



Northwest Territories Minister of Health and Social Services

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MR. ROBERT HAWKINS
MLA, YELLOWKNIFE CENTRE

Follow-Up to Oral Question 43-16 (1), Addictions Treatment Program

I am following up on Oral Question 43-16 (1) in regard to pre and post care programs for northern residents that have been referred for addiction treatment services.

As you know, over the last five years through the Mental Health and Addictions Framework for Action, there has been a significant investment in developing and staffing positions for Community Wellness Workers and Mental Health and Addictions Counselors for all of our communities. These workers and the programs and services they provide are the focus of community referral, treatment and pre and post care.

A great deal of emphasis is also placed on the clients' individual responsibility and motivation to participate in treatment and in the life-long recovery process that follows. Most treatment programs will not accept clients if they do not demonstrate a period of sobriety and express strong motivation toward recovery.

Part of the treatment process is discharge planning where the client is actively involved in and takes responsibility for decisions and planning focused on maintaining sobriety post-treatment. This involves identifying community supports and making pre-discharge contacts to prepare for return to the community. Counseling services, AA groups, supportive family and friends etc. are identified and contacted if that is the wish of the client. We consider these community supports and follow-up with community addictions staff to be the most important part of post residential treatment care. At the time of discharge from residential care the discharge plan would be sent, with the clients permission, to the Community Wellness Worker or whoever in the home community will be involved in the ongoing support of the client in recovery.


Following discharge, as part of the post treatment plan, the client is expected to take responsibility for contacting the referral source to ensure that ongoing treatment and support will be provided at the community level through the Mental Health and Addictions Counselors, Community Wellness Workers and other members of the team. These community-based workers become the primary contact for Nats' eej K'eh (NJK) or southern treatment programs, which provide them with advice on appropriate aftercare for individual clients.

NJK offers a toll-free number 1-800-661-0846 to call for aftercare advice and support. This toll-free number is available to anyone including clients who may have received their addictions treatment in the south.

Thank you for providing me with the "3-Month Follow-up" forms from Poundmaker Lodge Treatment Centre. Poundmaker Lodge is one of the facilities to which NWT residents may be referred for treatment of addiction. It is Poundmaker's practice to make follow-up calls directly to their clients, partly as a way to evaluate their programs and the outcomes of their interventions. Community staff do not consider this follow-up call to be a part of the after care program.

I encourage you to advise your constituents that there is some obligation on their part to re-establish contact with the community referral source upon their return from treatment.

I hope the information provided adequately answers your question regarding pre and post care for clients referred for treatment.



Sandy Lee

c: Mr. Tim Mercer
Clerk, Legislative Assembly

Ms. Heather Riviere
Legislative Officer, Executive