

Leadership Council Public Meeting - Minutes

June 23-24, 2021

Explorer Hotel, Yellowknife, NT

PRESENT:

- Mr. Jim Antoine, Chairperson
- Ms. Gina Dolphus, Chair, Sahtu Regional Wellness Council
- Ms. Ruby Simba, Chair, Dehcho Regional Wellness Council
- Ms. Patsy Schaefer, Chair, Fort Smith Regional Wellness Council
- Mr. Ted Blondin, Chair, Tlicho Community Services Agency
- Mr. Brian Willows, Chair, Hay River Health and Social Services Authority
- Ms. Ethel-Jean Gruben, Chair, Beaufort Delta Regional Wellness Council (by phone)
- Ms. Nancy Trotter, Chair, Yellowknife Regional Wellness Council (by phone)
- Mr. Bruce Cooper, Deputy Minister, GNWT DHSS

- Ms. Sue Cullen, Chief Executive Officer, NTHSSA
- Ms. Kim Riles, Executive Director – Clinical Integration, NTHSSA
- Ms. Elizabeth Johnson, Acting Chief Financial Officer, NTHSSA
- Mr. Tim VanOverliw, Executive Director – Corporate & Support Services, NTHSSA
- Ms. Lorie-Anne Danielson, Chief Operating Officer, Yellowknife Region, NTHSSA
- Ms. Mimi Hamelin, Chief Operating Officer, Sahtu Region, NTHSSA
- Ms. Arlene Jorgensen, Chief Operating Officer, Beaufort Delta Region, NTHSSA
- Mr. Wilson Dimsdale, Chief Operating Officer, Dehcho Region, NTHSSA
- Ms. Sara Nash, Director of Health and Social Services, Tlicho Community Services Agency (June 24)
- Ms. Georgina Veldhorst, Chief Operating Officer, Stanton Terr. Hospital, NTHSSA
- Ms. Sujata Ganguli, Chief Operating Officer, Fort Smith Region, NTHSSA
- Mr. Kevin Whitehead, Senior Advisor, CEO, NTHSSA
- Mr. Allen Stanzell, Senior Advisor, Governance, NTHSSA

GUEST PRESENTERS:

- Dr. AnneMarie Pegg, Territorial Medical Director, NTHSSA

1.0 Call to Order

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

- a) The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting, acknowledging Chief Drygeese Traditional Territory, home of the Yellowknives Dene and traditional lands of the North Slave Metis.
- b) Ms. Gina Dolphus led the meeting in an opening prayer.
- c) The Chairperson highlighted COVID-19 protocols, and a safety overview was provided by the Senior Advisor, Governance.
- d) Attendance was recorded as above.
- e) There were no conflicts of interest declared for this meeting.
- f) It was noted questions from the public could be emailed to rwc_nthssa@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 June 23-24, 2021 agenda, as presented.

Motion: Ms. Patsy Schaefer
Second: Mr. Brian Willows
LC21/06-001 – Carried Unanimously

b) Review/Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

The Leadership Council reviewed the minutes from the March 3-4, 2021 meeting.

On a motion duly moved and seconded, the Leadership Council of the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority approved the March 3-4, 2021 meeting minutes, as presented.

Motion: Mr. Brian Willows
Second: Ms. Gina Dolphus
LC21/06-002 – Carried Unanimously

3.0 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) **Beaufort Delta** – on behalf of RWC Chair Ethel-Jean Gruben, COO Arlene Jorgensen referred to the RWC report and outstanding issues list in the meeting package:

- The BDR RWC attempted on two occasions to hold a RWC meeting, but was not able to achieve quorum with existing vacancies and seasonal availability challenges.
- In addition, the Beaufort Delta RWC had the following issues and/or concerns for the Leadership Council and NTHSSA:
 - Organizational Safety/Cultural Safety;
 - Program and service delivery improvements;
 - Medical Travel policy and services;
 - Ambulance services for small communities;
 - Access to good quality dental care; and
 - Homelessness.

