
**MINUTES OF THE YUKON HEALTH AND SOCIAL
SERVICES COUNCIL MEETING
WHITEHORSE
March 20, 2009**

MINUTES OF THE YUKON HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL MEETING

Windsor Boardroom at the Edgewater Hotel

March 20, 2009

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Graham Lang – chair
Kevin McDonnell
Jane McIntyre
Naresh Prasad
Darcy Tkachuk
Maxwell Rispin
James Allen
Cindy Gosselin
Joseph Graham

REGRETS:

Penny Ferby
Marie Cox

SECRETARIAT:

Amar Dhillon

ALSO PRESENT:

Hon Glenn Hart, Minister of H&SS
Rodney D'Abramo, Executive Assistant to the Minister
Brian Kitchen, Dir of Policy & Program Development, H&SS

Call to Order

The Yukon Health and Social Services Council held its second meeting of 2008-09 on March 20, 2009. The meeting called to order at 9:04 on Friday, March 20th.

Approval of Agenda:

MOTION: Moved by Naresh Prasad and seconded by Darcy Tkachuk to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes : May 2 & 3, 2008

MOTION:: Moved by Cindy Gosselin and seconded by Jane McIntyre that the Secretariat review the minutes for typos, as well change topic to “concepts to recommendations.” Minutes will be approved at the next meeting.

Motion carried – Joseph Graham, Kevin McDonnell & James Allen abstained from voting as they did not attend the May meeting.

H&SS Activities Updates & Council’s Mandate

[Hon. Glenn Hart, Minister of H&SS, Rodney D’Abramo, EA to the Minister]

Health Care Review:

Following introductions, the Minister advised the Council regarding consultations currently being held throughout Yukon regarding Health Care Sustainability Review. He noted that the cost of health care delivery is rising at a pace that is impossible to sustain. Hence, a Steering Committee has been established which is comprised of a medical doctor, a registered nurse, one official each from Departments of Finance and Health & Social Services, Yukon Hospital Corporation, and an official representing First Nations.

Purpose of this Committee is to engage Yukoners in a dialogue on the findings and recommendations of the Yukon Health Care Review, a report that reviewed the current and long-term sustainability over the next 10 years of the public health care system in Yukon.

The Committee will prepare a report following consultations to the Oversight Committee and will be tabled in the Yukon Legislative Assembly.

Minister Hart encouraged Council members to get involved, perhaps by inviting the Steering Committee to its meeting to provide comments and input into consultations.

Council Mandate:

Further to Chair’s request, Minister Hart noted that the Council’s advice and recommendations are best informed when Council focuses its attention and balances information from a number of sources including:

- An understanding of the issue from a government perspective, including expert knowledge (eg. Federal, Yukon Government, First Nation, Municipal)
- An understanding of the issue from a non-government perspective, including expert knowledge (eg. individuals, community agencies, associations and coalitions, academics);
- An understanding of the issue from an individual citizen and non-expert perspective (eg. Clients)
- A healthy debate among Council members.

The Minister suggested that when Council chooses to address an issue that it perhaps be guided in its deliberations by some agreed upon Principles and these could include:

- Deliberations to have a specific focus on the Yukon environment and local impacts (eg. if it's a national issue or initiative – how does it look in the Yukon context);
- Deliberations to be considered within the current mandates of Departments;
- Deliberations to be on issues that fall within the current Strategic Planning framework for the Department and have a connection to the Government-wide goals and priorities;
- Recommendations based on consideration also to prudent resource management and be fiscally responsible.

He also suggested that the following other operational items may also be considered by the Council:

- Only two or three issues should be entertained at any one time so that the focus is on quality useful deliberations and not spread thinly over a multitude of complex issues.
- The issues and activities the Council is to focus on should be agreed to ahead of time between the Minister and co-chairs and should include consideration of issues the Council may have identified as important.
- Meetings should be held when it is important to meet based on the agenda and work, not based on a predetermined timetable.
- Committee work should be considered between meetings of the full Council to better engage members in issues as they unfold and move forward

Aging Strategy Symposium:

Minister Hart advised that he is considering, although in conceptual stage at this time, an idea of looking at population projections in the Yukon, demographics, and percentage of rise in aging population in order to start mapping out plans for appropriate service provision to the seniors. Need to collect information as to how to bring collective ideas to look at what services would be needed and if there are any challenges in such provision, hence the concept of having a symposium. He suggested to Council to consider whether it sees any role in this process.

