



FEB 25 2020

MR. JACKIE JACOBSON
MLA, NUNAKPUT

Oral Question 12-19(2): Cancer Screening, Care and Prevention in the Beaufort-Delta

This letter is in follow up to the Oral Question you raised on February 7, 2020 regarding Cancer Screening, Care and Prevention in the Beaufort-Delta.

The Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA) is launching a pilot colorectal cancer screening program in the Beaufort-Delta, in hopes of increasing screening participation in eligible populations. The pilot project will be held in the communities of Ulukhaktok and Paulatuk, and is set to launch later this month.

As part of the screening program, eligible patients will be identified by a Registered Nurse using their electronic medical records and kits will be mailed to the individual with a filled in requisition, label, and instructions. This project will allow residents to receive their kits directly in the mail and they will not need to go to their Health Centre for screening.

This pilot screening program will help identify patients who are at risk of developing colorectal cancer, have them diagnosed quicker, and at earlier stages when treatment is more effective. The pilot screening program also has a community engagement component. Through funding from the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer (CPAC), the NTHSSA will be meeting with communities in the Beaufort-Delta to determine perceptions of the colorectal cancer project, and how best to adjust service delivery to meet the needs of residents. We are also partnering with the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation and the Gwich'in Tribal Council for this project.

The Department of Health and Social Services, together with the NTHSSA, has undertaken a number of initiatives and training programs to improve the quality of care we provide to residents who are living with cancer, as well as their families and caregivers.

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The NTHSSA has two cancer nurse navigators who are available to all residents of the Northwest Territories (NWT). Their mandate is to provide individualized assistance for patients, families and caregivers to help overcome health system barriers and facilitate timely access to qualified medical and mental health care. They can be referred even before a diagnosis is made and through self-referral.

All Community Health Representatives will receive cancer awareness kits for breast, cervical, and colon cancer. These kits contain various activities and information for communities across the NWT, with the goal of increasing awareness about cancer and the importance of early detection through screening.

The NTHSSA and Stanton Territorial Hospital are working on providing care closer to home. We currently have three General Practitioner Oncologists working at Stanton Territorial Hospital and we are expecting three more physicians to take on this specialized role. These additions will lead to better care for patients, decreasing the need to travel outside of the NWT for treatment.

Thank you.



Diane Thom
Minister of Health and Social Services

c Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Legislative Coordinator
Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs