

Leadership Council Public Meeting - Minutes

January 11-12, 2023 Explorer Hotel, Yellowknife, NT

PRESENT:

- Mr. Gerry Cheezie, Chairperson
- Ms. Gina Dolphus, Chair, Sahtu Regional Wellness Council
- Mr. Muaz Hassan, Chair, Dehcho Regional Wellness Council
- Ms. Phyllis Mawdsley, Chair, Fort Smith Regional Wellness Council
- Mr. Ted Blondin, Vice Chairperson and Chair, Tlicho Community Services Agency
- Mr. Brian Willows, Chair, Hay River Health and Social Services Authority
- Ms. Debbie Gordon-Ruben, Chair, Beaufort Delta Regional Wellness Council
- Ms. Nancy Trotter, Chair, Yellowknife Regional Wellness Council
- Ms. Jo-Anne Cecchetto, Deputy Minister, Dept. of Health and Social Services

- Ms. Kim Riles, Chief Executive Officer, NTHSSA
- Ms. Joanne Engram, Acting Executive Director – Clinical Integration, NTHSSA
- Ms. Marissa Martin, Chief Financial Officer, NTHSSA
- Ms. Kristy Jones, Exec. Director, Child, Family & Community Wellness, NTHSSA
- Mr. Tim VanOverliw, Executive Director – Corporate & Support Services, NTHSSA
- Mr. Bob Laramy, Executive Director, System Sustainability, NTHSSA
- Ms. Gloria Badari, Project Director, System Sustainability, NTHSSA
- Mr. Roger Israel, Acting Chief Operating Officer, Beaufort Delta Region, NTHSSA
- Ms. Lorie-Anne Danielson, Chief Operating Officer, Yellowknife Region, NTHSSA
- Ms. Mireille Gionet, Chief Operating Officer, Sahtu Region, NTHSSA
- Ms. Barbara Chaulk, Chief Operating Officer, Dehcho Region, NTHSSA
- Ms. Sujata Ganguli, Chief Operating Officer, Fort Smith Region, NTHSSA
- Ms. Jennifer Torode, Chief Operating Officer, Stanton Terr. Hospital, NTHSSA
- Mrs. Erin Griffiths, Chief Executive Officer, Hay River HSSA
- Ms. Sara Nash, Director of Health Services, Tlicho Community Services Agency
- Ms. Sheena Wasiuta, Senior Advisor, Employee Engagement, NTHSSA
- Mr. Allen Stanzell, Senior Advisor, Governance, NTHSSA
- Mr. Nicholas Yuen, Executive Secretary, NTHSSA

PRESENTERS

- Mr. Fraser Lennie, Director, Quality Risk and Client Experience, NTHSSA
- Ms. Jenna Scarfe, Director, Mental Health and Community Wellness, NTHSSA
- Ms. Hayley Maddeaux-Young, Director, Mental Wellness and Addictions Recovery, Department of Health and Social Services

PUBLIC

Mr. Ollie Williams, Cabin Radio

1.0 Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 AM.

- a) The Chairperson welcomed the Council, presenters, and public to the meeting, and acknowledged the land on which the meeting was held.
- b) Ms. Dolphus led the meeting in an opening prayer.
- c) There were no conflicts of interest declared for this meeting.
- d) The Safety Overview was reviewed, and Attendance recorded as above, by the Senior Advisor.
- e) The Chairperson noted questions from the public could be emailed to ntsssafeedback@gov.nt.ca.

2.0 Agenda/Action Items/Minutes

a) Review/Approve Agenda

The Leadership Council reviewed the agenda for the meeting, there were no changes.

On a motion duly moved and seconded, the Leadership Council of the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority approved the January 11-12, 2023 agenda as presented.

Motion: Ms. Trotter

Second: Mr. Hassan

LC23/01-001 – Carried Unanimously

b) Review/Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

The Leadership Council reviewed minutes from previous meetings.

On a motion duly moved and seconded, the Leadership Council of the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority approved the September 29, 2022 AGM minutes as presented.

Motion: Ms. Trotter

Second: Mr. Blondin

LC23/01-002 – Carried Unanimously

The Chairperson noted this as the first public meeting for new RWC Chairs for the Beaufort Delta and Dehcho regions, and welcomed introductions and comments from all RWC Chairs.

