



BY HAND

**THE HONOURABLE DENNIS PATTERSON, M.L.A.,
MINISTER OF HEALTH.**

Fort Smith Health Centre

I am astounded by your decision to refer the report by the Saskatchewan College of Physicians and Surgeons to a Board of Inquiry established until the *Medical Profession Act*.

This action is an unwarranted escalation of administrative procedure. It is not supported by the people who are served by the Fort Smith Health Centre and creates, I believe, a counterproductive loss of faith in the health care system within the Health Centre's catchment area.

I was further dismayed to learn that the Public Administrator you appointed to manage and operate the Health Centre was not directly involved in the decision to refer the matter to a Board of Inquiry. I find this absolutely incredible, given that the Administrator's Terms of Reference state that his Main Function is to "*continuously provide direction for the planning, operation and evaluation of all programs, services and related corporate activities consistent with the articles of incorporation*". One can only wonder what level of confidence you are demonstrating in your own appointee.

I believe that your decision to proceed with the Board of Inquiry serves only to cloak the matter unnecessarily in administrative secrecy and confirms the speculation and concern that has been building in Fort Smith ever since you began attempting to manage the issue which probably led to the demonstration which greeted you in Fort Smith on August 26, 1992 when you went to open the Fort Smith Personal Care Unit.

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The situation which as developed is of grave concern to myself and my constituents in Fort Smith with respect to the administration of the Fort Smith Health Centre. The situation has deteriorated to such a degree that I felt it was necessary to hold a public meeting on this issue.

There has been a tremendous amount of rumour, innuendo and misinformation circulating in Fort Smith with respect to the adequacy of health care provided to the residents of Fort Smith.

A public meeting was held in my constituency on September 3, 1992. Every constituent who attended was unequivocally clear that a Public Inquiry be conducted.

Since even the Court records have been sealed, there is no apparent mechanism in place to provide the citizens of Fort Smith with accurate information as to the state of their health care institution and to address legitimate concerns that the people of Fort Smith have with respect to the administration of health care in their community.

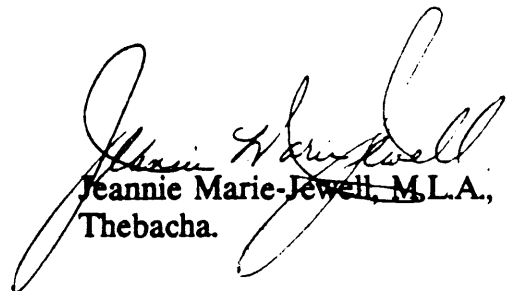
It is, no doubt, a critical issue and is an issue of great concern to the citizens of Fort Smith.

Accordingly, pursuant to section 2 of the *Public Inquiries Act*, I am requesting that a Public Inquiry be immediately struck to review the issues surrounding the administration and quality of medical services provided to residents of Fort Smith.

I recognize that a Board of Inquiry has been established, however, this whole situation can, and probably will, remain confidential which is not what my constituents want.

I strongly believe it is your responsibility, at the very least, to address the concerns of the people of Fort Smith, not the administration of your Department of Health which, to date, in my observation, you have been doing. May I remind you that you are a Minister responsible for health services to the public to be delivered by the public for the public, not to deliver health services for the Department of Health employees.

I look forward to a favourable response to my request at your earliest convenience.


Jeannie Marie-Jewell, M.L.A.,
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