

Meeting with Department of Health & Community Services
June 17, 2014

Issues to Address:

1. Introduction of Coalition
2. Health Related Concerns:
 - a) To what extent will the opening of the new long term care facility for seniors in Pleasantville eliminate the need for seniors i) to remain in inappropriate care in acute care facilities and ii) to be charged for this care?
 - b) What progress has been made with finalizing the Government's long awaited five year plan and when will that information be released publicly in a format that will reiterate the problem and identify a reasonable solution?
 - c) The Government of Newfoundland & Labrador announced two years ago that it would be instituting a pilot project, wherein it would be receiving requests and proposals from privately owned, assisted-living facilities to accommodate residents with a higher level of care than that which is currently approved for these facilities to provide. Which facilities have been given this approval?
 - d) We are still the only province in Canada that is assessed on income plus assets when entering a Government sponsored long term care facility. We request that assets be removed completely from the assessment evaluation and that the previous year's income tax return be used as a method of assessment. This is the method currently used in the other three Atlantic Provinces of Canada.
 - e) When will the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador consider a radical approach to the care of the elderly by ceasing to invest in the construction of institutional long term care facilities and dedicate the same resources to providing care and supports in the homes of those in need of care, where they can remain close to family and friends, have access to community and other support circles, and live with dignity and respect? This would require a radical approach and a well developed strategy that could be costly in transition.
 - f) There is strong support for shifting money in the budget from long term care institutions to more home care. If more home care workers are trained and paid a reasonable wage (\$15 p/h), and raise the hours from 5hrs to approximately 12 hours per day it would help a high number of seniors to stay longer in their own homes.
 - g) Our Government should require that personal care homes have a qualified health care professional on staff, whose role would include maintaining the health of residents to avoid the transfer of residents to hospitals or long term care facilities for routine medical care. Keeping the resident out of our hospitals by providing care elsewhere will mean cost savings for our province.

3. Budget Questions:

- a) Canada Health Accord. Health transfers are currently six percent per year; however these transfers will be reduced to three percent by 2016 and eventually to nominal GDP. This will have a significant impact on our province given that we will have the highest percentage of seniors than any other province or territory in Canada and a population growth of close to zero. Are there any plans to take a proactive approach to this issue?
- b) Timing of payment of the Low Income Seniors Benefit?
- c) Home Modification Program
- d) Supports for Health and Wellness
- e) Clarify Medical Transportation Assistance Program