The next RWC meeting is planned for July or September 2021.

b) **Sahtu** – RWC Chair Gina Dolphus reported:

- The RWC held a regular meeting on June 5, 2021, for updates on Child and Family Services and regional mental health and addictions programming.
- The Sahtu RWC has the following issues and/or concerns for the Leadership Council and NTHSSA:
 - Regional Wellness Council vacancies (2) and pending vacancies (2);
 - More education for youth on the personal and broader impacts of drug and alcohol abuse;
 - RWC should be aware of communication to local leadership;
 - Process for accessing dental services is not user friendly; and
 - Roll-out of Mental Health Survey was not efficient, how many responded?

The next meeting will be held in August or September 2021.

- c) **Yellowknife Region** – COO Lorie-Anne Danielson delivered the report on behalf of RWC Chair Nancy Trotter:
- The Yellowknife RWC held met on April 21 and June 16, 2021, with presentations on Advance Care planning, and a Child, Family, and Community Wellness Update.
 - The RWC is planning to visit the communities of Fort Resolution and Lutselk'e in the fall, to engage community members and promote the work of the RWC.
 - The Yellowknives Dene feel underserved with the current CHR service model in the region, the RWC would support creative solutions to resolve this concern, including consultations with the YKDFN.
 - In addition, Yellowknife has the following issues and/or concerns for the Leadership Council and NTHSSA:
 - Recommend consulting the Dene Nation, on the establishment of crisis team(s) (to include elders) to support people during the discovery, grieving process for remains of children who passed away while at residential schools;
 - Recommend review of the primary care waitlist to assign every resident, particularly immigrant residents, a physician;
 - The name of the Stanton Legacy Building should be indigenous to reflect the spirit of truth and reconciliation; and
 - Core funding is critical to continue organized screening programs for breast, colorectal, and cervical cancer.

The next Yellowknife RWC meeting will take place in September 2021.

- d) **Hay River** – Chair Brian Willows highlighted :
- The RWC met for a regular meeting on April 30, 2021, with a presentation on the colorectal screening program;
 - The RWC has participated in DHSS stakeholder meetings on long term care planning, colorectal screening program, and the Family Support Centre and Soaring Eagle Friendship Centre;
 - In addition, Hay River has the following issues and/or concerns for the Leadership Council and NTHSSA:
 - RWC role in the development of a Community Wellness Plan;
 - Growing vagrancy, intoxication, and mischief in the downtown core requires an interagency approach; and
 - Pending RWC vacancies.

The next RWC meeting will be held the week of July 5, 2021.

- e) **Dehcho** – RWC Chair Ruby Simba, reported:
- The RWC has not met since the March LC meeting.
 - The Dehcho has the following issues and/or concerns for the Leadership Council and NTHSSA:
 - RWC vacancies and pending vacancies; and
 - The impact of flooding in the region.

The next RWC meeting will be held on July 7, 2021.

- f) **Fort Smith** – RWC Chair Patsy Schaefer highlighted:
- The RWC held 2 meetings since the last LC meeting, on April 22, with updates on vaccine roll-out and uptake, hiring activity and vacancies, personal support worker training, and Stanton renewal planning, and June 16, with presentations on Emerging Wisely and the Highway 5 border crossing.
 - In addition, the Fort Smith RWC has the following issues and/or concerns for the Leadership Council and NTHSSA:
 - Medical Travel escort guidelines should be reviewed given regular feedback from patients and their families;
 - Regional staff vacancies and locum shortages, dental therapist position; and
 - Medical and mental health care for seniors.

The next meeting will be confirmed by the new RWC Chair in the fall.

- g) **Tlicho Community Services Agency** – TCSA Chair Ted Blondin updated the Leadership Council on :
- Kevin Armstrong has returned to TCSA as Chief Executive Officer.
 - TCSA wants to avoid COVID in the region, and is hopeful that vaccine promotion efforts can help address the relatively low vaccination rates in Tlicho communities.
 - In addition, the TCSA has ongoing issues, challenges and concerns for the TCSA Board:
 - Recruitment and retention Challenges in all program areas.
 - Critical nature of housing in Tlicho communities, the impacts on staff recruitment and retention across all program areas, as well as impacts on health and wellness of community members.

