



8 October 2024

File No. 5758-14

The Honourable Shane Thompson, Speaker
Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories
Box 1320, 4570 - 48th Street
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2L9

By email

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Investigation into a complaint by Jennifer Patterson that Richard Edjericon, MLA for Tu Nedhé-Wiilideh breached the *Code of Conduct* by orchestrating a campaign to have her terminated from her position as Nurse in Charge of the Fort Resolution Health Centre and removed from the community

A. THE COMPLAINT

[1] I received a written complaint dated 26 July 2023 from Jennifer Patterson and her legal counsel that Richard Edjericon, MLA for Tu Nedhé-Wiilideh had, since taking office in a by-election in the Spring of 2022, orchestrated a continuous campaign of harassing the nursing staff at the health centre in Fort Resolution, and in particular had mounted a campaign based on innuendo, hearsay and rumours to have Ms. Patterson terminated from her position as Nurse in Charge and removed from the community. The complaint is attached as **Appendix A** to this report.

[2] Ms. Patterson's complaint refers to a news conference which Mr. Edjericon and others held in April 2022 alleging "incompetence from community nurses and management, a lack of patient-client professionalism, a lack of reliable staffing, and even systemic discrimination" while referring to a number of anecdotal incidents.

[3] Ms. Patterson’s complaint also refers to complaints which Mr. Edjericon, the Mayor of Fort Resolution, and the President of the Fort Resolution Métis Council made in the Fall of 2022 to Ms. Patterson’s employer, the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority, alleging unprofessional and unethical conduct by Ms. Patterson.

[4] In December 2022, the NTHSSA suspended Ms. Patterson with pay pending an external investigation into nine specific allegations.

[5] Ms. Patterson’s complaint also refers to a text message which she believes was sent by Mr. Edjericon containing confidential information about her employment status.

[6] The investigation determined that none of the allegations was substantiated. The investigators made findings about the respective credibility of Ms. Patterson and Mr. Edjericon.

[7] Ms. Patterson complains that Mr. Edjericon violated the following principles contained in the Members’ *Code of Conduct* (the “Code”):

- #3. Members must treat members of the public, one another, and staff appropriately and without harassment. Members must take all reasonable steps to ensure their work environment is free from harassment.
- #7. Members must take appropriate steps to protect the confidentiality of any personal information, personal health information, or other confidential information that comes into their possession.

B. THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

[8] Section 100(2) of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act* (the “Act”) provides that a Member or any other person may file a written complaint with the Integrity Commissioner setting out reasonable grounds for believing that a Member or former Member has contravened any provision of the conflict of interest provisions in Part 3 of the Act or the Members’ *Code*:

- 100(2) A member or other person who believes on reasonable grounds that a member or former member has contravened any provision of this Part [3 of the Act dealing with conflicts of interest] or the

Code of Conduct may file a written complaint setting out those grounds with the Integrity Commissioner.

[9] The over-arching theme of the *Code* is that Members of the Legislative Assembly must conduct themselves in a way that instills trust and confidence on the part of the public in their elected officials.

#2. Members must act lawfully and in a manner that will withstand the closest public scrutiny, upholding the integrity and honour of the Legislative Assembly and its members. Members shall ensure their conduct does not bring the integrity of their office or of the Legislative Assembly into disrepute.

[10] The *Guide* contains commentary:

Commentary

As elected representatives of the people of the Northwest Territories, Members hold a position of trust and authority. Members are expected to hold themselves to a high standard of conduct. While this expectation is largely directed at a Member's public behaviour, Members must recognize that, as elected officials, behaviour in their personal lives will also be closely scrutinized. A Member's integrity is fundamental to maintaining public confidence, both in the individual Member and in the Legislative Assembly as an institution. . . .

The role of the Integrity Commissioner

[11] Prior to amendments in 2022, section 102 of the Act essentially provided that the Integrity Commissioner was a gate-keeper deciding whether to dismiss a complaint on specified enumerated grounds or refer it to a Sole Adjudicator for a formal inquiry.

[12] The 2022 amendments increased the scope of the Integrity Commissioner's function to permit the Commissioner to (1) send a complaint to mediation, or (2) make a finding that a Member was guilty of contravening a provision of Part 3 of the Act or the *Code* and recommending a sanction to the Legislative Assembly. The amended provision retained the Integrity Commissioner's ability to dismiss a complaint on the specified enumerated grounds or refer it to a Sole Adjudicator for a formal inquiry.

[13] The current provisions are set out in **Appendix G** to this report.

C. BACKGROUND

[14] Fort Resolution is a small hamlet of approximately 412 residents located in the South Slave region. The majority of its population is of Indigenous descent.

[15] The Tu Nedhé-Wiilideh constituency includes Fort Resolution.

[16] Richard Edjericon was elected the Member of the Legislative Assembly in a by-election in February 2022. He was re-elected in the 2023 election.

[17] The health centre in Fort Resolution opened in June 2018, replacing a 44-year-old building. It houses employees working for different divisions of the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority.

[18] The health centre has a Nurse-in-Charge at all times, who is responsible for managing the employees working for the health care division. The other division, social services, is overseen by managers not physically located in Fort Resolution.

[19] The health care division includes two Community Health Nurses, Personal Support Workers, Home Care Workers, the Cook for the Elders' Home, and administrative staff. The health centre has experienced a persistent shortage of nurses, often resulting in its operating with the Nurse-in-Charge and only one Community Health Nurse.

[20] Jennifer Patterson is a registered nurse with more than 30 years' experience specializing in community health care, emergency gerontology and wound care. She previously worked in NWT communities for 11 years as a nurse and was the Nurse-in-Charge at Fort Resolution from 2018 to 2023. During some of this time she was also the Acting Regional Manager of Community Health.

[21] In April 2022, NNSL Media ran an article about residents of Fort Resolution demanding better health treatment. The article contains numerous anecdotes about health care at Fort Resolution. Mr. Edjericon is quoted in the article, and is included with the photograph of the group present at that press conference. The article is attached to this report as **Appendix B**.

[22] In a letter dated 14 October 2022 addressed “To whom this may concern”, the President of the Fort Resolution Métis Council, Arthur Beck, said the Council “supported the removal of our female Head Nurse, that “she is very rude and disrespectful to community members”, and is “racist to our people” and “doesn’t want to work together”. Mr. Beck’s letter is attached to this report as **Appendix C**.

[23] In a letter dated 18 November 2022, the Mayor of the Hamlet of Fort Resolution, P. Simon, asked Lori-Anne Danielson, the Chief Operating Officer of the Yellowknife Region of the NTHSSA “to immediately transfer Ms. Jennifer Peterson [*sic*], Nurse In-Charge out of the Fort Resolution Health Centre and community”, alleging that her conduct was “unethical and unprofessional”, and “she need’s [*sic*] to be disciplined immediately”. He stated that “we are seriously thinking of filing a complaint to the Northwest Territories Registered Nurses Association”, and showed a copy of his letter being sent to the President of the NWTRNA. He asked for the current nurse (Broderick McGee) to be appointed as the new Nurse-In-Charge, and for the resulting vacancy to be filled by a new nurse “to respect the residents of Fort Resolution, respect the Chipewyan Language and Metis Culture, and who can work with community members in their home and engage with local leadership along with participating with community members in their homes and engage with local leadership along with participating in community events.” Mr. Simon’s letter is attached to this report as **Appendix D**.

[24] In a letter dated 25 November 2025, written on Legislative Assembly stationery and entitled “Immediate Transfer of Ms. Jennifer Peterson [*sic*], Fort Resolution Health Centre Nurse in-Charge”, Mr. Edjericon wrote to Ms. Danielson to support the letters from Mr. Beck and Mr. Simon requesting Ms. Patterson’s immediate transfer and the filing of a complaint to the NWT Registered Nurses Association. Mr. Edjericon stated concern about “the allegations of racism, disrespect and lack of professional support made against Ms. Peterson”. He included a copy of the News North (NNSL Media) article stating that “many of these claims against Ms. Peterson are heart-breaking and disgusting, and no patient should ever be treated this way by a professional health care worker, who is literally responsible for life and death decisions on her patients.” He supported the appointment of Mr. Broderick McGee as the new Nurse-in-Charge. He stated that, as the MLA for Tu Nedhé-Wiilideh, he fully supported the immediate removal of Ms. Peterson [*sic*]. Mr. Edjericon’s letter is attached to this report as **Appendix E**.

[25] On 2 December 2022, the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority suspended Jennifer Patterson with pay pending an external investigation into allegations of unethical and unprofessional misconduct.

[26] Soon afterwards, despite the confidential nature of the situation, a text message was sent to members in the community (**Appendix F**):

The Fort Resolution Health Centre Head Nurse is under investigation by external investigator. The investigator will interview all staff and community members in January 2023 then he'll submit his final report.

