

Leadership Council Public Meeting

May 28, 2020

Teleconference

Yellowknife, NT

Minutes

PRESENT:

- Mr. Jim Antoine, Chairperson
- Ms. Gina Dolphus, Sahtu Regional Wellness Council
- Mr. Brian Willows, Hay River Health and Social Services Authority
- Mr. Ted Blondin, Tlicho Community Services Agency
- Ms. Patricia Schaefer, Fort Smith Regional Wellness Council
- Ms. Ruby Simba, Dehcho Regional Wellness Council
- Ms. Ethel-Jean Gruben, Beaufort Delta Regional Wellness Council
- Ms. Nancy Trotter, Yellowknife Regional Wellness Council

- Ms. Sue Cullen, NTHSSA CEO
- Mr. Kevin Whitehead, Senior Advisor – CEO
- Ms. Kim Riles, Executive Director – Clinical Integration
- Ms. Gloria Badari, Chief Financial Officer
- Mr. Tim VanOverliw, Executive Director – Corporate and Support Services
- Ms. Erin Griffiths, HRHSSA CEO
- Ms. Shannon Aikman, TCSA CEO

REGRETS:

- Mr. Bruce Cooper, Deputy Minister Health and Social Services

GUEST PRESENTERS:

- Dr. Andy Delli Pizzi, Deputy Chief Public Health Officer
- Mr. Peter Workman, Chief Environmental Health Officer
- Dr. Sarah Cook, Territorial Medical Director
- Ms. Joanne Ingram, Director – Health Services
- Ms. Kyla Kakfwi-Scott, Project Lead – Primary Health Care Reform

1.0 Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:33 AM.

- a) Ms. Gina Dolphus led the Leadership Council in an opening prayer.
- b) The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. As an update, Jim Antoine spoke of unusual times brought by COVID-19, and thanked managers and staff for their hard work, the OCPHO for strong safety measures. Mr. Antoine mentioned it is also important to keep track of the ongoing business of NTHSSA, as we move from containment to relaxing public health restrictions. Many indigenous healers are also predicting a second wave of COVID-19 cases in August and September 2020.
- c) Attendance was taken by the Senior Advisor, Governance.
- d) There were no conflict of interest declarations for this meeting.

2.0 Agenda/Action Items/Minutes

a) Review/Approve Agenda

The Leadership Council reviewed the agenda for the meeting. There were no amendments.

On a motion duly moved and seconded, the Leadership Council of the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority approved the May 28, 2020 agenda, as presented.

Motion: Ted Blondin

Second: Patsy Schaefer

LC20/05-001 – Carried Unanimously

b) Review/Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

Leadership Council reviewed the minutes from the February 4-5, 2020 meeting held in Yellowknife, NT. There was one amendment to correct a typographical error on page 10.

On a motion duly moved and seconded, the Leadership Council of the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority approved the February 4-5, 2020 meeting minutes, as amended.

Motion: Nancy Trotter
Second: Ruby Simba
LC20/05-002 – Carried Unanimously

c) Review Action Items List

The Leadership Council reviewed the action items list included in their packages. CEO Sue Cullen noted the recent challenges in actioning items on the list, including the gap between the previous Senior Advisor, Governance leaving NTHSSA after the last Leadership Council meeting, and the new one starting mid-April, along with the dedicated operational focus on the COVID-19 pandemic since early March. The CEO will provide the Leadership Council with an update on Action Items in June.

Members requested items be prioritized, with particular focus on clarification with the Dene Nation regarding shingles vaccine coverage for indigenous residents, and the potential for several vacancies this summer on many Regional Wellness Councils due to the expiry of Member terms. The Chair advised Members he raised this issue with the Minister the previous week, and Members were advised there was recent advertising in News North asking for the public to apply. The Senior Advisor, Governance was asked to reinforce the urgency of this issue with the Ministers office, and share information on the recruitment process with Regional Wellness Councils.

The Leadership Council discussed a media request from Hay River about the paid caregiver program, and the importance of finding a solution to program issues, possibly through an NGO taking over responsibility for that program.