- Lack of robust IT infrastructure to support the delivery of HSS programs.

The next meeting will take place September 7-9, 2021 in Yellowknife.

Council considered a recommendation to adjust the meeting proceedings and agenda to accommodate graduation ceremonies the afternoon of June 24.

On a motion duly moved and seconded, the Leadership Council of the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority approved amending the agenda as required to complete the June 23-24, 2021 meeting by 12:00 Noon, June 24.

Motion: Ms. Patsy Schaefer
Second: Ms. Ruby Simba
LC21/06-003 – Carried Unanimously

4.0 Finance Committee Report

Mr. Brian Willows, Chair of the Finance Committee, reported on the June 8, 2021 Finance Committee meeting, attended by a quorum of Committee Members.

The Committee was updated on the 2021/22 NTHSSA Operating Budget and year-end work for the previous fiscal year. It's expected the annual deficit will be higher than expected. The request for an extension to the audit deadline to August 27, 2021 was granted. The Committee reviewed progress on system sustainability, and options to increase debt collection activities. The Committee confirmed the annual work plan for 2021/22, and approved through the following motion minor adjustments to signing authorities to account for position updates:

On a motion duly moved and seconded, the Leadership Council of the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority accepted the recommendation of the Finance Committee to approve the new signing resolutions as detailed in the Finance Committee Report.

Motion: Ms. Patsy Schaefer
Second: Mr. Ted Blondin
LC21/06-004 – Carried Unanimously

The next Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for August 10, 2021.

The Leadership Council considered a motion to go in camera.

On a motion duly moved and seconded, the Leadership Council of the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority moved in camera.

Motion: Ms. Gina Dolphus
Second: Ms. Patsy Schaefer
LC21/06-005 – Carried Unanimously

The Leadership Council discussed a financial matter.

On a motion duly moved and seconded, the Leadership Council of the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority moved out of camera.

Motion: Ms. Patsy Schaefer
Second: Mr. Brian Willows
LC21/06-006 – Carried Unanimously

5.0 Governance and HR Committee Report

Mr. Jim Antoine, the Governance and HR Committee Chair, reported that the June 9, 2021 Committee meeting was deferred until the next quarter, based on the Committee activity for recruitment of a new Chief Executive Officer.

The next Governance and HR Committee meeting is scheduled for August 11, 2021.

6.0 Quality Committee Report

The Committee Chair, Mr. Ted Blondin, asked the LC Chairperson to report on the June 10, 2021 Quality Committee meeting.

Committee was informed an implementation plan for Enterprise Risk Management software would be provided at their next meeting.

The next on-site survey for Accreditation is scheduled for 2023, but work to provide evidence for unmet criteria action plans, to complete survey instruments, selection of accreditation standards to survey, and staff

education and training to embed patient safety and quality improvement in the care we provide, is already underway in the cycle leading up to that. Committee looks forward to reviewing progress on this work at their next meeting.

The NTHSSA Quality Assurance Framework was approved by the Committee. This framework provides the methods and process to monitor quality and improve performance. Recommendations resulting from the QA Framework are advanced through the Executive to enhance patient and client care.

The Committee confirmed the status of the Office of Client Experience, the handling of Child and Family Services matters outside the QA Framework, and the confidentiality of human resource issues within the framework.

Also updated for the Committee was progress on the Child and Family Services Quality Improvement Plan, which is updated publicly at this link <https://www.hss.gov.nt.ca/en/quality-improvement-progress-tracker>. So far almost 56% of action items are completed in 10 priority areas, with others well on track. New 2021/22 funding for staff will add more positions to address concerns in some areas. New federal legislation is driving collaboration with indigenous governments to define their role in child protection matters concerning their membership. The CFS QIP will be updated after this last year of the current plan.

