



Resource Municipalities
COALITION

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Honourable Adrian Dix, Minister of Health

PO Box 9050, Stn Prov Govt

Victoria, BC

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February 3, 2022

RE: Comprehensive Audit of Northern Health

Minister Dix,

The Resource Municipalities Coalition (RMC) brings together the communities of Northern Rockies Regional Municipality, City of Fort St John, District of Taylor, District of Tumbler Ridge, and the District of Mackenzie to collaborate and embrace opportunities that protect and enhance the quality of life and services for British Columbians.

By embracing opportunities to improve our provincial health care system for the benefit of health care professionals and residents of British Columbia, the RMC also looks to support the Premier in his correspondence with the Prime Minister on consistent and appropriate funding of health care.

Further to a March 25th, 2021 conversation between yourself and Mayor Ackerman, Mayor Fraser, MLA Davies, MLA Bond, MLA Merrifield, and Danette Thompson of the BC Nurses Union, the RMC requests the Ministry of Health complete a third-party comprehensive audit of the Northern Health Authority (NHA) so that the challenges of providing a strong, effective, accessible, and sustainable health care system within the NHA jurisdiction can be assessed and result in effective solutions that support and promote an effective health care system.

While we recognize that many requests have circulated in recent months, the RMC believes an audit identifying specific criteria will allow a proper assessment of the activities and processes conducted by NHA and the implications that these activities have on the delivery of an effective health care system within their jurisdiction.

The RMC also recognizes that our health care professionals look to provide the highest quality of health care to everyone seeking medical services within the NHA jurisdiction. This dedication is applauded and admired by the members of the RMC, therefore the RMC views this request as further supporting and assisting our health care professionals in building a strong, effective, accessible, and sustainable health care system within northern BC.

(2)

As you are aware, the NHA is divided into three Health Service delivery areas that represent the Northeast, Northern Interior, and the Northwest, each with their own administration to execute the Vision, Mission and Values of the Northern Health Authority. The RMC respects the decision to divide such a vast jurisdiction into more specific regions, as residents of the north are more spread out over the geographic region and strongly encourage this structure to be carefully looked at within the audit process.

Acknowledging the significant stress placed on the delivery of health care within the Northern Health jurisdiction over the past decade, the RMC requests an audit with the following framework:

- 1) Determine a current level of core services provided by location and region, assess, and determine gaps that exist within the location and region compared to the provinces minimum core service levels for health care.
 - a. Identify deficiencies and gaps for differences between locations and regions,
 - b. Provide recommendations to address deficiencies and gaps, to exceed minimum core service levels, for the improvement of a strong, effective, accessible, and sustainable health care system,
 - c. Allocate a timeframe for execution of recommendation and,
 - d. Review the effectiveness of the recommendations, with follow-up review and corrective actions.

- 2) Review administration services provided by each health service delivery area by using a mapping structure to identify overlaps, duplications, staffing levels, effectiveness of organizational structure, and accountability, as it relates to the delivery of a strong, effective, accessible, and sustainable health care system.
 - a. Review the administration structure and roles for each health service area and their interaction with the overarching authority of Northern Health, identifying overlaps or gaps between each health service area and the NHA,
 - b. Review accountability of each role to the system at large and identify deficiencies and gaps of accountability on delivery of health services,
 - c. Review administrations accountability to community and community leaders,
 - d. Determine cumulative impacts of deficiencies and gaps of administrative leadership on health care professionals, staff, workplace amenities, and organizational policies, and subsequent influence on recruitment and retention,
 - e. Evaluate current administration's ability to deliver the Values and Strategic priorities of Northern Health,
 - f. Develop sustainable solutions and tools to address gaps and deficiencies with a timeframe for execution of these solutions and,
 - g. Review the effectiveness of solutions, with follow-up review and corrective actions.

(3)

- 3) Review support networks for all health care professionals and supporting services by reviewing access to career and educational development, recognition of diversity based on location, family supports, mental health supports, and positive work cultures.
 - a. Identify existing deficiencies of supports for health care professionals and supporting services staff,
 - b. Assess individual educational opportunities and the influence to improving the delivery of health care within the jurisdiction,
 - c. Review the influence of geographic diversity on health care professionals' development and subsequent influence on the health care system, recognize and provide designation of such development,
 - d. Identify gaps and deficiencies of family supports (work/life balance) to health care professionals in rural and remote settings,
 - e. Identify how existing supports encourage or hinder development of health care professionals within the NHA jurisdiction.
 - f. Provide recommendations to address deficiencies and gaps with a timeframe for execution of recommendations and,
 - g. Review the effectiveness of the recommendations, with follow-up review and corrective actions.

- 4) Review NHA policies and processes associated to the recruitment of health care professionals and supporting staff to provide a strong, effective, accessible, and sustainable health care system in northern BC.
 - a. Review and identify deficiencies and gaps with policies related to the recruitment of health care professionals and supporting staff as it relates to rural and remote communities within NHA jurisdiction,
 - b. Compare existing policies to industry standards of success within other jurisdictions of similar complexity for recruitment,
 - c. Identify deficiencies and gaps within the recruitment process that hinder educational opportunities or career development, as compared to an urban setting and other jurisdictions of similar size and complexity,
 - d. Develop recommendations to address deficiencies and gaps with a timeframe for execution of recommendations and,
 - e. Review the effectiveness of the recommendations, with follow-up review and corrective actions.

(4)

- 5) Review and identify current and emerging trends that challenge the delivery of a strong, effective, accessible, and sustainable healthcare system within NHA jurisdiction.
- a. Identify all infrastructure deficiencies that hinder or prevent improved service offerings with all locations,
 - b. Identify forecasted economic challenges that impact the delivery of services,
 - c. Identify existing gaps and future challenges induced by rural and urban divide,
 - d. Review NHA community engagement and the impacts of the engagement to the delivery of services,
 - e. Develop recommendations to address deficiencies and gaps with a timeframe for execution of recommendations and,
 - f. Review of the effectiveness of the recommendations, with follow-up review and corrective actions.

Sincerely,



Mayor Lori Ackerman
City of Fort St John



Mayor Rob Fraser
District of Taylor

Keith Bertrand

Mayor Keith Bertrand
District of Tumbler Ridge



Mayor Joan Atkinson
District of Mackenzie



Mayor Gary Foster
Northern Rockies Regional Municipality



Executive Director Mike Whalley
Resource Municipalities Coalition

CC: Premier John Horgan