

tres to provide special services to disabled persons, that the Department of the Secretary of State develop, through the National Association of Friendship Centres a pilot project with the following objectives:

- **Referral:** Establish a referral program aimed specifically at satisfying the needs of disabled Native persons. The funding of this referral program should include additional staff and educational resources.
- **Education:** Improve the capacity of Friendship Centre staff and board members to understand the concerns of disabled persons and advocate on their behalf. This

may require a special training program, as well as general information campaigns focusing on the problems and concerns of disabled persons.

- **Accessibility:** Improve accessibility to the Centres and their facilities for disabled persons. In some instances, facilities now exist on the second floors of buildings which have no elevators, making it impossible for many disabled persons to reach them.

**Permanent Service:** Little is known about the unique needs of disabled Native people. National figures on frequency and types of disabling conditions are lacking. Everyday

experience indicates that disability is a much bigger problem among these people than among other Canadians. New services and assistance are badly needed, but without proper data, it is difficult to deliver help in an effective manner. The purpose of establishing the pilot project, therefore, would be to identify the ways in which disabled persons would take advantage of special services, and the frequency with which this happens. If the pilot project proves that the services are well utilized, then immediate steps should be taken to transform this temporary pilot program into a permanent one, applicable to all Friendship Centres.

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