General:

The Minister outlined the issues his department could utilize Council's advice on:

- Health Care Review consultation
- Personal Health Information Legislation and Electronic Health Records initiatives
- Health Care Sustainability and Reform (specific pieces)
- Aging Strategy/symposium
- Safe Drinking Water initiatives
- Prevention programs: are there opportunities to initiate prevention programs?
- Regulating Midwifery and other Health Professions

- Smoke Free Places Act Regulations – Phase 2
- Seniors Services

Issues to consider for future work:

- Poverty and Social Inclusion
- Mandatory Testing and Disclosure Act (Justice lead)
- Registered Nurses Professions Act re: Licensed Practical Nurses

The Minister reiterated the fact that it is up to the Council to decide what it wants to take on from what suggestions he put forth for Council’s consideration. The Minister and his officials will continue to bring issues and policies for Council’s deliberations and to seek advice. He would like Council to be able to defend what Council recommends. The recommendations have to be measurable, reasonable, and achievable. He may not accept all recommendations from the Council but he definitely will consider them all.

Government’s Budget:

The Minister noted that Department of H&SS’ budget has been increased substantially. Social Assistance rates have been adjusted and will be indexed in the future. Respite services for the family members looking after their loved ones are now readily available. This Government has demonstrated balanced and good social conscience.

DISCUSSION ON DECISION-MAKING PROCESS:

[Council Members]

The Members discussed at length a what process Council should follow in order to make decisions, what issues it should look at and how it should decide on recommendations.

McDonnell pointed to Council’s Operating Procedures’ section 1.1.5 that outlines decision-making procedure which states that Council “shall reach its decisions by seeking consensus among its members....”

It was agreed that for a recommendation to go forward, everyone would have to agree or it will be tabled for further discussion. Co-chairs will be part of the consensus.

The Co-chairs’ role will be to ensure meetings are run appropriately, everyone participates in the discussions, have an opportunity to express his/her views, and gets to ask questions. Following each meeting, the Co-chairs will meet with the Minister to discuss issues raised and recommendations, if any, and then communicate the outcome of their meeting with the Minister to the Council.

UPDATES OF H&SS & FEDERAL/PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL

[Brian Kitchen, Director of Policy, Planning and Program Development]

Following introductions, Brian talked about the following topics:

A. Role of Department with the Council:

As Director Policy, Planning and Program Development, Brian is a conduit to the Council in the Department to provide information and/or analysis on any issue, program, service or topic Council requires. Whatever information he will provide to the Council will always be from government's perspective.

He also brings to the Council, information on federal/provincial/territorial initiatives, decisions, updates on ongoing long-term discussion being held at Ministers and Deputy Ministers' meetings to keep the members informed on what is happening at national level.

B. Ministerial Framework:

His Policy Unit is a resource for information and assist Council members in understanding issues which, of course, are never black and white, e.g., seniors drug program – his Unit will provide factual information but whether there should be a co-payment – this would be a policy question and for the Minister's consideration/decision.

C. Department Budget:

The budget has been tabled in the Legislature for the approval. If Council is interested, he can arrange a presentation.

D. Current Departmental priorities and initiatives:

i) Health Care Review Consultations – as Minister noted earlier, a Steering Committee, chaired by Dr. Reddoch, has undertaken to consult Yukoners on recommendations of the report. Council can be a part of the consultation by inviting the Committee to its meeting. Premise of the report is that expenses are rising at far more faster level than the revenues and it is a challenge to sustain health care system as is.

Steering Committee is to hear what people say and record it for government's consideration. He also noted that so much of the health care system is in legislations. He distributed Terms of Reference for the Steering Committee.

ii) Personal Health Information Legislation – this legislation will govern personal health information and how it is controlled based on privacy issues and ATIPP Act. Later applies to government and crown corporations and does not apply to private sector.

Intent is to provide a greater control to the individual over his/her own information which currently is based on "implied" sharing of information among health professionals. The

Legislations will be developed over the next 1 ½ years to be tabled in the Legislature in the fall of 2010. This will establish the rules and guidelines to how the information will be shared. Scope of the legislation will include: who it would be applied to; consent and privacy issues; collection of information, how it is kept and shared; and, oversight and compliance.

