

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
9TH ASSEMBLY, 7TH SESSION**

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Stanton Yellowknife Hospital

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February 8, 1982

Mr. R. McQuarrie
M.L.A.
Government of the Northwest Territories
Box 2895
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

Dear Mr. McQuarrie:

Re: Care Facilities for Senior Citizens

Further to our telephone conversation of January 29, 1982 I wish to bring you up to date on this issue.

Approximately four years ago it was recognized by members of this community that Yellowknife lacked adequate facilities to care for its elderly. At that time proposals were made about the establishment of a Personal Care Unit. Two years ago a series of assessments were done on the senior population which affirmed the need for such a unit. Several avenues were explored by the Department of Health, Social Services, and the hospital and plans were drawn up for the conversion of one of the cluster units at Northern United Place. Approval was obtained to proceed with this project up to the ministerial level. To date no further progress has been made as no decision has been forthcoming from the Minister of Health.

Last week a meeting was held with representatives from Social Services, the hospital and the Homecare departments to reassess our present needs. Based on the information available on January 29, 1982 our needs far extend simply the provision of a Personal Care Unit. The assessment was based on the Yellowknife area only so our figures must be considered very conservative.

Assessed needs were:

Nursing Home - 6 clients

Personal Care - 12 clients

Those who would likely require the services of a personal care unit in 1-2 years - 25 clients

The Stanton Yellowknife Hospital has a 20 bed medical ward which was designed to handle acute care patients. As of January 29, 1982, 8 of the 20 beds were occupied by chronic care patients who must remain there as no other facilities are available to them.

In December of 1980 the Homecare Department of Stanton Hospital increased services to Mary Murphy Home. This was done as an interim measure until a personal care unit was established. It was felt at that time that the home was not a safe environment for several of its residents. Homemakers are now present 7 days a week to prepare breakfast and lunch for several of the residents whose stoves have been disconnected due to inability to care for themselves. Night attendants are also present to provide assistance between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. These people also receive meals on wheels each evening. When these services were increased it was hoped they would not be required for any longer than 6 months. They have now been operating over a year with no indication that further facilities are forthcoming.

It is becoming increasingly difficult for the Homecare Department to provide adequate care for these people and we wish to indicate our concern regarding this matter. It is also a concern that acute care medical beds are not available to acute care clients. The new hospital plans do provide beds for extended care but extended and chronic care are not the same thing and these facilities will not be available for several years.

I trust this information will be helpful to you in your deliberations with other government officials. This department would be most willing to work with anyone interested in providing better care facilities for the citizens of Yellowknife and area.

Yours truly,



Pat Felhaver
Homecare Co-ordinator

PF/kdh

cc: Mr. F. N. McClelland - Administrator
Mr. A. McCallum - Minister of Health

