

Staffing Solutions to Rebuild and Reform Healthcare Now

WHEREAS the *Canada Health Act* guarantees access to insured health services that are accessible, universal and publicly funded;

AND WHEREAS the “medicine chest clause” is a treaty promise of on-going healthcare provided to Indigenous peoples as recognized by section 35 of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*;

AND WHEREAS the provision of healthcare services is the responsibility of the Government of the Northwest Territories;

AND WHEREAS only 59% of Northwest Territories residents aged 18 and older have reported having access to regular health providers in 2023, compared to an average of 84% in Canada;

AND WHEREAS nine family doctors have left their practice in the Northwest Territories since 2024, resulting in a 49% vacancy rate, with a further 42% vacancy rate for specialists;

AND WHEREAS the Northwest Territories Medical Association reports that 63% of current physicians are considering leaving their practice in the Northwest Territories;

AND WHEREAS some nurses in the Northwest Territories are calling for the establishment of a standalone labour union to address chronic labour relations issues, low staff morale and stagnant wages;

AND WHEREAS frontline practitioners at Stanton Territorial Hospital have reported that Emergency Department services may be interrupted or cease altogether if immediate action is not taken to address staffing matters;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Member for Yellowknife Centre, that the Government of the Northwest Territories take immediate action to improve the recruitment and retention of all doctors, nurses and allied healthcare workers through higher wages, contract flexibility and enhanced benefits;

.../2

Date of Notice: May 22, 2025
Date de l'avis : 22 mai 2025

Date of Introduction:
Date de présentation :

Disposition:
Disposition :

Carried:
Adoptée :

Moved by: Mr. Testart
Proposée par : M. Testart

Seconded by: Mr. Hawkins
Appuyée par : M. Hawkins

Ruled Out of Order:
Déclarée irrecevable :

AND FURTHER, that the Government of the Northwest Territories work with the Public Service Alliance of Canada and Union of Northern Workers to develop an inclusive bargaining structure for all healthcare workers to give the frontline a real voice in negotiations;

AND FURTHERMORE, that the Government of the Northwest Territories undertake the following actions:

- Establish a working group composed of members of the Executive Council and regular Members of the Legislative Assembly to oversee primary care reform and health system sustainability initiatives;
- Move to interest-based negotiations with the Northwest Territories Medical Association before the fall of 2025;
- Publicly release the details of the new locum contract for Emergency Department doctors;
- Improve flexibility in locum contracts to assist doctor and nurse retention and recruitment;
- Phase out agency nurses with a three-year plan that improves working conditions for frontline staff with improved professional development and compensation;
- Enhance financial incentives for shift work for doctors, nurses and allied healthcare workers;
- Implement minimum staff-to-patient ratios at all Northwest Territories hospitals;
- Implement practitioner-led innovation to ensure continuous improvement on the frontline;
- Negotiate physician licence-sharing between Nunavut and Alberta to eliminate red tape preventing entry of new physicians into the Northwest Territories healthcare system;
- Prioritize pan-national physician licencing in the Government of the Northwest Territories Federal Engagement Strategy;
- Fast-track development of new policies on emerging medical technologies, such as AI, e-consults and virtual care;
- Expand the role of nurse practitioners in all regions of the Northwest Territories to improve access to healthcare and decrease costs; and
- Modernize auxiliary care at hospitals and establish a licensing body for paramedics;

AND FURTHERMORE, that the Government of the Northwest Territories release an action plan to implement the aforementioned actions that is time-bound and fully costed by the fall of 2025;

AND FURTHERMORE, that the Government of the Northwest Territories respond to this motion in 120 days.