Members noted the absence of the Deputy Minister of Health and Social Services or his designate, due to a late scheduling conflict. Members requested Leadership Council meetings be scheduled when the Deputy Minister or his designate is confirmed to be available. It was also requested the Minister be invited to attend the next meeting in August 2020, as soon as possible after the meeting.

3.0 Executive Reports

a) Chief Executive Officer

CEO Sue Cullen, went through her report and answered questions where applicable, including:

- Comments on the unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on residents, and thanking all health systems staff for their extra hard work implementing the pandemic response plan so far during the pandemic.
- Brief updates on the reduction of public health restrictions through Emerging Wisely, and the expected release of the Authorities Pandemic Plan.
- Ongoing efforts to maintain and improve Child and Family Services continue throughout the Authorities pandemic response, to make CFS programming more culturally safe, collaborative, and community based.
- Financial matters including the 2019/20 year end, 2020/21 operating Budget, and the Ministers expectation of a deficit reduction plan by Fall 2020.
- The successful 2 stage Accreditation process in September and December 2019, culminating in an excellent 97.2% score for NTHSSA, and work on outstanding criteria that was due by December 13, 2020, subject to a 6 month extension request based on COVID-19.
- Management updates including CFO (Gloria Badari), Executive Director, Clinical Integration (Kim Riles), and Stanton Territorial Hospital COO (Georgina Veldhorst), and Senior Advisor, Governance (Allen Stanzell).

Council asked about time off for staff after the initial wave of COVID-19. The CEO spoke about staff being tired and needing a break, they will be offered up to 2 weeks off subject to the public health measures in place.

Members agreed the mental health of our workers is important, that staff and managers have been working hard and need a break before the expected second COVID-19 wave.

b) Chairperson

The Chair provided his report of activities since the February Leadership Council meeting. This included meetings with the Minister, Deputy Minister and CEO along with other NTHSSA management.

The Chair referenced his discussions with traditional healers and elders, and their belief we have been fortunate to have so few cases of this virus in the NWT so far. They are also concerned about the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic expected mid-August to September.

The Chair reminded Council of the dates for the next Leadership Council meetings, with Committees targeting August 11-13, 2020 for their meetings, and August 25-27, 2020 set aside for Leadership Council to meet.

c) Deputy Minister, Health and Social Services

The Deputy Minister report was included in the meeting package, but he or his designate could not attend the meeting due to a late scheduling conflict. Members were offered to review the DM Report and submit any questions they have for follow up to the Senior Advisor, Governance.

Members requested the DM attend the next Leadership Council meeting in June to discuss his report. Members also requested their future meetings be scheduled around the DM availability.

4.0 Finance Committee Report

Brian Willows, the Chair of the Finance Committee, delivered a brief report on the May 21, 2020 Finance Committee meeting, pending a Leadership Council meeting later in June to discuss Finance matters in detail:

- Welcome to the new CFO Gloria Badari, thanks to Committee Members Patsy Schaefer and Ruby Simba for their work on the Committee.
- The Committee work plan for 2020/21 was approved, based on the plan from the previous year.
- Work on the 2019/20 Audit continues, with the OAG and Crowe Mackay, in order to meet the August 28, 2020 extended deadline granted by the Minister. COVID expenses are tracked separately;
- SAM implementation has highlighted learning challenges with the new system, Finance staff have been seconded to help improve overall system familiarity.
- SAG will work with the CFO and DHSS to forward a budget template for each RWC to complete.

- For the 2020/21 operating Budget, the approved overspend is \$19.2 million.

The Council commended staff for their efforts to control spending, and re-enforced their system goal of a balanced Budget – saving today to meet the demands of tomorrow.

The next meeting of the Finance Committee will be in the August 11-13, 2020 window previously identified for Committee meetings.

5.0 COVID-19 Update

Dr. Andy Delli Pizzi and Peter Workman joined the meeting by video, to update Members on the status of COVID-19 globally, in Canada, and the NWT.