Jennifer Peterson [*sic*] has been released from her duties effective 5:00 p.m. December 2nd 2022. There is an acting head nurse in place in the interim. Were [*sic*] hoping Brody will be the new Head Nurse in January. Then they'll back fill Brody[']s old nurse position January.

[27] The external investigators reported in February 2023 that none of the allegations against Ms. Patterson was substantiated.

[28] Ms. Patterson's suspension was ended, and she was reinstated to be Nurse-in-Charge at Fort Liard in the Dehcho Region, but went on medical leave and now resides outside NWT.

[29] Ms. Patterson made her written complaint to me on 26 July 2023.

D. MY INVESTIGATION

[30] I provided a copy of Ms. Patterson's complaint to Mr. Edjericon and asked for his response, which I received from his legal counsel, Steven Cooper, on 22 November 2023.

[31] I received a reply by Ms. Patterson's legal counsel, Austin Marshal, on 18 December 2023.

[32] There then followed a series of further submissions from counsel:

- From Mr. Cooper on 2 February 2024.
- From Mr. Marshall on 26 April 2024, which included the unredacted Workplace Investigation Report of the external investigators, which had recently become available.
- From Mr. Cooper on 1 June 2024.

- Final reply from Mr. Marshall on 9 July 2024.

In my judgment, nothing would be gained by a detailed repetition of the numerous assertions by Mr. Edjericon or Mr. Cooper on his behalf, or the detailed point-by-point refutations by Mr. Marshall. It is the bigger picture which matters.

E. Mr. EDJERICON'S POSITION

[33] Mr. Edjericon's lawyer, Steven Cooper, submitted that the complaint should be dismissed.

[34] Mr. Edjericon had heard complaints from his constituents that Ms. Patterson was dismissive of their medical complaints and exhibited disregard of the culture and sacred traditions of the residents of the constituency. The complaints which Mr. Edjericon had apparently heard about included:¹

- a. A woman entered the Health Centre complaining of extreme abdominal pain. Ms. Patterson dismissed the severity of the woman's complaints and sent her home with over-the-counter pain medication. Later that evening, the woman gave birth to her child in her bathtub. She was unaware that she was pregnant.
- b. Ms. Patterson, and her staff, would refuse to attend to the homes of residents who were not mobile and could not attend the Health Centre. Many of these residents were often elders who were near death and often died in pain because they could not receive medical services.
- c. A worker experienced a heart attack while operating heavy machinery and required a defibrillator and first aid. Ms. Patterson refused to attend on site and the worker died as a result.
- d. A local man from the community died and Ms. Patterson refused to allow the family to attend to the morgue to say their last farewell. Ms. Patterson, without regard to the dignity of the body and the grief of

1. Note: Mr. Edjericon did not have any personal knowledge of these situations. The external investigators determined that none of the allegations was substantiated.

the family, had the deceased moved outside to the parking lot to allow the family to view the body.

- e. Ms. Patterson refused to allow local foods and a menu with traditional foods in the Health Centre. The Health Centre's cook was prevented from preparing local game that the patients requested. Ms. Patterson, instituted a similar menu to major urban hospitals instead. Many of the elders receiving medical services in the Health Centre would not eat as a result.

[35] In analyzing the complaint, Mr. Cooper submitted that:

- Mr. Edjericon did not harass Ms. Patterson. He was responsible for representing his constituents, and was using his position to gather information in order to determine what could be done to improve health care delivery. Ms. Patterson was not a member, employee or constituent assistant of the Legislative Assembly, so the harassment provisions of the *Code* did not apply.
- Mr. Edjericon did not broadcast confidential information about Ms. Patterson. The fact she was under investigation was not confidential; only the process and the information disclosed to the investigators was confidential. Mr. Edjericon was informing his constituents of the investigation in order to demonstrate that their concerns were being heard and addressed. Although Ms. Patterson complains about a breach of confidentiality about her employment status, an inquiry before a Sole Adjudicator would be a public hearing.
- Mr. Edjericon denied launching a campaign to remove Ms. Patterson, and was not targeting her personally. He made the complaint to change the operations of the health centre. It was because of her position that Ms. Patterson ultimately bore the brunt of any issues that resulted because of her leadership at the health centre.
- The NNSL article did not name Ms. Patterson.
- Mr. Edjericon was not acting in his own interest, but in the interests of his constituents. Members of the community “brought their concerns to the only person in power that could effect change, Mr. Edjericon.”

- Mr. Edjericon was misunderstood to be alleging that Ms. Patterson was racist. His concern was to express that the health centre was engaging in behaviours that verge on systemic racism that the Indigenous, Metis and Inuit people of Canada continue to face.
- Because Mr. Edjericon believed there was a life and death situation for his constituents, even if there were a contravention of the *Code*, it was minor, committed through inadvertence, and was an error of judgment made in good faith.
- Mr. Edjericon was not intending to use his position to have Ms. Patterson terminated or disciplined. Instead, he was using his position to bring light to the issues at the Health Centre. As Ms. Patterson ran the day-to-day operations, she was, ultimately, the focus of investigations and complaints.
- Mr. Edjericon says that Ms. Patterson only made her complaint after she was under investigation to harm his reputation. Although the complaint was dated 26 July 2023, Mr. Edjericon believes Ms. Patterson had formed the intention to make it much earlier, to deflect attention from her.
- If Ms. Patterson believes she has been harmed without legal basis, she has other recourse, such as suing for defamation.
- The public interest would not be served by sending this matter to a public inquiry in front of a Sole Adjudicator. There is a balance to be struck between zealous advocacy and improper use of one's political position—which must always fall in favour of the former. Politicians cannot live in fear that they will be reported to the Integrity Commissioner for zealous advocacy. The Commissioner should only step in in the most egregious circumstances, to do otherwise would undermine the fragile nature of consensus government. Mr. Edjericon must be given every political tool to carry out his job.
- Mr. Edjericon takes issue with the way the external investigation was conducted, and vehemently believes its procedures and processes employed were flawed from the beginning. He does not agree with the external investigators' conclusions. Their report should be rejected as evidence of anything related to the complaint.

[36] Accordingly, Mr. Cooper submitted that Ms. Patterson's complaint should be dismissed.

E. Ms. PATTERSON'S POSITION

[37] Ms. Patterson's legal counsel, Austin Marshall, took issue with the substance and accuracy of many of the points in Mr. Cooper's letters.

[38] The essence of the complaint is that Mr. Edjericon orchestrated a sustained campaign of inappropriate conduct and harassment and accusations of racism against Ms. Patterson based on a lack of information, misinformation, and untruths. He called her a killer. He called her an incompetent and uncaring nurse. He described her as disgusting. In addition, he violated Ms. Patterson's right to privacy of her employment information.

[39] The external investigators found that none of the allegations about Ms. Patterson was substantiated.

[40] The report of the external investigators is relevant and can be considered because it is the final step in the process initiated by Mr. Edjericon's complaint to Ms. Patterson's employer. The external investigators interviewed Mr. Edjericon and a number of witnesses identified by him. While the report may not be proof of the findings of the investigators, it juxtaposes the findings of the external investigators against the unsubstantiated and inaccurate statements made by Mr. Edjericon about Ms. Patterson. The matter should be sent to an inquiry by a Sole Adjudicator where Mr. Edjericon would be called and cross-examined as a witness, along with the persons interviewed by the external investigators (and perhaps the external investigators too).

[41] It is clear Mr. Edjericon did not understand the operations of the health centre. He had never visited it. He never met with Ms. Patterson (who had never been previously complained about during her four years at Fort Resolution). He had never contacted senior management about health care services in the community. His letter did not ask for an investigation into the health centre's operations, but explicitly demanded Ms. Patterson be transferred out and explicitly named the person he wanted to replace her. It was apparent that Mr. Edjericon did not understand the importance of fully understanding a situation and limiting his comments to actual fact before purporting to speak on behalf of (some of) his constituents.

[42] Mr. Edjericon took no steps to verify the allegations about Ms. Patterson's health care of patients—he simply incorrectly assumed they were true, and her personal fault.

[43] In the unredacted version of the external investigators' report:

- The external investigators provided a different picture of the health care that was available to the residents of the community. They recognized the professionalism of Ms. Patterson, and noted the verbal abuse and aggressive behaviour staff were subjected to by patients on a regular basis (including death threats). They concluded that community members did not—and perhaps never would—understand the Authority's policies regarding the triage process, home visits, emergency transport to the health centre, medevacs, medical escorts, and after-hours calls, for example.
- They had evidence that the President of the Métis Council and the Mayor of the Hamlet did not write their letters; Mr. Edjericon did, falsely orchestrating a scenario of community leadership wanting something done about Ms. Patterson.
- The external investigators found Ms. Patterson to be a credible and reliable witness:

Patterson was understandably defensive during her interviews, but she was open and forthright with information. She demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the policies and procedures in the workplace. Patterson provided detailed recollections of specific incidents involving patients and staff members, and she indicated when she could not recall details as readily. We find that her testimony is largely corroborated by other witnesses. Overall, we find Patterson to be a credible and reliable witness.