Committee reviewed the latest Quality Improvement and Patient Safety Scorecard. QIPSS indicators will evolve to account for reconciliation with system performance indicators tracked by the Department. Not all indicators will be reported each quarter. Wherever possible reporting will include data by region. Section 1 of the QIPSS will focus on indicators related to system strategic priorities in the Quadruple Aim Framework. Section 2 will focus on indicators related to the vision and guiding principles of NTHSSA. The next QIPSS will reflect these changes, including irregularly reported indicators presented in an Appendix.

Areas of interest to Committee in this QIPSS include data collection consistency, detailed analysis of causes and mitigation measures, patient conditions for medevacs, and a presentation on the Sick Kids Telepsychiatry program at the next Leadership Council meeting. The Committee remains appreciative of the work done in the area of Quality Improvement.

The next Quality Committee meeting is scheduled for August 12, 2021.

7.0 Chairperson's Report

Chairperson Jim Antoine summarized his activities since the last Leadership Council meeting, including meetings with the Executive team, LC update and

Quality Committee and several Governance/HR Committee meetings, correspondence to and meeting with the Minister of Health and Social Services, completion of 2 periods of self-isolation, assisting the community of Ft. Simpson in food mitigation efforts, and discussions with various LC Members and NTHSSA Executive staff.

The Chairperson confirmed the next round of meetings for Committees tentatively set for August 10-12, 2021 and the Leadership Council August 24-26, 2021.

8.0 Deputy Minister, Health and Social Services Report

The Deputy Minister reported to the Leadership Council on increasing vaccine rates, clinics and data availability by community and region being available to the public on the GNWT COVID-19 Dashboard. The DM discussed the anticipated availability of vaccines for children ages 5 to 11. Communications around the importance of vaccines was stressed, with RWC members encouraged to promote the vaccine in their communities and regions. The Vaccine Promotion fund for community governments was fully subscribed. Emerging Wisely 2021 relaxed most restrictions on gathering limits and self-isolation. The health system is preparing for surge management in the event of future COVID-19 outbreaks.

Program updates for the Council included 2021-22 Budget highlights (more funding for the Anti-Poverty Fund, Indigenous Patient Advocates in each region, community-based Addictions and Wellness Counsellors, Territorial midwifery program, and the Foster Family coalition for respite services); Shingles vaccine roll-out expected this summer; offer of a presentation to the Leadership Council on the Medical Travel escort policy review; the 618 responses received to the Addictions Recovery survey showed higher satisfaction with counselling and on-the-land programs, and lower satisfaction with detox and eMental health services; feedback for the Territorial Alcohol Strategy is being sought from communities, with a target of a draft Strategy for review in the Fall of 2021; the Community Suicide Prevention Fund is fully subscribed for 2021/22 with 7 proposals approved; DHSS is advancing recommendations from the Home and Community Care

review to support the Legislative Assembly priority to enable seniors to age in place with dignity; the latest quarterly report on Social Indicators – COVID-19 Pandemic is available to the public at this link <https://www.hss.gov.nt.ca/sites/hss/files/resources/social-indicators-covid-19-pandemic-june-2021.pdf>; a public announcement of approved Anti-Poverty Fund projects for 2020/21 will be made in the next 2 weeks.

Finally, updates were provided on Legislative initiatives in DHSS, including drafting of legislation to regulate the NWT sale of flavoured vapour products, and the statutory review of the Child and Family Services Act by the Standing Committee on Social Development.

The Council was reminded the Fall session of the Legislative Assembly will convene October 14 to November 4, 2021.

9.0 Chief Executive Officer Report

The Chief Executive Officer and her successor provided operational updates to the Leadership Council, highlighting achievements since the system transformation to one Territorial health authority began in 2016.

