

April RWC Update

RWC Chairs:

April was another busy time across the NTHSSA, and I am pleased to provide you with some updates on work completed.

Work continues with medical travel initiatives, including the NTHSSA rapid improvement project and the ongoing medical travel modernization project led by the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS). Although I don't have significant details to share on that work, I am pleased to share that, based on feedback regarding medical travel signage at the airport for clients from smaller communities in your regions travelling to Yellowknife for medical appointments, a new sign has been installed at the Yellowknife Airport. I have included a photo for reference. This sign has been placed in the terminal, and I hope it provides helpful guidance to those who need information and may be unsure where to go.

Halfway through the month, a news release was also shared with the public about work to implement the Nurse Case Manager positions at Primary Care in Yellowknife. This pilot is made possible by recent funding from the DHSS, which allows it to enter the recruitment stage. As positions are filled, these Nurse Case Managers will:

- Coordinate with providers and programs that frequently refer to or receive patients for out-of-territory care.
- Evaluate opportunities for virtual care alternatives.
- Help patients avoid becoming unnecessarily attached to distant health care systems.
- Assist with developing best practices and data to reduce travel-related expenditures and improve patient navigation

Although this pilot is focused on YK region medical travel, we expect to gain valuable insights that can help inform improvements for all NWT residents. Over time, if successful and with appropriate resources available, this may be expanded to other regions.

I am also pleased to share that planning for our upcoming June meeting has begun. I have attached the draft agenda here. We will focus on the NTHSSA top 3 priorities on Day 1, followed by the Chairs' roundtable, then DHSS priorities on Day 2. I look forward to welcoming you all to Yellowknife for this in-person meeting and hearing from each of you about updates from your regions.

As many of you will be aware, there have recently been several announcements and discussions taking place related to an expected increase in military presence across the territory. These discussions are still in the early stages, but I wanted to reassure each of you that the NTHSSA will be looking for opportunities to work with GNWT partners to leverage potential federal investment in support of meaningful improvements in health and social services programs and services for our clients and NWT residents.

Later this month I will be travelling alongside the CEO to Fort Smith to meet with the Regional Wellness Council there. We are expected to be in the region May 20th and 21st. If invited, we would be pleased to attend RWC meetings in each of the regions during the coming fiscal year. Please reach out to me or send an email to Allen, and we can coordinate planning.

And finally, some of you may also know that this summer marks the 10-year anniversary of the NTHSSA. Planning work has begun to ensure opportunities in each region for staff to mark this significant milestone. It is an opportunity to showcase how far the organization has come, look towards the future, and most importantly, celebrate the hard work and dedication of everyone who helps to keep health and

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social services programs and services going across the NTHSSA. As more details become available on that, I will be sure to share them with you.

As always, if you have any questions about this work or future work, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Thank you,

Dan