- By contrast, the external investigators stated the following about Mr. Edjericon's credibility and reliability:

We find that Edjericon was not forthcoming with the investigators. He evaded questions and attempted to provide answers that fit a certain narrative about the quality of healthcare provided to small communities in the Northwest

Territories rather than being responsive to the Allegations. Edjericon further challenged the impartiality of the investigation early on and explicitly stated his intention to challenge the results of the investigation. (Edjericon later alleged to Danielson that the investigators were racist.)

We find that Edjericon was genuine in his concern for the community, but that he had very limited direct knowledge of specific incidents involving Paterson. He expressed to the investigators that whether she was directly responsible or not, she should bear the blame as the NIC.

Finally we find that Edjericon was not credible in his denial of any involvement in the text message circulated in the community after Patterson left the community.... He also denied saying that his plan was to get Patterson fired. Other credible witnesses told us that Edjericon sent the text and made that comment. When confronted with these questions, Edjericon's open demeanour suddenly became closed off and his answers became curt and vague.

Overall, we do not consider Edjericon to be a credible or reliable witness.

- The external investigators investigated all of the allegations about Ms. Patterson, and found that none of them was substantiated:

No.	Allegation	Assessment
1.	Patterson was being racist towards the people living in the community of Fort Resolution who seek healthcare services.	Unsubstantiated
2.	Patterson was not engaged or willing to work with community members or local leadership.	Unsubstantiated
3.	Patterson was working in isolation.	Unsubstantiated
4.	Patterson was refusing to see community members or sending them home undiagnosed with medication, such as Tylenol.	Unsubstantiated

No.	Allegation	Assessment
5.	Patterson was deliberately cancelling appointments or denying medical travel assistance.	Unsubstantiated
6.	Patterson was putting community members at risk.	Unsubstantiated
7.	Patterson was being rude and disrespectful towards employees within the Health Centre.	Unsubstantiated
8.	Patterson was being rude and disrespectful towards other members of the health care team, community, and public.	Unsubstantiated
9.	Patterson was belittling and condescending towards Elders and family members in the community.	Unsubstantiated

- Mr. Edjericon supported the threat to file a professional conduct complaint about Ms. Patterson with the Northwest Territories Registered Nurses Association. No such complaint was ever made.
- Members of the community were so aggressive to the staff at the health centre that Ms. Patterson needed RCMP assistance to be able to get her belongings and move out of the community. One of the participants at the NNSL press conference threatened Ms. Patterson with physical harm; charges were laid; a peace bond ultimately resulted.

[44] Mr. Edjericon’s actions do not bear close public scrutiny and do not uphold the integrity and honour of his office and the Legislative Assembly.

[45] The matter should be sent to an inquiry before a Sole Adjudicator.

E. DECISION

[46] The work of a Member of the Legislative Assembly is very important. In addition to participating in the legislative process in the Assembly, Members also represent the interests of constituents in their dealings with governmental entities.

[47] Given the important and prominent role of Members in our society, it is essential that Members maintain the highest standards of conduct—both in their official dealings and in their personal lives—in order to maintain public confidence in each of them and in the

Assembly as a whole. To this end, the Legislative Assembly enacted the *Code of Conduct* for MLAs.

[48] The Introduction to the *Code* articulates the expectation of appropriate conduct by MLAs:

As a Member of the Legislative Assembly, you serve the residents of the Northwest Territories. You pass laws that apply to them. You shape government policies and programs they use. In exchange, residents expect, and will hold you to, a higher standard when it comes to how you act.... Your conduct as a Member reflects on all other Members. It also reflects on the Legislative Assembly....

When residents have a negative view of how Members act, it can mean they have a negative view on the Assembly itself. This weakens the work you do as a Member of the Assembly.

[49] Principle 2 of the *Code* states:

2. Members must act lawfully and in a manner that will withstand the closest public scrutiny, upholding the integrity and honour of the Legislative Assembly and its Members. Members shall ensure that their conduct does not bring the integrity of their office or of the Legislative Assembly into disrepute.

[50] By enacting Part 3 of the *Legislative Assembly Act and Executive Council Act*, the Assembly provided a mechanism for the Integrity Commissioner to investigate complaints on its behalf about perceived breaches of the *Code*, and (if appropriate) to make recommendations to the Assembly about sanctions which the Assembly could impose in exercising its disciplinary authority with respect to Members.

[51] As Mr. Edjericon's counsel rightly observes, there is a balance to be struck between the need for a Member to be an effective advocate for their constituents (on the one hand) and doing so in a way that does not breach the *Code of Conduct*.

[52] Being sensitive to this balance, I am nevertheless of the view that Mr. Edjericon's actions in this matter were not acceptable and do not stand up to the closest public scrutiny for the following reasons.

[53] I am satisfied on the balance of probabilities that there was a campaign to have Ms. Patterson removed from her position and from the community, and that Mr. Edjericon was the prime mover.

- It is not credible for Mr. Edjericon to assert that the NNSL article was not aimed at Ms. Patterson. Although Mr. Cooper makes the point that Ms. Patterson was not explicitly named in the article, Mr. Edjericon in his letter dated 25 November 2022 to NHSSA states that “I include a News North (NNSL) newspaper article, where a lot of these allegations are made against Ms. Peterson [*sic*] from community members.” As Mr. Edjericon states, it was because of her position that Ms. Patterson ultimately bore the brunt of any issues that resulted from her leadership at the health centre.
- It is not credible that Mr. Edjericon had no hand in the complaint letter dated 18 November 2022 from the Mayor. Both the Mayor’s letter and Mr. Edjericon’s letter dated 25 November 2022 (and the subsequent text message) incorrectly refer to Ms. Patterson as Ms. *Peterson*. Both letters threaten to make a complaint to the NWT Registered Nurses Association. Both letters (and the subsequent text message) advocate making Broderick McGee as the replacement Nurse-in-Charge. The similarities in the letters makes it unlikely that they were written independently. This is consistent with the statement in the report of the external investigators that Mayor Simon denied writing his letter, that Mr. Edjericon wrote it, and he was just signing what was presented to him.
- Contrary to the assertion that Mr. Edjericon was just attempting to bring concerns by some members of the community to the attention of the NTHSSA, Mr. Edjericon’s letter dated 25 November 2022 went much further. The subject line of the letter is “Re: Immediate Transfer of Ms. Jennifer Peterson [*sic*], Fort Resolution Health Centre Nurse in-Charge”. And the second last paragraph of the letter states his “full support to remove Ms. Peterson [*sic*] immediately from her role as Head Nurse of the Fort Resolution Health Centre.”

Objectively, one must conclude that Mr. Edjericon had an agenda to remove Ms. Patterson.

[54] Secondly, Mr. Edjericon’s failure to take steps to verify the accuracy of the concerns he had heard about lacks integrity. Contrary to the suggestion by his legal counsel, Mr. Edjericon was not simply conveying concerns to the NTHSSA. His letter dated

25 November 2022 gives the clear impression that the allegations were true, that Mr. Edjericon believed the allegations to be true, and that Ms. Patterson was the professional health care worker involved. In my view, a Member needs to be very careful to verify allegations being made by a constituent against someone—particularly a professional person, whose livelihood depends upon their reputation. A Member blindly or willfully repeating unsubstantiated allegations (particularly on Legislative Assembly stationery) undermines the Member’s integrity and credibility, as well as that of the Assembly as a whole.

[55] Thirdly, Principle 3 of the *Code* requires Members to treat members **of the public** appropriately and without harassment. Principle 3 is not limited to ensuring that staff and other Members in the work place are free from harassment—it requires Member to treat everyone, including members of the public, appropriately and without harassment. In my view, Mr. Edjericon’s actions and conduct to have Ms. Patterson removed as the Nurse-in-Charge at the health centre were inappropriate and constituted harassment.

[56] Mr. Edjericon’s veiled accusations about racism were also inappropriate. While he says he was referring to issues of systemic racism, his letter of 25 November 2022 refers to “allegations of racism ... made against Ms. Peterson in her role as Nurse-in-Charge”. One of those allegations was contained in the Mayor’s letter dated 18 November 2022—which Mr. Edjericon refers to in his letter—that states “she is a racist head nurse”. Another allegation is contained in the letter from Arthur Beck, President of the Fort Resolution Métis Council—which Mr. Edjericon also refers to in his letter—“S]he is racist to our people.” None of these relates to issues of systemic racism. Calling someone a racist is a very strong and hurtful allegation. It is inappropriate for a Member to make such an allegation where there is no evidence to substantiate such a claim. In my view, doing so breaches Principle 3 of the *Code*.

