

The Honourable Lesa Semmler  
Minister of Health and Social Services

**Complaints in the Health Care System**

Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Written Question asked by the Member for Tu Nedhé-Wiilideh on November 1, 2024, regarding complaints in the Health Care System.

The Member asked for the annual number of complaints made over the last five years regarding the conduct of regulated health or social services professionals, specifically nurses, employed by the Government of the Northwest Territories.

The Department of Health and Social Services, or the Department, does not receive complaints for registered nurses, as these health professions are regulated by the College and Association of Nurses of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut which is commonly referred to as CANNN.

CANNN has provided a summary of complaints received over the last five years:

- in 2019 they received 15 complaints;
- in 2020 – 30 complaints;
- in 2021 – 43 complaints;
- in 2022 – 17 complaints; and,
- in 2023 – 34 complaints.

It is important to note that prior to 2024, CANNN did not track complaints by territory. Additionally, CANNN has informed us that most complaints received are made by colleagues and employers.

The Professional Licensing Office is the regulatory authority for health and social service professionals that are regulated by the Department of Health and Social

Services in the Northwest Territories. From January 1, 2019, to November 1, 2024, the Professional Licensing Office received 22 complaints.

Complaints received by the Professional Licensing Office are separate from complaints received by the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority, who receives complaints through the Office of Client Experience. The Office of Client Experience is accessible to all residents and guests accessing care and services in the Northwest Territories, including through the Hay River Health and Social Services Authority and the Tẖcẖ Community Services Agency.

The Office of Client Experience offers a single point of contact for clients seeking support in accessing and navigating the Health and Social Services system or wishing to share their experiences.

Between January 16, 2023, to December 1, 2024, they received 1,564 requests for service; 878 of those were complaints. Approximately 60% of all requests came from residents who identified as either First Nations, Inuit, or Métis.

The Member also asked the number of Human Resource investigations that occurred because of complaints made to either the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority or to CANNN concerning the conduct of regulated health or social services professionals, for each of the last five years.

There have not been any human resource investigations conducted by the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority stemming from complaints, in the last five years. The Department does not have information on investigations conducted by CANNN.

The Member asked about the number of critical incident investigations conducted in our health system each year, over the last five years.

The Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority has had a Quality Assurance Framework in place since 2022. Since that time, there have been a total of 17 critical incident investigations conducted:

- 4 in 2022,
- 8 in 2023, and,
- 5 in 2024.

It is important to note that several of the critical investigations may still be in progress and the type of quality assurance activity may change pending the outcome of the review process.

The Member also asked the number of Indigenous investigators involved in conducting investigations in the health system.

I am unable to provide a specific number because the Department does not collect demographic information, such as the ethnic background, of investigators conducting investigations within the health system.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.