



Government
— of —
Saskatchewan

Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, Seniors
and Rural and Remote Health

Legislative Building
Regina, Canada S4S 0B3

Our File: 21-596

MAY 6 6 2021

Donna Ziegler and Family
(jdziegler@sasktel.net)

Dear Donna:

Please accept my sincere condolences on the tragic loss of your family member, John. Thank you for taking the time to share the challenges you and your family have faced while navigating through the mental health care system, during a time made especially stressful by the pandemic. I appreciate the time and effort you have taken to share your experiences with mental health and addictions services.

Our government, and the health system, values hearing about patient and family experiences. They provide us with insights and help inform how our services can be enhanced so that we can achieve the highest level of quality and effectiveness for Saskatchewan's citizens. I am pleased the Patient Advocate has been able to assist you in finding direction and support.

Please know that mental health and suicide prevention continue to be high priorities for our government and the health system. In 2021-22, the Ministry of Health is investing a record high total of \$458 million for mental health and addictions services and supports across Saskatchewan, including a new investment of \$1 million.

Saskatchewan has a Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan (MHAAP) that is guiding our direction and has helped set the priority areas for the province's mental health and addictions investments, including suicide prevention. Information about MHAAP is available online at www.saskatchewan.ca/government/health-care-administration-and-provider-resources/saskatchewan-health-initiatives/mental-health-and-addictions-action-plan.

Additionally, our government's *Pillars for Life: The Saskatchewan Suicide Prevention Plan* offers the opportunity to engage in sustained, integrated and culturally appropriate actions to support individuals and prevent suicide. This plan is a starting point for Saskatchewan that allows for flexibility to address the various and unique needs of Saskatchewan people.

We are committed to the safety and well-being of Saskatchewan residents, through our prior and current investments in mental health. For instance, we have invested in mental health first aid training for mental health care providers within Saskatchewan. We provide mental health supports for EMS providers, for multi-disciplinary teams in the community, for police and crisis teams, and for RCMP as they respond to mental health related calls.

Alongside the provincial HealthLine 811 and Mobile Crisis phone lines, a Canada Suicide Prevention phone and texting service and the federally funded Hope for Wellness chat line is available nationally.

Through the Government of Canada's [Action Plan on Post-traumatic Stress Injuries](#), the [Online Therapy Unit](#) at the University of Regina has been involved in establishing an internet-delivered cognitive behaviour therapy program for Public Safety Personnel and first responders.

I appreciate that you have taken the time to express your concerns about the gaps you see within the mental health system, and provide suggestions on how to improve it.

It takes great courage for families such as yours that have been touched by the tragedy of suicide to offer their thoughts and considerations so that others may be helped in future. Thank you for writing.

Sincerely,



Everett Hindley
Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, Seniors
and Rural and Remote Health

Dear Ziegler family:

Thank you for reaching out to me directly about the tragic circumstances around John's passing. We are committed to doing better for all families in Saskatchewan.

cc: Honourable Paul Merriman, Minister of Health
Honourable Lori Carr, Minister of Social Services
Lisa Lambert, MLA, Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood
Honourable Don McMorris, Indian Head-Milestone