[57] In addition, in his letter to Ms. Patterson’s employer, Mr. Edjericon referred to making a professional conduct complaint against Ms. Patterson with her professional regulatory body, the Northwest Territories Registered Nurses Association. Making such a threat was an entirely inappropriate lever to achieve Mr. Edjericon’s goal of getting rid of Ms. Patterson. If a lawyer had made such a threat (regardless of whether the threat was actually carried out), the lawyer would have been subject to discipline under the legal profession’s Code of Conduct.

[58] Fourthly, Principle 7 in the *Code* states:

7. Members must take appropriate steps to protect the confidentiality of any personal information, personal health information, or other confidential information that comes into their possession.

[59] It was inappropriate for Mr. Edjericon to send the text message to the community about Ms. Patterson’s suspension. The communication from Ms. Danielson to Mr. Edjericon about action being taken as a result of his complaint was explicitly stated to be confidential. It is splitting hairs to suggest that it was only the content of the investigation that was to be confidential, not the fact of the investigation, nor the fact that Ms. Patterson had been suspended pending the outcome of the investigation. And it was not Mr. Edjericon’s role to speculate about Brody becoming the new Head Nurse in January. Both of these indicate to me that he “had skin in the game”, was not a mere conduit of constituents’ concerns, and was not prepared to let the investigation into his complaint unfold in due and proper course. As a result, in my view Mr. Edjericon did not comply with the spirit of Principle 7. The breach of confidentiality by a member affects the public’s view of the Member’s reliability and trustworthiness, and this affects the integrity of both the particular member and all Members.

[60] There is no evidence to support Mr. Edjericon’s counsel’s submission that Ms. Patterson made her complaint for the purpose of diverting attention from her situation. This does not accord with the time line involved. Her complaint is dated 26 July 2023—long after the NNSL article from April 2022, the letters to NTHSS in October and November 2022, and the issuance of the investigation report in February 2023. There is no evidence whatever to support Mr. Edjericon’s counsel’s suggestion that Ms. Patterson had formed the intention to complain much earlier for the purpose of diverting attention from her situation to focus on Mr. Edjericon. If she had wished to do that, she would have made the complaint right after being suspended with pay, while the investigation was ongoing. Mr. Cooper’s suggestion does not have the air of reality.

[61] Mr. Edjericon’s counsel submits a smorgasbord of reasons for dismissing the complaint—referring to virtually all of the possible grounds for dismissing a complaint which are enumerated in section 102(2)(a) of the Act. In my view, however, the complaint cannot be characterized as being frivolous or vexatious, or not made in good faith. The complaint discloses contraventions of the *Code*, which were not minor. Mr. Edjericon’s actions were deliberate; his allegations were made without verification or regard to the truth, and were clearly aimed at having Ms. Patterson removed from her position. There is no evidence of any measures which Mr. Edjericon took to prevent a contravention of the *Code*. There is no merit in the suggestion that the complaint should be dismissed because Ms. Patterson could have sued if she felt harmed by Mr. Edjericon’s actions—the possible availability of other remedies does not prevent a complaint under the *Code*, and is not a

reason for dismissing it. Accordingly, it would not be appropriate to dismiss Ms. Patterson's complaint on any of these bases.

[62] Prior to the 2022 amendments, I would have been required to send a matter such as this to a Sole Adjudicator. However, as a result of the 2022 amendments, section 102(2)(c) of the Act (as amended) allows the Integrity Commissioner to a Member guilty of contravening a provision of the Act or the *Code of Conduct*, and to recommend that the Legislative Assembly impose one or more of the penalties listed in section 106(1)(b) of the Act, while retaining the discretion to send a particular matter to an inquiry before a Sole Adjudicator.

[63] In my view, it is not necessary to send this matter to an inquiry before a Sole Adjudicator. A further inquiry is not required to discover further facts beyond my investigation, and would be expensive and lengthy. In my view, this is an appropriate and proportionate case for me to report to the Assembly about the contraventions of the *Code* and to make recommendations about penalty.

[64] Section 106(1)(b) of the Act lists the following possible penalties:

- (i) a reprimand,
- (ii) a fine in an amount not exceeding \$25,000,
- (iii) an order requiring the member to make restitution ... to the Government of the Northwest Territories or to a public agency of the Government ... of any gain realized by the member or his or her spouse or dependent child by participating in a transaction in contravention of a provision of this Part,
- (iv) an order requiring the member to pay compensation to any person for a loss suffered by that person as a result of the participation of the member or his or her spouse or dependent child in a transaction in contravention of a provision of this Part,
- (v) a suspension for a period not exceeding 30 sitting days of the privileges of the member to sit in the Legislative Assembly,
- (vi) a declaration that the seat of the member is vacant,

(vii) an order that the member pay costs

[65] I recommend that the Legislative Assembly reprimand Mr. Edjericon and require him to pay a fine in the amount of \$2,500.00.

[66] My reasons for making this recommendation are: (a) the fact that Mr. Edjericon undoubtedly (but wrongly) believed that he had authority as a Member to make the allegations and take the actions which he did, with a view to harming Ms. Patterson; (b) however, this is not a case in which it would proportionate to suspend Mr. Edjericon or vacate his seat; but (c) something more than a reprimand is required, given the intentional nature of Mr. Edjericon's actions and allegations; (d) \$2,500, while at the lower end of the range contained in the Act, is large enough to be meaningful.

[67] As this case does not involve a financial transaction, no order requiring restitution or compensation would be appropriate.

[68] The lesson to be taken from this unfortunate situation is that there are limits on what a Member may do, and how they may go about what they do. Being a Member is not *carte blanche* to make or repeat unverified and unfounded allegations. Members have an obligation to inform themselves about the facts. It is inappropriate for a Member to orchestrate a campaign for an employee of a public body to be transferred, suspended or terminated.

All of which is respectfully submitted by:



David Phillip Jones, K.C.
NWT Integrity Commissioner

cc: Mr. Glen Rutland, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly to glen_rutland@ntassembly.ca
Mr. Austin Marshall by email to amarshall@marshallyk.com
Mr. Steven L. Cooper, K.C. by email to steve@cooperregel.ca

MARSHALL LAW
BARRISTER & SOLICITOR

AUSTIN F. MARSHALL
(ALSO OF THE ONTARIO BAR)

TELEPHONE: (867) 873-4969
FACSIMILE: (867) 873-6567

MAILING ADDRESS:
BOX 1236, YELLOWKNIFE, NT X1A 2N9

STREET ADDRESS:
SUITE 203, 5204 - 50TH AVENUE, YELLOWKNIFE, NT
(web: www.marshallyk.com)

July 30, 2023

BY E-MAIL

GNWT Integrity Commissioner
300 Noble Building
8540 - 109 Street NW
Edmonton, AB T6G 1E6

Attention: David Phillip Jones, K.C.

Dear Sir:

Re: Integrity Complaint against MLA Richard Edjericon
Our File: 3908

We are solicitors for Jennifer Patterson.

Our client wishes to file a complaint against MA Richard Edjericon. Our client alleges that MLA Edjericon violated the Members Code of Conduct and harmed her by doing so. A copy of our client's complaint is enclosed.

You will note that the complaint refers to a number of statements made by third parties. Our client has not named them out of concern for any retaliation they may suffer if their names are disclosed. Our client is agreeable to providing the names to you if you need them for purposes of your investigation.

Our client indicates in the complaint that she is in possession of a redacted copy of the workplace investigation report her employer commissioned in its investigation of the complaints made against her. Our client obtained her copy in response to her ATIPP request for the document. The redactions limit the information provided to our client. There will likely be statements and names of witnesses in the unredacted report relative to the matters our client recounts in her complaint.

The report does conclude that all of the 9 allegations against our client are unsubstantiated. The investigators make findings on the credibility of our client and the witnesses they interviewed. They found our client to be a credible and reliable witness. Transcripts of the interviews are included in the report.

If you wish to see the report, our client is agreeable to this. We would just want to confirm with the employer that we are providing it to you for purposes of your investigation.

If you require any further information from our client, she will be pleased to provide it to you.

We will look forward to hearing from you.

Yours very truly,

MARSHALL LAW

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Austin Marshall". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

AUSTIN F. MARSHALL

AFM/
enclosure

c. Client

Jennifer Patterson

[Contact information deleted]

26 July 2023

David Jones
Integrity Commissioner
NWT

Dear Mr. Jones:

RE: Complaint against MLA Richard Edjericon

I am writing this letter as a member of the public and a constituent of Tu Nedhe-Wiliideh MLA Edjericon. It is my position that MLA Edjericon has violated the following principles of the MLA's Code of Conduct:

#3: Members must treat members of the public, one another, and staff appropriately and without harassment. Members must take all reasonable steps to ensure their work environment is free from harassment.

#7: Members must take appropriate steps to protect the confidentiality of any personal information, personal health information, or other confidential information that comes into their possession.

