



ROBERT HAWKINS

MLA, YELLOWKNIFE CENTRE

Oral Question 150-20(1): Long-Term Health Support Services

This letter is in follow up to the Oral Question you raised on February 29, 2024, regarding Long-Term Health Support Services as it relates to diabetes services. As you know, diabetes is a result of the body either not producing enough insulin or not using the insulin it produces effectively.

The most common form of diabetes is Type 2, which is largely preventable by being physically active, maintaining a healthy weight and eating a diet that contains a variety of health foods.

For diagnosis of diabetes, this is usually done through routine bloodwork. Once diagnosed, standard practice is to treat diabetes with prescription medication along with lifestyle modifications including diet and exercise. Clients are provided with teaching on topics such as foot care, home glucose monitoring and instruction about the use of self-testing (finger prick and testing strips).

Ongoing monitoring of diabetes requires a hemoglobin A1C test every three to six months to measure average blood sugar levels over the past 3 months. Results of the hemoglobin test will sometime indicate adjustment to prescribed medications to bring the average blood sugar levels to the manageable level.

Diabetes management services are available to all residents of the NWT through a variety of programs and services in the communities including:

- The **NWT Community Health Nursing Chronic Care Program** is offered in every community health centre to individuals living with diabetes.
- Residents with diabetes from all communities are followed by a physician or nurse practitioner for **medication management** and regular **disease monitoring**.

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- Targeted **Diabetes Education and Care Programs** are offered in Fort Smith, Inuvik, Hay River, and Yellowknife by teams of diabetes educators including nurses, nurse practitioners, dietitians, and physicians.

These standard practices are readily delivered in community health centres by health care providers, except for bloodwork, which is drawn at the health centre and sent to Stanton Territorial Hospital laboratory for processing.

Additional information is available on the Health and Social Services' Diabetes page at:

<https://www.hss.gov.nt.ca/sites/hss/files/resources/diabetes-rates.pdf>
<https://www.hss.gov.nt.ca/en/services/diabetes/frequently-asked-questions>

Unless there are serious complications caused by the underlying condition of diabetes, travel to regional centres is not usually necessary.

Thank you.



Les Semmler

Minister of Health and Social Services

- c. Principal Secretary
Deputy Secretary, Premier's Office
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly
Director, Legislative Affairs and House Planning, Executive and Indigenous Affairs