknowledging the situation. I am glad to see the province recognizing the severity of this crisis. While there is much work to be done, it is good to know they are hearing some of what we have to say."

The implementation of the Provincial Approach to Homelessness is a positive step. We are also pleased to hear about expanded support for second stage housing to protect those suffering from interpersonal violence, and the previously announced complex needs emergency shelter spaces as these projects will have a positive impact not only on the homelessness crisis but also mental health and addictions within our province. We welcome all these developments, but we encourage the Government to take this a step further and amend the SIS and SAID programs to address continuing issues experienced by Saskatchewan's most vulnerable population.

The Action Plan for Mental Health and Addictions is also a direct result of advocacy from SUMA and many other partners and NGOs throughout the province, and we are pleased to recognize the 500 new addictions treatment spaces across the province, as well as expanded mental health services for children and youth. We again encourage the Government to continue this

For more information visit [www.suma.org](http://www.suma.org), or to arrange an interview please contact:

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positive momentum by considering safe consumption sites for those who are not ready for treatment. For those who are, we advocate for changes to the current 28-day treatment model, which research shows is lacking in its efficacy, and more resources for aftercare.

Finally, we applaud the Government for expanding the nursing loan forgiveness program and their continued work on the Health Human Resources Action Plan. SUMA has been advocating for this government to address the recruitment and retention of healthcare professionals, particularly in small urban centres, for several years and we will continue to push for more action on this important file.

Allotting more resources now will save many down the line in all of these areas.

We thank the Government for their continued work to help make Saskatchewan's hometowns the best they can be and look forward to our continued partnership.

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