Since MLA Edjericon took office in the spring of 2022, he has waged a continuous campaign of harassment of the nursing staff at the health centre in Fort Resolution, with a particular focus on me.

Shortly after he was sworn in, I was advised by multiple community members, that MLA Edjericon had publicly stated at many meetings that he was looking for complaints from community members that would help him "get rid of me" as he felt that I was "racist" and "killing the people of Fort Resolution." He brought in reporters and sent out word for community members to bring their stories to him. He then had the stories published in NNSL and was quoted making disparaging and derogatory comments about the nursing staff. He also made incorrect and misleading remarks about the services provided at the health centre. As a result of this story, the nursing staff, including myself, were subjected to increased abuse from community members when providing care. We were threatened with "the MLA is going to get you fired" or "if you don't see me now, I will call the MLA and you will be out of a job." We also had community members repeating the comments made by the MLA in the news article, specifically that we were "incompetent" and "didn't take our jobs seriously." We had potential nursing hires pull out after doing an internet search on the community and reading the article. Senior management was informed about these incidents and reports were completed, per the GNWT incident reporting system.

After the NNSL article came out, I was advised by our senior management that they had reached out to MLA Edjericon and invited him to come and tour the health centre and meet with myself and the other nursing staff. Senior management advised that MLA Edjericon declined this invitation. To date, MLA

Edjericon has not had any direct interaction or communication with me. He has not brought forward to senior management, a single complaint containing a specific scenario or situation, which would indicate racism or incompetence. He has not provided any evidence to substantiate his claim that I am “killing people.”

Over the summer and into the fall of 2022, MLA Edjericon continued his campaign of actively pursuing complaints about me and the nursing staff. I was advised that he had enlisted the assistance of a particular community member, who represents him in Fort Resolution, and whose wife happens to work at the health centre and is a direct report to my position. I was advised that they were “determined to get rid of me” and were now encouraging staff (from the same family) to come forward with complaints. I was advised by a community member that they had a plan to bring the Mayor of the Hamlet and Fort Resolution Metis Association on board with this complaint and that they wanted me replaced with a “male” nurse.

As a result of this collusion between the MLA, Mayor, and Fort Resolution Metis President, I was placed on administrative leave from my employment in early December 2022, pending investigation for allegations of misconduct under the Public Services Act. The complaint included vague allegations of “racism,” “incompetence,” and “unprofessionalism.” No specific details of any incidents related to these allegations were provided. I was advised by my employer that this process was completely confidential and was not to be shared with anyone. However, by 5pm, on December 2nd (the day I was notified), a group text message from MLA Edjericon was sent out to the community, stating that I had been “relieved of my duties” and that an investigation would be done in January 2023 and community members would have the opportunity to speak to an investigator and tell their stories. The message also included his plan to replace me with a specific male nurse and his plan to “backfill” this nurse’s position. Within hours, I was receiving messages from community members confirming receipt of this text message. MLA Edjericon deliberately spread my personal information, which included the false statement about my employment status and about his role in the hiring of NTHSSA staff. He also deliberately provided confidential details about the investigation process. In my interview with the investigators in January 2023, they advised me that each witness interviewed confirmed that they had received the text message from MLA Edjericon.

The NTHSSA denies that the MLA was provided with any information, yet the text message he sent contains details and language that would only be known from an inside source. I am pursuing all available avenues to determine where he received this information and what direction was provided with it.

As a result of MLA Edjericon sharing my personal information with the community members, I was forced to leave my home in the community and find alternate accommodations while this matter is investigated. This has significantly impacted my physical, mental, and financial well being. I was unable to attend health care appointments as scheduled in the NWT and I was forced to try to find alternate providers out of territory to address my health care needs. I was also forced to secure alternate accommodations outside Fort Resolution.

Two weeks after being notified regarding the allegations, I was contacted by the investigators hired by the NTHSSA to conduct the investigation. They provided me with three letters that had been received: one from the Mayor of Fort Resolution, Patrick Simon, one from the Fort Resolution Metis President, Arthur Beck and one from MLA Edjericon. In the letters from the Mayor and MLA, I am referred to as

“Jennifer Peterson” and in the letter from the Fort Resolution Metis President, I am referred to as “the female head nurse.”

Review of the letters indicated vague allegations only without any specific details or examples of these allegations. The letters stated that I was “racist” and “killing people.” In the letter from the MLA, he indicates that he wrote his letter “after careful review of both letters,” referring to the letters from the Mayor and the Metis President. He went on to comment about the article from the NNSL and stated that “a lot of these allegations are made against Ms. Peterson from community members.” This is false and was confirmed by the investigators during my interview a few weeks later as the nurses who were involved in the NNSL article situations, had confirmed their role as the nurse providing care. In the letter from the mayor, it outlines a specific patient scenario and states that I was the nurse caring for this patient. Again, this was false, and the nurse involved confirmed this to the investigators.

During my interview with the investigators, I was advised that the Mayor of Fort Resolution, Patrick Simon, admitted that he had not written the letter submitted in complaint, but that MLA Edjericon had written the letter and provided it to him to submit on his letterhead and with his signature. This is outrageous and fraudulent behavior on the part of an elected representative. Given this context, the MLA’s letter, in which he states that he is writing after “careful review” of the Mayor and Metis letters, is a blatant lie. This was a deliberate action from MLA Edjericon, to ensure that his complaint would be received in the manner he intended and that his desired outcome, my removal from my position, would be met. When I was able to obtain a redacted copy of the investigator’s report through ATIPP in April 2023, I noted that in the report the MLA admitted to the investigators that he wrote both the letter from the mayor and the letter from the FRES Metis Association. This is even further evidence of his determination to get his way regarding my removal from the community.

After my interview with the investigators in early January 2023, I was advised that they would be wrapping up the investigation shortly. However, two weeks later, the investigator confirmed to myself and my union representative, that when the MLA was made aware that the investigation was not going his way, he provided a list of additional witnesses to the COO of the region and demanded that they be interviewed as part of the investigation. The COO then directed the investigators to interview these additional witnesses. This was a deliberate attempt by MLA Edjericon to influence the outcome of this investigation. I was interviewed again as a follow up, after these additional witnesses, at the end of January 2023. During this interview, I was advised that a witness brought forward by MLA Edjericon had made threats of physical violence and harm against me should I return to the community. As a result of these threats, it became clear that I would not be able to return to my home or my job. This necessitated my immediate move from the community for my own safety. In order to do this, I had to arrange an RCMP escort in and out of the community to collect my personal belongings. This was terrifying and incredibly stressful. I filed a complaint with the RCMP regarding these threats and court action is pending.

MLA Edjericon’s deliberate spreading of misinformation and a false narrative about my role in certain community health matters, resulted in a campaign of hate towards me that resulted in threats of physical violence. The investigators concluded that all of the allegations made were unsubstantiated and that I was in fact, just following the GNWT policy and any issues with these policy matters should have been addressed to senior management. They also concluded that I was not safe to return to my job and home there.

If MLA Edjericon's desired goal was to improve healthcare services to his constituents, he had many avenues available to him. However, he did not make any attempts to meet with senior management, or with health centre staff, and did not respond to invitations to have discussion and dialogue about his concerns and to work together to find solutions. Instead, his sole focus was on the removal of a specific nurse, with whom he had no personal interactions or had any firsthand knowledge. And as a result of his actions against me, the health centre was left short staffed through the holiday season, which had a ripple effect on staffing at other health centres. Ultimately, patient care in multiple communities was placed at risk due to his determination to have me removed from my position.


Under the Public Service Act, an employee can only be suspended for 60 days, and an investigation must be completed within this time. Due to MLA Edjericon's demands that his additional witnesses be interviewed, the investigation took 78 days to be completed. This was a significant delay, well beyond the clear requirements of the Act.

MLA Edjericon's actions have had, and continue to have, a significant negative impact on me. The stress of his attack on me exacerbated a previously sustained workplace injury and I have not yet been medically able to return to work. My return to work remains unknown at this time, as I continue to receive treatment. The financial implications of the suspension and loss of income are also negatively impacting me, as well as the additional costs of finding alternate accommodations at short notice, and costs for medical treatment. Because of MLA Edjericon's public sharing of my personal information, I have received reports of misinformation being passed on from every region in the NWT. These reports include misinformation regarding the PSA investigation, my alleged actions as a nurse, and my employment status. As someone who has dedicated her whole career to providing professional, competent, and compassionate care, having my reputation smeared in this manner, is simply devastating. These rumors could impact my ability to practice once I am medically able to return to work. I remain fearful and wary of returning to work, due to the threats against me and the ongoing misinformation narrative. I had to request accommodation in another community for when I'm able to return to work, for my own safety. I do not know if this will be sufficient for me to feel safe at work, given the actions and clear influence of MLA Edjericon.