Members received details of the NWT testing strategy based on exposure criteria, experienced symptoms, parameters and risks of asymptomatic testing, and the need for testing health care workers.

The presentation outlined the significant health care, social, and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in Canada and the NWT, and resulting measures in national and territorial pandemic responses. Members were particularly interested in the immunology, research and development, and timelines related to a COVID-19 vaccine.

Members also received updates on 2 conditions recently more common in the NWT than expected – pertussis (whooping cough) and syphilis. Finally, an update on Emerging Wisely, the NWT CPHOs plan to relax public health restrictions in the NWT, was presented to Council.

Members expressed concern about confusing public communications around testing (eligibility for quick tests versus testing for all, versus asymptomatic testing). Council expressed their support for the work of the OCPHO to use border closures and self-isolation as protective measures. Clarification was provided that the NWT testing strategy was based on balancing risks and rewards of quick and asymptomatic testing.

6.0 In-Camera Session

The Leadership Council met in-camera with Dr. Andy Delli Pizzi, Dr. Sarah

Cook, Kim Riles, Joanne Engram, and Tim van Overliw to discuss the development and public release of the Authorities Pandemic Plan.

LUNCH

7.0 In-Camera Session

The Leadership Council met in-camera with CFO Gloria Badari and ED, CSS Tim VanOverliw to discuss matters related to the Ministerial directive for deficit reduction planning as part of the 2020/21 NTHSSA Operating Budget.

8.0 Governance and HR Committee Report

Jim Antoine, the Governance and HR Committee Chair, led the Leadership Council through the report of the May 25, 2020 Committee meeting, including:

- CEO Performance, Goals, and Objectives – based on a modified 360 degree approach, the DM will lead the review process, assisted by the SAG. Committee will review a first draft of the CEO self-assessment at their August 2020 meeting.
- Leadership Council Training and Development Plan – plans for a full LC meeting in May 2020, including a training day covering the Member Code of Conduct, NTHSSA System Knowledge, Audit and Risk Management and Legislation/Regulation Change Process, were disrupted by COVID-19. The planned trip to Alaska in June 2020 to attend the NUKA System of Care Conference has been cancelled – although the Southcentral Foundation has organized an online Virtual Nuka Week for July 27-31, 2020. The SAG will update the Plan for Committee and LC consideration at the August 2020 meeting.
- Annual Review of the Code of Conduct – in the interim, the SAG will forward the Code of Conduct and the acknowledgement form for each Council member to sign, as required annually in the Code.
- Strategic HR Action Plan – COVID-19 has disrupted the work planned for March and April, the Council will receive a draft of the plan at the August 2020 meeting.
- Management Succession and Development Plans – GNWT offers a model for NTHSSA in this area, the Committee agreed community

employees should receive development opportunities in regional centres and headquarters , mental health supports, and other incentives to maximize recruitment and retention of NTHSSA employees.

The next meeting of the Governance and HR Committee is scheduled for the August 11-13, 2020 window previously identified for Committee meetings.

9.0 Quality Committee Report

The Quality Committee held its meeting on May 26, 2020. The Committee Chair asked the SAG to read the report into the record, including :

- Child and Family Services – Committee was briefed on current progress within the CFS system following 2 consecutive negative OAG reports, and CFS COVID-19 adjustments. It was noted there are many improvements underway to the CFS system, including a more collaborative relationship with the Foster Family Coalition. Committee members invited CFS officials to visit their regions and attend Regional Wellness Council meetings as part of their collaborative approach to evolve the CFS system.
- Primary Health Care Reform – Committee received an update on efforts to improve access, relationship based care and outcomes within the health and social services system. Significant progress has been made on expanding same day access to services with integrated care teams. It was noted the Yellowknife RWC is very pleased with integrated care team achievements in their region. Work continues on developing other regional demonstration projects.
- Quality Scorecard Quarterly Update – Committee reviewed performance indicators available to date, compared to previous indicators. Some new indicators have been added, the intent is to move toward a consistent set of indicators for Committee and LC to evaluate performance.
- Accreditation Update – the Committee reviewed the unmet governance standards, SAG and the Quality team will follow up with the LC on requirements to close gaps.