Specifically cited were the initiation of a governance structure including

support from a dedicated Senior Advisor; response to the COVID-19 pandemic, led by establishment of the Authorities COVID Response Team (ACRT), and vaccination, testing, and contact tracing programs; development and implementation of the Child and Family Services Quality Improvement Plan; renewal of the Health Family Program and development of a Family Preservation Program; achievement and maintenance of Accredited status with 97.2% of national standards met or exceeded; improvements in acute care (surgical and obstetrical programs, in-patient and emergency services, pharmacy, lab and rehab services, transfusion medicine, diagnostic imaging, point-of-care testing), Continuing Care (long-term care, home care, palliative care, extension of Paid Family/Community Caregiver Pilot, oral health services, cancer care and prevention, cancer screening and navigation, active treatment), mental health and addictions, approval of a quality assurance framework, advancing privacy and policy standards and training, advancing the NWT Choosing Wisely program, and enhancing client feedback and advocacy options through regional Quality and Risk Managers and Indigenous Patient Advocates.

Progress was also cited in informatics and health technology, talent and organizational development (recruitment and retention, learning management system, Medical residency program), medical travel (improved reporting and financial administration, partner relationships), Med-Response, OHS (Territorial approach), communications (rebranded public web-site, internal comms platform, social media profile); a joint focus on system sustainability with DHSS and Department of Finance; full implementation of SAM for better oversight , reporting for budgeting, variances.

Regional highlights included Primary Health Care Reform initiatives in Fort Smith, the Sahtu, and Yellowknife, increased mental health programs and services in the Sahtu and Dehcho. In the Beaufort Delta, reducing wait times for specialists in the region and no-shows at the hospital clinic, and introducing a Regional Indigenous Wellness Coordinator were highlighted accomplishments. The opening of the new Stanton Hospital represents a significant feat. Stanton and Yellowknife public health were recognized for their important role in the pandemic response.

The Leadership Council noted a likely short-term increase in the use of locum doctors given the pending departure of several physicians, and the minimal impacts of flooding in Fort Simpson on NTHSSA facilities.

Chairperson Jim Antoine and members of the Council thanked Mrs. Cullen for her dedication and hard work during her tenure at NTHSSA, and welcomed Mrs. Riles as new CEO effective July 23, 2021.

Lunch Break

10.0 System Sustainability Plan

The Leadership Council was pleased to review progress on system sustainability, including some improved efficiencies through contracting, and funding to address some collective agreement costs. Staffing of the Sustainability Office remains a priority, with positions potentially being based in smaller centres based on hiring preferences. Council stressed the urgency they feel around achieving progress quickly, and looks forward to receiving an update at each Leadership Council meeting.

11.0 COVID-19 Update

The Territorial Medical Director reviewed the latest COVID-19 statistics with

the Council, with cases decreasing across Canada, and no cases in the NWT. Community vaccination rates and next steps in the vaccine roll-out were discussed. The Council was interested in ways they could assist vaccination efforts in their communities and regions. The TMD stressed the importance of our flexible testing system during the surge response to the outbreak at NJ McPherson School. It remains critical to protect health system capacity through vigilant vaccine efforts and following public health advice and orders.

Council stressed the importance of communicating with residents in an appropriate forum and language for them. There was recognition that pandemic restrictions are a continuum to move in and out of as pandemic case numbers and conditions fluctuate.

12.0 Cultural Safety Action Plan

The Leadership Council was updated on hiring for the Cultural Safety and Anti-Racism Unit, meetings of the Indigenous Advisory Body in 2021, and the Cultural Safety Training framework currently in development. While concerned progress on some Cultural Safety Action Plan items has slowed during pandemic outbreaks, the Council is resolved that work in the 4 key objectives is critical to NTHSAA organizational success. The deployment of Indigenous Patient Advocates across health regions and development of a Reconciliation Action Plan within the Department will help improve overall client and community experiences with the NWT health system. Council recognizes the magnitude of the work required on Cultural Safety, and acknowledges the great work and progress achieved so far. The next Cultural Safety update will coincide with the next Leadership Council meeting.

The Council was advised their meeting with the Minister of Health and Social Services would take place over breakfast the following morning. They reviewed possible agenda items for that in camera meeting.