As a member of the public and the community, I am requesting that MLA Edjericon be investigated for violation of the MLA's Code of Conduct, specifically #3 and #7, for his sustained campaign of harassment, confirmed fraudulent action with regards to the falsified letters, his misrepresentation of himself as an employee representative for the GNWT, his blatant attempts to influence a 3rd party investigation, the resulting threats of physical violence and for his breach of my confidential information and privacy.

Thank you for your review of my complaint.

Respectfully,

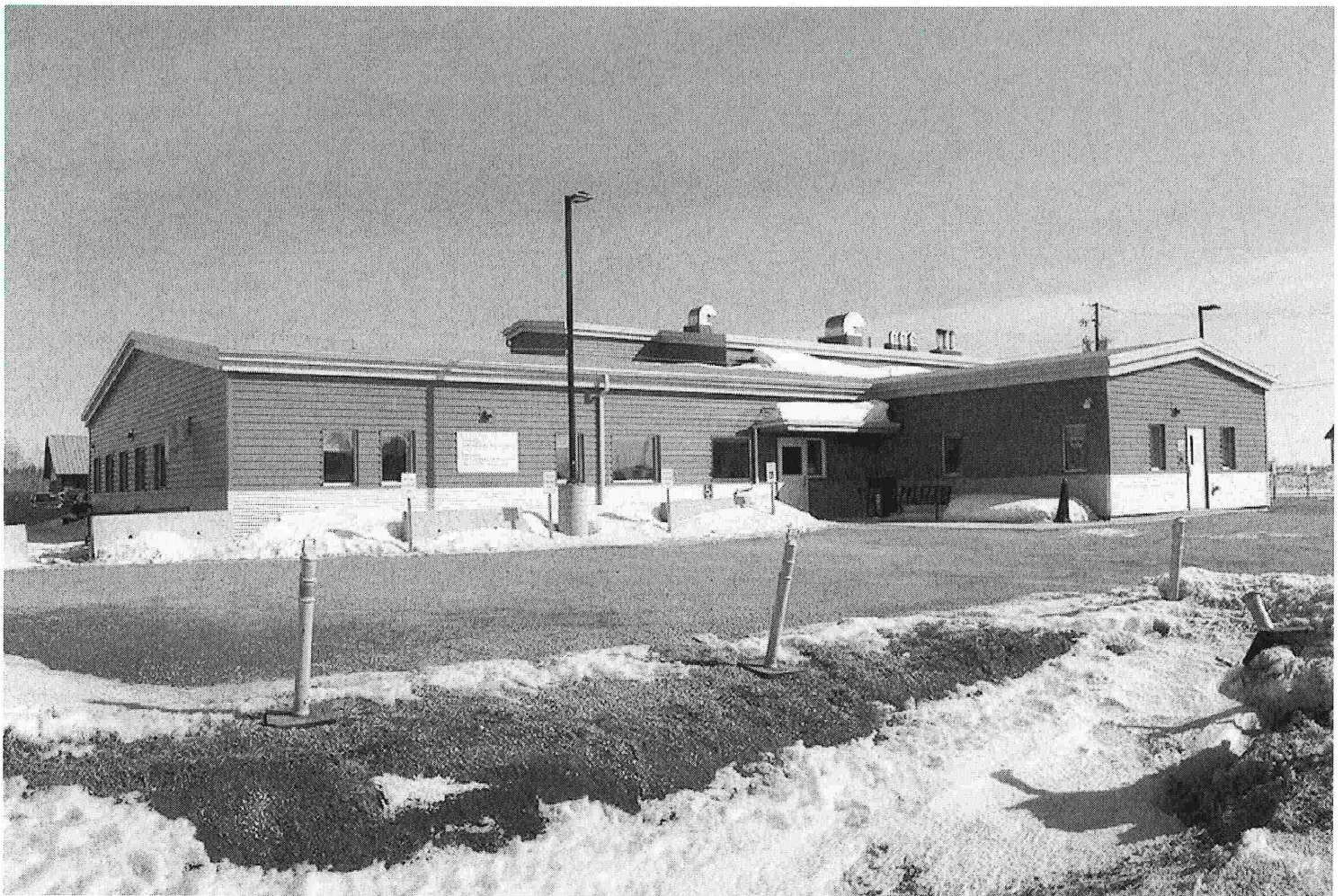


Jennifer Patterson

NNSL

Fort Resolution residents demand better health treatment

Simon Whitehouse
Apr 27, 2022 1:30 AM



The Deninu Kue Health Centre was built in Fort Resolution in 2018 for nearly \$20 million. Some residents are complaining they're getting inadequate treatment from medical workers in the community. Simon Whitehouse/NNSL photo

This is the first instalment in a two-part series. Some Fort Resolution residents are calling for better first-response treatment and a shakeup of nursing management at the Deninu Kúé Health and Social Services Centre.

Trudy King, Dollie Simon, Lucy Fabien, and Ramona Fordy, who all live in the South Slave community, say that the local health centre – built in 2018 – has had an array of problems largely because community nurses do not provide emergency response.

They allege incompetence from community nurses and management, a lack of patient-client professionalism, a lack of reliable staffing and even systemic discrimination. Commonly, they say they feel helpless when trying to voice their

complaints.

King, who was born and raised in Fort Resolution, said she has had more than one serious health scare within the last year which she feels was not responded to with the urgency required.

One day last August, someone close to their family was suffering from cramps and visited the health centre. Upon arriving, she said the young woman, who has asked not to be named, was given an Aspirin and told to go home.

After she got home, the young woman unexpectedly delivered a baby girl, not knowing she was pregnant.

"She had a baby and thank God, I watch TV," King recalled. "I scooped the baby up and I called out to... get me a clean towel. I wrapped the baby up in the towel.

"I took off to the health centre... but the problem was that the health centre would not send anybody to the house."

In a separate incident, her son Jonathan experienced extreme pain in his midsection one day this past January. He went to the health centre and after being seen, he spent the next five hours yelling in pain.

"I asked the nurse on the phone why is she holding him there for nothing when he's in a lot of pain, and while I'm talking to her on the phone, I could hear him yelling, 'Mom, help me,'" King recalled.

She said the nurse eventually asked her to take her son to Hay River in her truck, but the vehicle was not roadworthy to make the two-plus hour trip.

She successfully advocated for the health centre to send a taxi to transport him to Hay River for treatment, she added.

"They did a scan on him and from Hay River medevaced him at three o'clock in the morning to Yellowknife to find out that he had a hole in his intestine," said King. "He's very lucky to be alive."

Billed for baby's travel

Simon's concern relates to medical travel as she said her family was charged for her grandson's medevac flight to Edmonton.

"My grandson was born two years ago and he had complications – breathing problems – in Yellowknife and so he was medevaced to Edmonton," she explained. "Mom couldn't go and another baby was on the same flight. Mom went

the next day.

“My concern is that although he was really well taken care of, he keeps getting a medevac bill for \$4,500, on his name — a newborn baby.

“I told (my daughter) not to pay it and he keeps getting billed.”

Fabien, who’s undergoing treatment for lung cancer, has to get regular bloodwork for her chemotherapy at the health centre. She said she has been kept waiting in the past when nurses were on duty and could have assisted her. There are also problems with staff laughing and gossiping, which doesn’t feel welcome, she added.

“I go there every week for eight weeks for bloodwork and then I have to take two weeks off,” she explained. “A couple months ago, we went there for my bloodwork and they cancelled because they had an emergency. They said they couldn’t take my blood when there were three nurses there and the process only takes five minutes.”

She said she was forced, at her own expense, to get the treatment she needed by travelling to Hay River.

Richard Edjericon, MLA for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh, said the amount of health-related stories he has been hearing since he won the byelection in January has been overwhelming at times.

He believes there is a different level of treatment that his constituents receive compared to what people get in larger centres.

“They did build a \$20-million facility (in Fort Resolution in 2018) but the services they’re providing are not the same as the services in Yellowknife,” Edjericon said. “The (health staff) that are here (in Fort Resolution) don’t take their job seriously.”

Edjericon said he believes that there needs to be a better connection between health centre staff and local residents.

Multiple people in the community told NNSL Media that a major source of frustration is a 2019 policy that prevents community health nurses from leaving the health centre to provide home emergency services.

Laney Beaulieu, a medical school student from Fort Resolution, told CBC last year that there’s a lack of emergency responders, other than health nurses.

She said recently that the problem persists.

"I think there's a big problem with high turnover and the no house-call policy has been very damaging for the nurse-patient relationship due to the contribution it has had to deaths in the community," Beaulieu said.

NTHSSA

NWT Health and Social Services Authority spokesperson David Maguire stated that the health authority aims to provide equal health service among all 14 communities, including Fort Resolution, and that there are formal avenues to complain when people don't feel they get the service they deserve.

"Health centre staff provide home visits for anyone who requires homecare (Elders, people with disabilities), (and) they also complete home visits for well-child appointments for newborns," Maguire said. "Provision of first response, such as responding to emergencies outside the health centre, is outside of nursing scope of practice and skillset."