Overall, the Council noted PHCR is an important element of deficit reduction plans, and looks forward to planning to meet Accreditation objectives.

The next meeting of the Quality Committee is scheduled for the August 11-13, 2020 window previously identified for Committee meetings.

10.0 Cultural Safety Action Plan

The Leadership Council received an update on the pilot of cultural competency training and the Cultural Safety Action Plan tracker, including 2 videos of training sessions with NTHSSA.

Council complimented the work done to date, and supports the Cultural Safety Action Plan as a critical piece of creating a safe and respectful environment for patients and staff to receive care, and work. It was suggested the training would be valuable as part of the broader cultural orientation for NTHSSA employees, particularly in areas like Child and Family Services.

Regional Wellness Council Reports

The Leadership Council received updates from each region during the meeting. Below are summaries of the actions, suggestions and activities of each region that provided a report:

a) **Fort Smith** – RWC Chair Patricia Schaefer summarized :

- There were 2 Fort Smith RWC meetings since the February LC meeting – an informal meeting on March 24, 2020 regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, and a May 21, 2020 RWC meeting.
- The Fort Smith RWC has the following issues and/or concerns for the Leadership Council and NTHSSA:
 - Concerns with Medical Travel continue to be a significant issue in the region. The RWC would be interested in a medical travel policy update to address concerns from the region.
 - COVID-19 has dominated health care service delivery in the region, regional operations are working closely with NTHSSA.

- Staff in the region are working hard during the pandemic and will require time off, breaks before they burn out and before the expected second wave of COVID-19 arrives this fall.

The next meeting is scheduled for July 2020 in the Fort Smith Health Centre Boardroom.

b) **Tlicho Community Services Agency** – TCSA CEO Shannon Barnett-Aikman reported on :

- The most recent TCSA Board meeting of March 10-11, 2020;
- Significant activities of the TCSA Board, including engagement with the NTHSSA, NWT Minister of Education, and Tlicho Government Chiefs Executive Council regarding operating Budgets, COVID-19 pandemic impacts on schools in the NWT, and the TCSAs overall response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The following TCSA issues and/or concerns for the Leadership Council and NTHSSA:
 - Significant increase in addictions-related behaviours in our communities since the onset of COVID-19 public health restrictions (as evidenced by the type and increase of after-hour calls since mid-April).
 - Significant need for increased mental health and wellness supports – our communities are grieving for many reasons, not least of which is the high number of deaths we've experienced in recent months and years.
 - The need for strong remote / virtual business processes in response to COVID-19 has served to further highlight the importance of implementing an HSS IT modernization project. The scope and financial implications of needed upgrades to aging and outdated TCSA IT infrastructure are extensive.
 - The TCSA is in significant need to secure additional Behchokoq-based program delivery and office space to support our Health, Social, and Corporate Services. The age and condition of both the Behchokoq Nursing residence and the regional headquarters building are of significant concern.
 - Significant need for early childhood development supports across the territory, especially within the Tlichoq region, as

evidenced by the latest results of the Early Development Instrument (EDI). TCSA is seeking stronger partnerships with territorial Speech Language Therapy clinics and Occupational Therapy clinics for preschool and school-aged children.

The next meeting will take place June 23-25, 2020 subject to OCPHO COVID-19 guidelines.

- c) **Hay River** – RWC Chair Brian Willows reported on :
- The May 22, 2020 RWC meeting could not proceed due to lack of quorum.
 - In addition, Hay River has the following issues and/or concerns for the Leadership Council and NTHSSA:
 - Recruitment for nurses has been successful and HRHSSA presently has a full complement. Physician coverage has not been a concern over the winter and spring.
 - RWC continues to be short of members and we are challenged in conducting business and representing the interests of the community. RWC will actively seek nominations from interested groups in Hay River - need to continue local public engagement with the RWC through NTHSSA public presentations on subjects of public interest.
 - There continues to be much community interest, specifically the Senior's Society, in the paid caregiver program.
 - Need a solution to ground transportation cost issue for those on fixed incomes and vulnerable populations. Some clients who attend dialysis treatments 3 times a week are spending \$100-\$140 a week for transportation.

