



JUL 12 2010

MR. TIM MERCER
CLERK OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Response of Petition 6-16(5)

Attached is the Response to Petition 6-16(5) tabled by Mr. Glen Abernethy on May 13, 2010.

Sandy Lee
Sandy Lee

Attachment

- c. Mr. Kevin O'Keefe
Legislative Coordinator

① Noted July 12/10
② Table in October.
JK



Petition tabled by Mr. Glen Abernethy on May 13, 2010

Response by the Honorable Sandy Lee
Minister of Health and Social Services

Proposed Changes to Supplementary Health Benefits (SHB) Program

This letter is in response to the Petition you tabled on May 13, 2010, regarding expansion of access to SHB and that the incremental cost to support the expansion be funded through the graduated territorial income tax.

As I announced in the House on May 18, 2010, a Joint Working Group (JWG) has been created to address the concerns raised and to finalize the SHB Program implementation. The JWG is composed of three regular Members and three Cabinet Ministers, including myself as Minister of Health and Social Services. In order to ensure an implementation date on or before November 1, 2010, JWG will report to Cabinet and the Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning after their meetings in June.

The JWG will use the principles of consensus government to ensure that the final program is available to all residents of the Northwest Territories. The focus of the JWG will be defining personal and employer responsibilities around uninsured health care and third party insurance, ensuring that a safety net is created for residents who accrue high health care costs, and defining catastrophic coverage.

Expanding access to SHB for those in greatest need has been the priority of the Department of Health and Social Services. I look forward to working together to advance this important issue.

Thank you for continuing to voice the concerns of your constituents and for your ongoing interest in improving this program.



Sandy Lee

c. Mr. Tim Mercer
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Mr. Kevin O'Keefe
Legislative Coordinator, Executive