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Manitoba Developmental Centre to close - A victory for human rights

Winnipeg, MB, February 2, 2021 – The government of Manitoba announced that the Manitoba Developmental Centre (MDC) will be closing. The centre is an institution for people with intellectual disabilities. It has been in operation for more than one hundred years. For more than thirty years, People First of Canada and its members have been educating the public and trying to close down MDC and other large institutions in Canada.

“I am very happy,” said David Weremy, “It took a long time. Now it’s done.” Weremy lived at MDC for 18 years of his life. He is a long-time People First member and part of the National Task Force on Deinstitutionalization. The Task Force is a partnership between People First of Canada and Inclusion Canada.

“It has been a long time coming. This is a great outcome for people with intellectual in our province and our country,” said Shelley Fletcher, executive director of PFC and a Task Force member. “Canada is moving closer to the reality promised in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, especially Article 19 – the right to live and be included in the community.”

Over the next three years, 133 people will be moving from the institution and into community living. “All people have the right to live in the community. They belong in the community, not in an institution,” said Kory Earle, president of PFC. “This is a big victory for human rights in our country. It is a big advance in human rights for all people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.”

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People First of Canada is the national voice of people who have been labelled with an intellectual disability. The vision of People First is to see all citizens living equally in the community. For further information contact Shelley Fletcher, Executive Director for People First of Canada Phone: 204-784-7362 or by Email: sfletcher@peoplefirstofcanada.ca Find out more at www.peoplefirstofcanada.ca