3.0 Regional Wellness Council Reports

Below are summaries of the actions, suggestions and activities of each Regional Wellness Council that provided a report:

- a) **Sahtu** – RWC Chair Gina Dolphus was recently re-appointed, and highlighted an upcoming orientation meeting for the Sahtu RWC, including several new Members, at the end of January. The next meeting will follow in the spring of 2023.
- b) **Yellowknife Region** – The Yellowknife RWC met 3 times since the fall of 2022, receiving various presentations including a Stanton Legacy Project update and a local seniors' group dialogue. Chair Nancy Trotter also congratulated Dr. David Pontin, Area Medical Director, for his recent award from the College of Family Physicians.

Key issues, concerns for the Leadership Council and NTHSSA include medical travel, public communications on system programs and services (e.g. Shingles vaccine), enhancements to cancer screening, increase mental health awareness, a volunteer program at Stanton Territorial Hospital, and the naming of the Stanton Legacy building.

- c) **Hay River** – The last meeting of the Hay River RWC was November 28, with the LC Chairperson in attendance, featuring a presentation on midwifery services. RWC Chair Brian Willows highlighted consideration for the large number of seniors in the community, medical travel concerns over perceived inconsistencies in decisions, influence of drugs leading to overdoses and deaths, and growing homelessness concerns as priority issues for the RWC and the community. The next RWC meeting will be held in the spring of 2023.
- d) **Tlicho Community Services Agency** – Mr. Blondin highlighted the difficulty in recruiting new nurses, competing with big incentives from other jurisdictions, as starting to affect the quality of services. This is extra challenging with respiratory infection season ramping up. TCSA is trying to solve community housing issues working with the Tlicho Investment Corporation, and take advantage of training initiatives with Aurora College, to help mitigate staffing concerns. Burnout of current staff is a risk from consistent staffing pressures.

The frequent use and abuse of alcohol and drugs remains prevalent in the region, with serious implications for a staff challenged health and social services system.

- e) **Beaufort Delta** – RWC Chair Debbie Gordon-Ruben reported on an orientation meeting for her RWC on December 9, with vacancies still to be filled. The RWC has highlighted 2 main issues as priorities – medical travel (escorts for elders and cancer treatment) and resumption of dental services in the region. The next RWC meeting will be planned for a later date.
- f) **Dehcho** – Mr. Hassan updated the Council that the Dehcho RWC had a full complement of members (all new) attend an orientation session in Fort Simpson in September 2022. He highlighted the general legacy impacts of the pandemic and 2022 flood, growing drug concerns, mental health of residents, and housing as priority issues in the region. The RWC Chair stressed that solutions would require collaboration of departments across the GNWT and with other levels of government. The next RWC meeting will be determined at a later date.
- g) **Fort Smith** – RWC Chair Phyllis Mawdsley reported on 3 RWC meetings held since the fall of 2022. Discussions focussed on Primary Health Care Reform, physician allocations, the Trail Cross group home, community collaboration with the RCMP, mental health and addictions services, midwifery service changes. The RWC looks forward to hosting the Area Medical Director at the next meeting in February.

4.0 Finance Committee Report

Mr. Willows reviewed discussions at the November 22, 2022 Finance Committee meeting. The Committee received an update on the Q2 financials for NTHSSA, with the annual deficit projected higher than budgeted. Committee was pleased with the explanation of cost-drivers contributing to the deficit, and that the overall understanding of the reasons for deficits continues to improve.

Members were encouraged to become familiar with the System Sustainability initiative, which identifies potential cost and operational efficiencies through better practices and processes, and improved system alignment, through process mapping and functional reviews.

The Committee Chair commended the management team for a sharper focus on a more robust finance function to produce better data, reporting and understanding of deficit cost drivers.

Members were re-assured that while some nurse salary funding is restricted and cannot be used for other positions, other staffing models can be used to maintain services and safe patient care. Members requested more information on regional expenditures for medical travel. Similar information for community dental services would be requested in a presentation from Indigenous Services Canada and the Department of Health and Social Services.

5.0 Governance and HR Committee Report

Chair Gerry Cheezie summarized the November 23, 2022 Committee meeting.