The next meeting will take place in July/August 2020.

- d) **Yellowknife Region** – the report given by RWC Chair Nancy Trotter included:
- Recent RWC meetings included February 20, April 16, and May 20, 2020, with a strong focus on COVID-19.
 - In addition, Yellowknife has the following issues and/or concerns for the Leadership Council and NTHSSA:
 - Homelessness and addictions in Yellowknife. Large amounts of money for social assistance in the region is used for drugs

and alcohol. In some communities this was managed by issuing food vouchers. The NWT Disabilities Council have made a number of good recommendations regarding the Yellowknife Day and Sobering Centre. We would like to see these recommendations reviewed by the Leadership Council as the users of the facilities are from across the territory. We endorse the managed alcohol program and recommend that this program continue after the COVID-19 situation resolves.

- We are very concerned for the welfare of students currently living in domestic violence situations. The status of the Child and Youth Care Counsellor program needs to be clarified so that counsellors can be in place for students now and in the fall. It is recommended, that Health and Social Services work more closely with the Department of ECE to ensure the mental health needs of the most vulnerable children are not falling through the cracks.
- How will the long-term care facility at the Legacy Stanton facility be operated? At the present time in Canada, seniors living in privately run for-profit care facilities are four times more likely to die from COVID-19 than seniors living in public run facilities. This has huge implications for our situation in the Yellowknife region.

The RWC Chair thanked all the staff of the NTHSSA, the Department, the Yellowknife Region, and all the front-line workers for their extra work during this time of COVID-19.

The next meeting is scheduled for June 18, 2020.

e) **Sahtu** – RWC Chair Gina Dolphus highlighted :

- Recent RWC meetings including February 18-19 and April 22, 2020. COVID-19 response has dominated regional health care delivery.
- In addition, the Sahtu RWC has the following issues and/or concerns for the Leadership Council and NTHSSA:
 - Currently one (1) RWC vacant seat.
 - Diabetes statistics continue to rise in the Region and RWC members are advocating for a designated, Sahtu Dietician position.

- Current locum physician model is not working. While there were interested physicians, much has changed due to COVID-19, highlighting the need for a new model.

The next meeting is TBD.

- f) **Dehcho** – Chair Ruby Simba reported on:
- Recent RWC meetings including April 16 and May 1, 2020.
 - In addition, Dehcho has the following issues and/or concerns for the Leadership Council and NTHSSA:
 - RWC requested a copy of the COVID-19 Pandemic Response Plan.
 - RWC requested clarification of the process of those that are tested positive with COVID-19 being asked to self-isolate while in their home communities, but those that have travelled outside the NWT need to self-isolate in the designated areas (Inuvik, Fort Smith, Hay River or Yellowknife).

The next meeting is scheduled for June 2020.

- g) **Beaufort Delta** – the Beaufort Delta RWC did not meet before the Leadership Council meeting, their next meeting is scheduled for June 12, 2020. The Chair, Ms. Ethel-Jean Gruben, will provide a report at the next Leadership Council meeting.

11.0 Leadership Council Meeting Evaluation

The Leadership Council was asked to complete the meeting evaluation forms and submit them to the Senior Advisor, Governance for tracking, follow up.

12.0 In-Camera Session

The Leadership Council did not hold an in-camera session for this agenda item.

13.0 Closing Prayer

Ms. Gina Dolphus led the Leadership Council in a closing prayer.

15.0 Adjournment

- The Council will meet again in June by teleconference, to review Finance issues in depth and receive a COVID-19 update.
- The Leadership Council made a motion to formally end its business and close its meeting at 4:02 pm.

On a motion duly moved and seconded, the Leadership Council of the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority closed its May 28, 2020 meeting.

Motion: Ted Blondin
Second: Gina Dolphus
LC20/05-003 – Carried Unanimously



Chairperson Approval Signature

September 03, 2020

Date