He added that community governments often do provide ground ambulance on a full-time or part-time basis, and that the service is supported by the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs.

In regards to medevacs, air ambulance fees are invoiced to patients who do not have active NWT health care coverage, according to Maguire.

When a client has access to third-party insurance or employer benefit, the cost of emergency transportation services may be invoiced to them to coordinate payment through their insurance or benefit provider, he stated. The NTHSSA provides a letter to clients explaining the process as well as a contact phone to call if they have questions, Maguire added.

Success is all in your mind

NNSL Media

Hay River man charged after 'altercation' with knife

NNSL Media

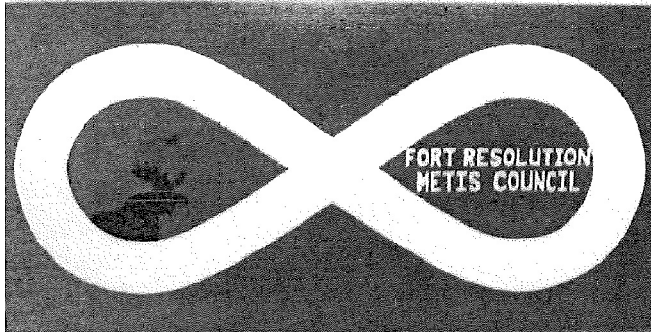
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Fort Resolution Metis Council

P.O. Box 137
Fort Resolution, NT X0E 0M0
Phone 867-394-4151
Fax (867) 394-3322
E-Mail: frmc@northwestel.net

October 14, 2022

Re: Letter of Support

To whom this may concern:

Writing this letter of support on behalf of our Fort Resolution Métis Council for the removal of our female Head Nurse.

The Community of Fort Resolution, NT are overwhelmed with the lack of support from the female head nurse, as she rejects to see clients, she is very rude and disrespectful to community members. She is racist to our people; and doesn't want to work together.

Should you have any question or require additional information, please contact our office Monday to Friday from 9:00am – 5:00pm.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Arthur Beck".

Arthur Beck,
President



Hamlet of Fort Resolution, PO Box 197, Fort Resolution, NWT X0E 0M0 Phone (867) 394 4556 Fax (867) 394 5415

November 18, 2022

Lorie-Anne Danielson
Chief Operating Officer
Yellowknife Region
Northwest Territories Health and Social Services
P.O. Box 1320
Yellowknife NT X1A 2L9

RE: IMMEDIATE TRANSFER OF MS. JENNIFER PETERSON, NURSE IN-CHARGE OUT OF THE FORT RESOLUTION HEALTH CENTRE, AND TO TRANSFER IN A NEW NURSE IN-CHARGE

I am writing this letter to you on behalf of the Hamlet of Fort Resolution Council to immediately transfer Ms. Jennifer Peterson, Nurse In-Charge out of the Fort Resolution Health Centre and community. Ms. Jennifer Peterson's code of conduct as the Head Nurse is unethical and unprofessional since she arrived in Fort Resolution. Along with how she conducts herself towards community members whom she publicly serves on behalf the Government of the Northwest Territories. We heard from one our elders in the community who said, "that Jennifer Peterson is the head nurse and she's killing our people in the Chipewyan language". Furthermore, this elder said "because she is a racist head nurse on how she conducts herself towards the people living in Fort Resolution who seek professional healthcare services, and she doesn't engage or work with community members, local leadership, and she works in isolation".

The community members of Fort Resolution, NT are overwhelmed with so many complaints over the years to all local leadership about the lack of professional support from Ms. Jennifer Peterson, Nurse In-Charge of the Fort Resolution Health Centre. She refuses to see community members or sends them home undiagnosed with Tylenol pills or she deliberately cancels their appointments or denies their medical travel assistance leaving patients in limbo with no communication, putting their health at risk. She is very rude and disrespectful towards her own employees at the health centre, and community members that walk through the Fort Resolution Health Centre doors.

As one latest example, we just lost S.23(2)(a) at the Fort Resolution Health Centre late last week, Ms. Jennifer Peterson told S.23(2)(b) loudly and in an angry voice "you're not coming back here again because you're going to die in Yellowknife from cancer". She was belittling and condescending towards S.23(2)(b). S.23(2)(b) in front of her employees, including S.23(2)(b) s S.23(2)(b) y S.23(2)(b) s. They were all present to witness this outburst then she walked back into her office and slammed her door in disgust.

./2

-2-

Ms. Jennifer Peterson's attitude is unethical and unprofessional as the GNWT Nurse In-Charge at the Fort Resolution Health Centre, and she needs to be disciplined immediately by your department.

At the same time, we are seriously thinking of filing a Professional Conduct complaint to The Northwest Territories Registered Nurses Association (NWTRNA) to investigate her code of conduct as a registered licensed nurse in the Northwest Territories.

I strongly recommend that we immediately, appoint the current nurse Mr. Broderick McGee as the new Nurse In-Charge for the Fort Resolution Health Centre, and bring him back to the community ASAP to take on this new Nurse In-Charge Position, and at the same time transfer Ms. Jennifer Peterson Head Nurse out to another community.

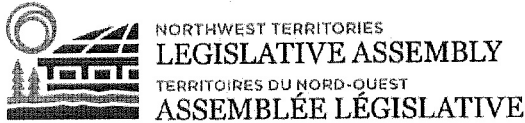
Now Mr. Broderick McGee is the new Nurse in Charge of the Fort Resolution Health Centre, we will need a new nurse transferred in to replace Broderick McGee old nurse position that's currently available at Fort Resolution Health Centre. We need the new nurse to respect the residents of Fort Resolution, respect the Chipewyan Language and Metis Culture, and who can work with community members in their homes and engage with local leadership along with participating in community events.

Sincerely,



His Worship Mayor Patrick Simon

- Cc. Mr. Gerry Cheezie Chairperson, Northwest Territories Health, and Social Services Leadership Council. Email: gcheezie@hotmail.com
- Mr. Arthur Beck, President Fort Resolution Metis Council. Email: secretary@frmcnwt.com
- Mr. Louis Balsillie, Chief Deninu K'ue First Nation. Email: SAO@dkfn.ca
- Mr. Richard Edjericon, Tu Nedhé – Willideh MLA Email: edjericon@gmail.com
- Mrs. Jennifer Pearce, President - The Northwest Territories Registered Nurses Association (NWTRNA). Email: president@rnanfnu.ca



WWW.NTASSEMBLY.CA
WWW.NTASSEMBLY.CA/FR

November 25, 2022

Lorie-Anne Danielson
Chief Operating Officer
Yellowknife Region
Northwest Territories Health and Social Services
P.O. Box 1320
YELLOWKNIFE, NT X1A 2L9

RE: Immediate Transfer of Ms. Jennifer Peterson, Fort Resolution Health Centre Nurse In-Charge

Please accept this letter of support for the Hamlet of Fort Resolution and Fort Smith Metis Council, who have submitted their respective business letters to request the immediate transfer of Ms. Jennifer Peterson, out of the Fort Resolution Health Centre and the community of Fort Resolution on behalf of their members and residents.

After careful review of both letters, I am in support of the Hamlet of Fort Resolution and Fort Resolution Metis Council to file a Professional Conduct complaint to the Northwest Territories Registered Nurses Association to investigate Ms. Peterson's Code of Conduct as a registered nurse in her current role.

I am very concern with the allegations of racism, disrespect and lack of professional support made against Ms. Peterson in her role as Nurse-In-Charge. I included a New North (NNSL) newspaper article, where a lot of these allegations are made against Ms. Peterson from community members. Many of these claims against Ms. Peterson are heart-breaking and disgusting, and no patient should ever be treated this way by a professional health care worker, who is literally responsible for life and death decisions on her patients.

The Mayor of the Hamlet of Fort Resolution and President of Fort Resolution Metis Council are requesting to appoint Mr. Broderick McGee as the new Nurse-In-Charge, and they have full confidence in Mr. McGee to effectively engage with community members to provide the level of health care that is both respectful and professional.

P.O. Box 1320 | Yellowknife | Northwest Territories | X1A 2L9 | Tel: 867-767-9130 | Fax: 867-920-4735
C. P. 1320 | Yellowknife | Territoires du Nord-Ouest | X1A 2L9 | Tel.: 867-767-9130 | Telecopieur: 867-920-4735

Kici Okimānāhk Māmawapowin • Beba ʔeifgith ʔeta Dēlth'i Kijé • Ek'ētehsodq Legehdi Kijé • K'áowe gogha elek'éterewe ke Iénakedé
Gogha Sombaa Nálée • Dagwidj'è Tr'igwahtsil Geenjil Nadhat Kat • Legislative Assemblitkut • Ihumiurviat Malirutaliatigun • ᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭ

As the Tu Nedhe-Wiliideh MLA representing the community for Fort Resolution, both the Hamlet of Fort Resolution and the Fort Resolution Metis Council have my full support to remove Ms. Peterson immediately from her role as Head Nurse of the Fort Resolution Health Centre.