There are three phases in development of the legislation:

Phase I – Reference Group consultation which includes Yukon Medical Association, Yukon Registered Nurses Association, Whitehorse General Hospital, First Nations and Pharmacists;

Phase II – General Consultations

Phase III – Development of Legislation

The Council may get involved in the reference group's analysis.

iii) Aging Strategy & Symposium – as noted by the Minister earlier, Council may want to be an advisor on concept of symposium or approach or participate in committee work.

iv) Safe Drinking Water – currently going through a very detailed technical review of regulations. Department's mandate is drinking water at the tap. Other water sources such as rivers, lakes, etc. fall under Department of Environment.

v) Prevention Programs – these are linked to sustainability review. Council may want to look at the programs and see what Department already has in place and currently doing in prevention area and consider whether it is enough or what more can be done.

vi) Midwifery – currently, midwifery is not a regulated profession in the Yukon which means government cannot pay for the unregulated profession but consumers are lobbying to be paid through the insured health services. It is in early stages of consideration whether it should be regulated in Yukon. Council may look at and advise whether this service should be regulated.

vii) Smoke-Free Places Act – this was passed in the Legislature an year ago and governs smoking in the territory. Supporting Regulations are being developed and are in second phase that is to look at restriction to advertising and selling products. Council may provide feedback in this process.

viii) Services for Seniors – what services are being provided and whether there are any gaps?

COUNCIL BUSINESS:

Discussion on Mandate:

The Council reviewed and held a discussion in order to consider what items it should include in its Action Plan from what Minister and Brian suggested.

In its deliberations and discussions of proposed suggestions, Council looked at what possible role

it can play in each item and it arrived at following list:

Health Care Review Consultation

- *Input to public consultation/have committee present to the Council*

Health Care Sustainability & Reform

- *Input to Government Actions (may be as part of Phase II of Health Care Review Committee)*

Personal Health Information Legislation

- *Info Forum and Input to Reference Group on 4 Policy areas*
- *Phase II – Public Consultation Proposed Legislation*

Aging Strategy Symposium

- *Advise on concepts of symposium or approach*

Safe Drinking Water Initiatives

- *Input to 3rd set of Regulations*
- *Look at Drinking Water beyond H&SS Mandate*

Prevention Programs

- *Audit of existing prevention programs*

Regulating Midwifery and other Professions

- *Should it be regulated and if so input on details*

Smoke Free Places Act & Regulations

- *Input on 2nd Phase – restrictions on Tobacco Products. (get briefed/provide feedback)*
- *Start Phase II next month*

Services for Seniors

- *Council recommendations on changes/improvements (building on Council's work to date)*

Services to Seniors:

Following a discussion of possible options Council has, it decided to form a Sub-Committee.

MOTION: moved by James Allen and seconded by Naresh Prasad, that a Sub-Committee be formed to review previous notes, all presentations relating to seniors services from the past Council meeting minutes, as well as look at the recommendations from the Minutes of May 2 & 3, 2008 Minutes. The Sub-Committee to write a report on its deliberations to be presented at Council's next meeting.

Members of the Sub-Committee are Kevin McDonnell, Darcy Tkachuk, Cindy Gosselin and Maxwell Rispin. – Motion Carried

MOTION: moved by Graham Lang seconded by Naresh Prasad that Council approves that the Sub-Committee members to be paid one day honoraria for the work outlined in the above-noted motion. Motion Carried.

NOTE: Members of the Sub-Committee abstained from voting.

Amar Dhillon will arrange a working dinner meeting for the Sub-Committee at the Westmark Hotel on March 24, 2009 from 5:30 – 9:30 p.m.

Council's Website:

The Council will invite Patricia Living, Director Communications and Social Marketing to one of its future meetings.

Possible Agenda - next meeting;

- Dorothy Drummond re Services for Seniors
- KDFN Seniors Services – Joseph to provide contact
- Elder Active
- Golden Age Society

Date of Next Meeting:

Next Council meeting will be held on May 29 & 30, 2009.

MOTION: moved by Graham Lang and seconded by Naresh Prasad to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.