13.0 Stanton Legacy Project Update

The Leadership Council was asked for advice on culturally appropriate wayfinding signage in the Stanton Legacy building. Council recommended reaching out to RWCs directly for someone to participate in a working group, with meetings over the summer. The NTHSSA CEO asked each RWC Chair to forward any recommendations to her directly. It was also offered for any RWC to receive an update on services at the current Stanton Hospital, by contacting the Chief Operating Officer's office.

14.0 Adjournment – June 23, 2021

The Leadership Council adjourned for the day at 3:07 pm.

On a motion duly moved and seconded, the Leadership Council of the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority adjourned its June 23, 2021 proceedings.

Motion: Mr. Brian Willows
Second: Ms. Gina Dolphus
LC21/06-007 – Carried Unanimously

15.0 Meeting with the Minister of Health and Social Services

The Leadership Council met over breakfast in camera with the Honourable Julie Green, Minister of Health and Social Services, to discuss system issues.

16.0 Call to Order Day 2 – the Chairperson called the meeting back to Order on June 24, 2021 at 8:46 am.

Ms. Gina Dolphus led the meeting in an opening prayer for Day 2.

17.0 Operational Plan

The NTHSSA Operational plan is based on the System Strategic Plan of the Department, the Quadruple Aim Framework. The Operational Plan reflects the programs and services provided by NTHSSA, a Budget aligned to achieve and support this core business. Strategic objectives and key activities to support them will be included, along with a plan for public engagement and relevant performance measures for Plan implementation. The Quality Improvement and Patient Safety Scorecard, Department performance measure reporting, quarterly updates through the CEO report, the annual Budget cycle, and the Annual Report are key accountability points. The Plan requires approval from the Leadership Council at its next meeting before public and internal release.

Council appreciated that the Operational Plan would be viewed through a sustainability lens as a patient-centred approach to health system services continues.

18.0 Regional Issues, Action Item List

Council raised the following regional issues :

- Shingles vaccine planning – delivery model being confirmed similar to prescription, roll-out pending COVID-19 vaccine priority; and
- Emerging Wisely 2021 – public health emergency required to give force to
- public health orders, will be extended through 4th wave; and
- Concerns about confusion on the role of Regional Wellness Councils – long-term policy change versus an operational focus.

The Senior Advisor, Governance reviewed updates to the Action Item List. New Action items or commitments from this meeting include:

- Council requested information on the cost of agency nurses versus permanent employees;
- The Deputy Minister offered a presentation on the Medical Travel – Escort Policy review at the next Leadership Council meeting;
- The Executive Director, Corporate & Support Services offered to meet with Regional Wellness Councils regarding the Operational Plan; and

Council requested a review and update of materials on the role of Regional Wellness Councils, for distribution to Chairs and Members.

19.0 Review Council Code of Conduct

The Leadership Council completed their annual review of their Code of Conduct page by page, and were asked to acknowledge their understanding and commitment to abide by the Code, by signing and returning the acknowledgement form in the meeting package to the Senior Advisor, Governance as soon as possible.

20.0 Leadership Council Meeting Evaluation

The Leadership Council completed the meeting evaluation forms and returned them to the Senior Advisor, Governance for tracking, follow up.

21.0 In-Camera Session

On a motion duly moved and seconded, the Leadership Council of the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority moved in camera.

Motion: Ms. Patsy Schaefer

Second: Mr. Brian Willows
LC21/06-008 – Carried Unanimously

The Leadership Council discussed a human resources matter.

On a motion duly moved and seconded, the Leadership Council of the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority moved out of camera.

Motion: Mr. Ted Blondin
Second: Ms. Nancy Trotter
LC21/06-009 – Carried Unanimously

22.0 Adjournment

The Leadership Council formally ended its business and closed its meeting at 10:41 am.

On a motion duly moved and seconded, the Leadership Council of the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority closed its June 23-24, 2021 meeting.

Motion: Ms. Patsy Schaefer
Second: Ms. Ruby Simba
LC21/06-010 – Carried Unanimously

Chairperson Approval Signature