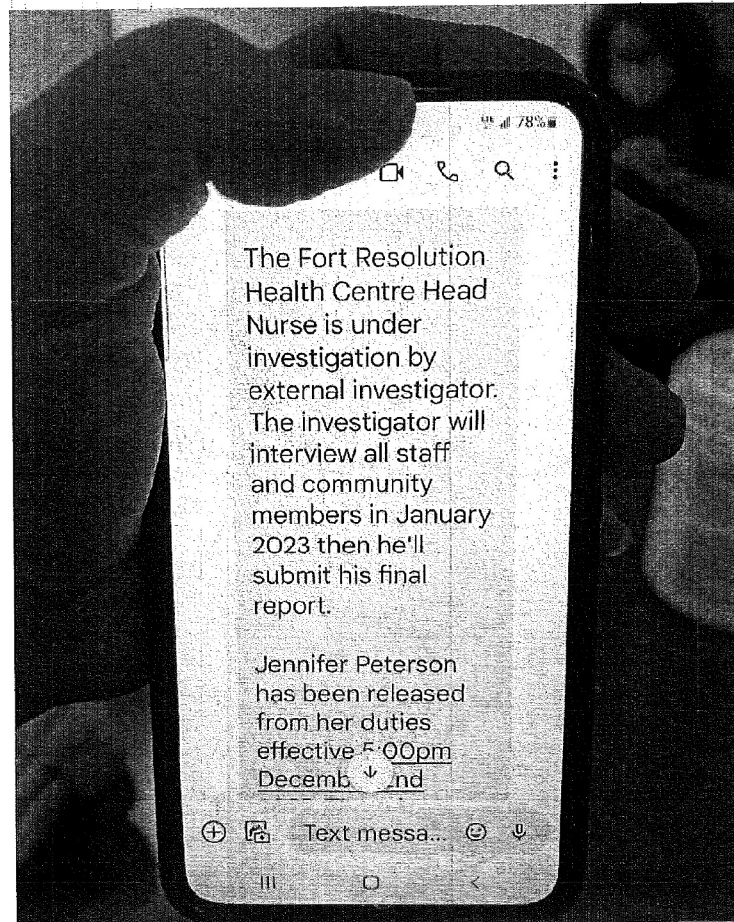
If you have any questions, I can be reached at Richard_edjericon@ntassembly.ca or call me at S.23.(2)(h)(i) I look forward to hearing from you.

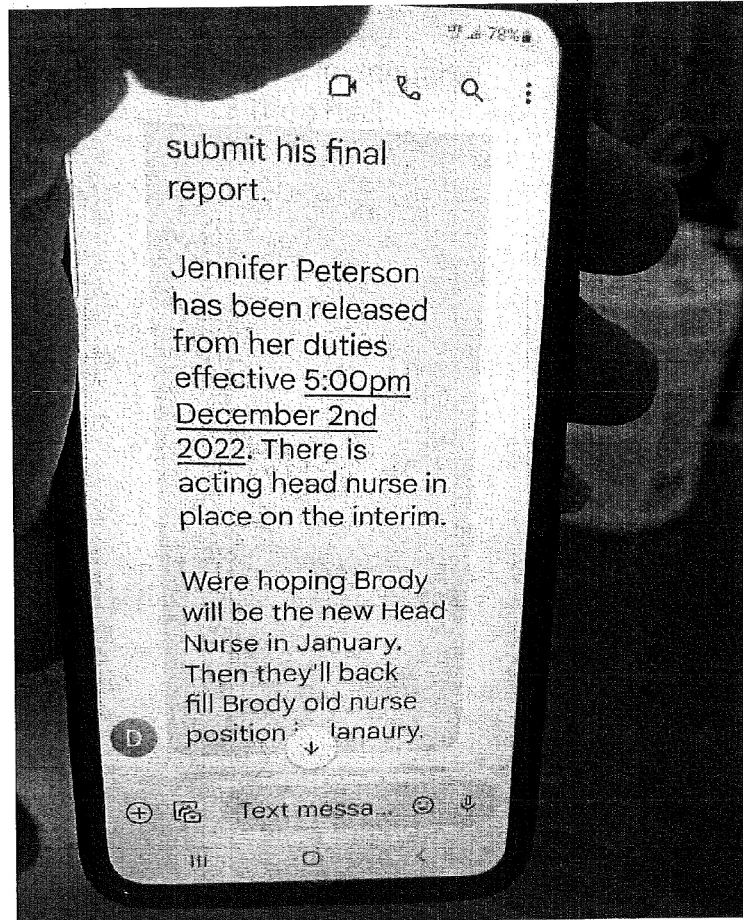
Kind Regards,



Richard Edjericon
Tu Nedhe-Wiliideh MLA

Text Message Provided by Destiny Lafferty





LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS**Extract from Part 3 of the *Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act***

102. (1) In this section, “alternative dispute resolution process” includes mediation.
- (2) After conducting an investigation under section 101, the Integrity Commissioner shall do any one of the following:
- (a) dismiss the complaint, if the Integrity Commissioner determines that
 - (i) the complaint is frivolous or vexatious or was not made in good faith,
 - (ii) there are insufficient grounds to warrant an inquiry,
 - (iii) the complaint does not disclose a contravention of this Part of the Code of Conduct,
 - (iv) a contravention of this Part or the Code of Conduct was minor or was committed through inadvertence or by reason of an error in judgment made in good faith,
 - (v) the member or former member took all reasonable measures to prevent a contravention of this Part or the Code of Conduct, or
 - (vi) the public interest would not be served if the complaint proceeded to an inquiry before a Sole Adjudicator;
 - (b) refer the matter to an alternative dispute resolution process if the complaint is in respect of a breach of the Code of Conduct;
 - (c) find the member or former to be guilty of contravening a provision of this Part or the Code of Conduct and recommend to the Legislative assembly one or more punishments in accordance with subsection (6);
 - (d) direct that an inquiry be held before a Sole Adjudicator.
- (3) The Integrity Commissioner shall prepare a report of
- (a) what option was chosen under subsection (2);
 - (b) the reasons for the choice; and
 - (c) what punishment is recommended under paragraph (2)(c), if applicable.

- (4) The Integrity Commissioner shall
 - (a) submit the report prepared under subsection (3) to the Speaker; and
 - (b) deliver a copy of the report to
 - (i) the member or former member,
 - (ii) the complainant,
 - (iii) each other member, and
 - (iv) the Clerk.
- (5) The Speaker shall, at the first opportunity, lay a copy of the report before the Legislative Assembly.
- (6) Any punishment that the Integrity Commissioner recommends under paragraph (3)(c) must be the same as what the Sole Adjudicator may recommend under (a) paragraph 106(1)(b) for a member; and (b) paragraph 106(1)(c) for a former member.
- ...
106. (1) After conducting an inquiry, a Sole Adjudicator shall submit a disposition report, with reasons, to the Speaker, the member or former member complained of and the complainant, advising that
 - (a) the complaint is dismissed, where the Sole Adjudicator has determined
 - (i) that the complaint does not disclose a contravention of this Part or the Code of Conduct,
 - (ii) that a contravention of this Part or the Code of Conduct was minor or was committed through inadvertence or by reason of an error in judgment made in good faith, or
 - (iii) that the member or former member took all reasonable measures to prevent a contravention of this Part or the Code of Conduct;
 - (b) the Sole Adjudicator has found the member to be guilty of contravening a provision of this Part or the Code of Conduct, and is recommending to the Legislative Assembly that one or more of the following punishments be imposed:
 - (i) a reprimand,
 - (ii) a fine in an amount not exceeding \$25,000 established by the Sole Adjudicator,

- (iii) an order requiring the member to make restitution, in an amount determined by the Sole Adjudicator, to the Government of the Northwest Territories or to a public agency of the Government of the Northwest Territories, of any gain realized by the member or his or her spouse or dependent child by participating in a transaction in contravention of a provision of this Part,
- (iv) an order requiring the member to pay compensation to any person for a loss suffered by that person as a result of the participation of the member or his or her spouse or dependent child in a transaction in contravention of a provision of this Part,
- (v) a suspension for a period not exceeding 30 sitting days of the privileges of the member to sit in the Legislative Assembly,
- (vi) a declaration that the seat of the member is vacant,
- (vii) an order that the member pay costs in an amount determined by the Sole Adjudicator; or

(c) the Sole Adjudicator has found the former member to be guilty of contravening a provision of this Part or the Code of Conduct, and is imposing one or more of the following punishments [which are the same as in the previous paragraph excluding a reprimand, a suspension, or a declaration that the seat be vacated—none of which would apply in the case of a former member].