Members reviewed the draft output from their June 2022 strategic planning workshop, and look forward to reviewing the plan with new Members, and sharing the plan with the Minister to influence the priorities of the next Territorial government.

The Committee discussed the expected appointment of new Regional Wellness Council Chairs by year-end. Each will receive an RWC and Leadership Council orientation, and should be in place to attend the first Leadership Council meeting in January 2023.

Members reviewed an approach to training for Executive Manager performance evaluation, and a draft self assessment for corporate training and professional development. Further discussion at the next meeting is suggested for both these areas.

6.0 Quality Committee Report

With assistance from Mr. VanOverliw, Council reviewed the Quality Committee report from the November 24, 2022 meeting. Members received updates on Primary Health Care Reform, the Quality Improvement and Patient Safety Scorecard, and the Quality Assurance Framework.

An update on PHCR reminded Committee this initiative is rooted in the pillars of relationships and cultural safety, and goes beyond the traditional health care system to include all factors that play a part in health (income, housing, education, etc.) – connecting to broader GNWT approaches to integrated service delivery. Members accepted the update on projects at 6 demonstration sites in the NWT, and look forward to hearing more about the integration of public health and primary care, and planning roadmap activities for existing PHCR projects.

Committee reviewed detailed indicators for Diabetes, Early Childhood Occupational Therapy and Speech Language Pathology, and Child, Family and Community Wellness. Committee appreciated the importance of the indicators to track patient backlogs, program demand, quality consistency, and for early diagnosis of conditions in children. Member accepted the streamlining of CFCW indicators to focus on prevention and preservation programs and services.

The Committee will receive an update on the Quality Assurance Framework at a future meeting. This falls within the Quality Management Framework approved by the Council in 2019, and applies to NTHSSA quality reviews related to patient safety and quality concerns, offering protective neutrality to the Authority and patients bringing their concerns forward.

7.0 Chairperson's Report

Mr. Cheezie commented this is the first meeting with a full complement of Members since his appointment in August 2022. He is slowly getting more comfortable with the role of Chairperson, and looks forward to working with the Members to move NTHSSA forward. The Chairperson summarized his activities since he was appointed, which included attending several orientation meetings and an RWC meeting in Hay River. Some priority areas for Council to consider include advocacy for indigenous governments to be involved in negotiations for more health funding for medical travel, addictions treatment options in the regions, and youth suicide prevention. Finally, the Chairperson referenced target dates for the next Leadership Council meetings – Committees on February 22, 23, and 24, and Leadership Council on March 7, 8, and 9 in Yellowknife.

Members lauded the Chair's focus on mental health and addictions services and suicide prevention.

Break for lunch

8.0 Deputy Minister, Health and Social Services Report

The Deputy Minister Report included information on HSS Program and Policy Initiatives (response to the OAG Report on Addictions Prevention and Recovery Services, the NWT Alcohol Strategy, the Child and Youth Counselling Initiative, the NWT Seniors Strategy, the Supportive Living Review, results of the 2022 Patient Experience Questionnaire, proposed changes to the Extended Health Benefits Policy, and the 2021-22 DHSS Annual Report), an OCPHO update (COVID-19 and influenza, the syphilis outbreak, and the NWT 811 Health Advice Line), and

Legislation (the Medical Professions Act, the statutory review of the Child and Family Services Act, proposed changes to the Pharmacy Act, proposed regulations for Naturopathic practitioners and psychologists under the Health and Social Services Professions Act), public engagement on Meat Safety Regulations, and changes to the Nursing Professions Act.

Council asked several questions on the various updates presented by the Deputy Minister, requesting syphilis outbreak statistics by age group, an update on the IRC child and family services law integration with NWT legislation, or specific updates on the status of COVID-19 vaccines for children under 5, new wastewater public information, and the status of the Arctic Indigenous Wellness Foundation healing facility.

9.0 Office of Client Experience

The NWT Health and Social Services recognizes Cultural Safety as a key to improving the quality of care for Indigenous peoples because it addresses the difficult reality that the Northwest Territories health and social services system has not been a place of healing for many indigenous residents. Regional Wellness Councils and the Leadership Council have supported component of NTHSSA quality improvement.

