



March 11, 2026

Dear Mayor and Council/Chair and Board,

Re: Request for Support for NCLGA Resolution re: Improved Access to Publicly Funded Mental Health Services

Please find attached a resolution adopted by the City of Dawson Creek titled **“Improved Access to Publicly Funded Mental Health Services,”** which has been submitted for consideration at the 2026 North Central Local Government Association (NCLGA) Annual General Meeting.

The resolution calls for the Province of British Columbia to improve access to universal, publicly funded mental health services, including counselling and related supports, with a focus on early intervention and prevention. The resolution reflects growing pressures experienced by local governments as gaps in accessible mental health services increasingly affect municipal systems such as emergency response, policing, and community safety.

Council directed staff to circulate the resolution to northern municipalities and regional districts to request support in the form of co-sponsorship. Due to the approaching submission deadline, obtaining co-sponsorship was not feasible. As such, we are sharing the resolution so northern communities have an opportunity to review it in advance of the AGM.

If your Council or Board representatives are attending the NCLGA AGM, we would welcome your consideration of speaking in support of the resolution during debate. Communities that are supportive but unable to attend may also wish to provide a short letter of support that could be referenced during discussion.

If your Council or Board intends to support the resolution, we would appreciate hearing from you in advance of the AGM.

The resolution and supplementary background memo are attached for your review.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Darcy Dober
Mayor



March 10, 2026

North Central Local Government Association
155 George Street
Prince George, BC V2L 1P8

Email: admin@nclga.ca

To Whom It May Concern:

Re: Council Resolution and Supplementary Memo for NCLGA Annual General Meeting in 2026

At the Regular Meeting of Council held Monday, March 9, 2026, the Council of the City of Dawson Creek passed the following resolution regarding Improved Access to Publicly Funded Mental Health Services for consideration at the 2026 North Central Local Government Association (NCLGA) Annual General Meeting:

Improved Access to Publicly Funded Mental Health Services

***WHEREAS** local governments experience increasing pressures on emergency services, policing, bylaw enforcement, homelessness response, and community safety systems associated with gaps in timely and accessible mental health services;*

***AND WHEREAS** access to counselling and other mental health supports is often dependent on private insurance coverage, employer benefits, session limits, or out-of-pocket costs, creating barriers to equitable access, particularly in rural and northern communities;*

***THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the North Central Local Government Association and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities request that the Province of British Columbia take steps to improve access to universal, publicly funded mental health services, including counselling and related supports, with a focus on early intervention and prevention.*

Sincerely,

Tabatha Young,
Corporate Officer

CERTIFIED A TRUE AND CORRECT COPY OF THE RESOLUTION OF
COUNCIL FROM THE REGULAR MEETING HELD MARCH 9, 2026.

Tabatha Young
Corporate Officer



Improved Access to Publicly Funded Mental Health Services – Supplementary Memo

This request is being brought forward in the wake of the tragedy in Tumbler Ridge on February 10, 2026, where nine lives were lost and several others were injured in one of the deadliest school shootings in Canadian history.

This devastating event has prompted renewed reflection on mental health supports, early intervention pathways, and system coordination across British Columbia. As communities grieve, there is also a shared responsibility to strengthen preventive mental health systems and improve access to supports that may help reduce the likelihood of future tragedies.

Local governments across British Columbia are facing increasing pressures related to gaps in timely and accessible mental health services. In rural and northern communities, these challenges are often intensified by limited local services, workforce shortages, long travel distances, and reduced access to specialized care. When early intervention and community-based supports are unavailable, impacts frequently shift to municipal systems such as emergency services, RCMP detachments, bylaw enforcement, and homelessness response.

Access to counselling and related mental health supports in British Columbia is currently delivered through a mix of public and private funding. In many cases, services depend on private insurance coverage, employer benefits, session limits, or out-of-pocket costs, creating barriers to equitable care, particularly in smaller communities where alternatives may be limited.

Improving access to universal, publicly funded mental health services, including counselling and related supports, would help ensure individuals can access care regardless of income or private insurance coverage. Strengthening these services within the broader health system, with a focus on early intervention and prevention, may help reduce reliance on crisis-based responses and improve community stability. As the order of government most directly managing many of the local impacts, municipalities have a strong interest in advocating for improved access to these services, particularly in rural and northern communities, where service gaps are often most acute.