A new Office Client Experience has been created, and includes 4 new Indigenous Patient Advocate positions, to provide health and social services system navigation support and client advocacy to residents and guests of the Northwest Territories, including those in the Hay River HSSA and Tli Cho CSA regions. Guiding principles for the system advocacy and navigation services offered by the OCE are :

- To provide services that meet the needs of Indigenous residents, in a culturally safe and respectful manner;
- Family is medicine;
- Minimizing the amount of time clients and families have to tell their stories;
- Clients are partners; and
- We work to empower our clients and families.

The goals of creating the Office of Client Experience are :

- Increased awareness of client rights and responsibilities;
- Improved client and family experience;
- Culturally safe care experiences for Indigenous clients and families;
- Streamlined access to supports and services;

- Growth in staff capacity for Indigenous client-centered care and perspectives; and
- Increased access to cultural and language supports.

Council endorsed this approach to improved client relationships based on listening, a feeling of being heard. Following a soft launch later in January and a formal launch in February, Council looks forward to regular updates on the Office of Client Experience at future RWC and LC meetings.

10.0 Update on the Action Plan to Address the OAG Report on NWT Mental Health and Addictions Recovery Services

The Office of the Auditor General (OAG) conducted an audit of addictions prevention and recovery services in the Northwest Territories for the period of August 1, 2016- July 31, 2021. The OAG report made recommendations for 7 areas intended to improve the delivery of addictions and recovery services:

- Equitable Access – improve equitable access to addictions services for all NT residents;
- Diverse Subpopulations – establish a standard approach to collection of socio-demographic data from diverse populations;
- Aftercare Planning – develop a standard approach to aftercare planning;
- Coordination of Addictions Services – improve coordination of out-of-Territory and community-based treatment resources;
- Cultural Safety – review and reduce standard and policy barriers to improve program delivery;
- Data Collection – improve data collection processes that expand the collection of demographic information in the NT; and
- Outcomes of Addictions Services – establish indicators to monitor and measure outcomes, and adjust services for improved outcomes.

The Department of Health and Social Services has accepted all recommendations. Council welcomed the presentation on the Territorial workplans for each recommendation, drafted collaboratively between DHSS, all Health & Social Service Authorities and feedback from Standing Committee on Government Operations.

Council suggested a community-based approach to identify and fill gaps in addictions services, eliminating bureaucratic barriers, and ensure services meet the needs of residents. Members highlighted the success of local on-the-land programming in some regions.

11.0 In-Camera Session

No in camera Session was required for January 11, 2023.

12.0 Adjournment

The Leadership Council adjourned for January 11, 2023 at 4:30 pm.

The Chairperson of the Leadership Council of the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority declared the January 11, 2023 proceedings adjourned.

13.0 Call to Order

The Chairperson called the meeting back to Order at 8:33 am on January 12, 2023.

The Leadership Council held closed meetings with NTHSSA and DHSS senior management, to learn more about the Draft NWT Alcohol Strategy, a Mental Health and Community Wellness reform project in the Beaufort Delta region, the NTHSSA Employee Engagement Plan, and Accreditation Governance Standards (deferred to a future meeting). The Council also met in camera with the Minister of Health and Social Services to discuss regional concerns and system policy issues.

14.0 Chief Executive Officer Report

Ms. Riles provided her CEO report including notes about the current syphilis outbreak, the importance of flu vaccines, and new supports available through 811. The report included updates on Accreditation (survey in September 2023), Operations (COVID-19 testing guidance, seasonal vaccine availability, a joint meeting on the Inuvialuit Suicide Strategy, Yellowknife Boarding Home and Sheltering updates, and the review of the Medical and Professional Staff Bylaws), Human Resources (senior management staffing, recruitment and retention incentives, and operational impacts of staff shortages, and current vacancy rates), and Finance (2022-23 Variance, the 2023-24 Budget, and System Sustainability).

Council appreciated the CEO's report and looks forward to further updates.

15.0 Adjournment

The Leadership Council formally adjourned for January 12, 2023 and closed its January 11-12, 2023 meeting at 3:43 pm.

On a motion duly moved and seconded, the Leadership Council of the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority closed its January 11-12, 2023 meeting.

Motion: Ms. Dolphus

Second: Mr. Blondin

LC23/01-003 – Carried Unanimously



July 21, 2023

Chairperson Approval Signature

Date