



JUL 07 2016

MR. R.J. SIMPSON
MLA, HAY RIVER NORTH

ORAL QUESTION 224-18(2): Services to Support Seniors Aging in Place

This letter is in follow up to the Oral Question you raised on June 14, 2016 regarding services to support seniors aging in place.

"Our Elders: Our Communities" is a holistic document. It is focused on trying to improve residents' experiences with aging, particularly aging in place. By focusing on the priorities of Our Elders: Our Communities, the Department of Health and Social Services will be working with our partners, such as the NWT Seniors' Society to ensure our residents have access to a wide range of programs and services to assist them with remaining in their homes and communities for as long as possible.

As the Minister who is responsible for health and social services and persons with disabilities, I know how important it is for residents of the Northwest Territories, regardless of where they live, to be able to access health services when they need them; and that at times transportation can be a barrier.

Responsibility for seniors and persons with disabilities is shared with other government departments. Health and Social Services Authorities provide transportation for residents of our long term care facilities to make sure they get to their appointments when they need to and to other public events when necessary. At times home support workers assist elders with accessing services when they do not have a family member to assist them.

Public transportation is the responsibility of community governments; and that includes transportation of seniors, non-seniors, persons with disabilities. Public transportation services allows citizens, including seniors, persons with disabilities, youth and other members of communities to access to health and other professional services; go shopping, visit their friends and family and participate in in community events.

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In regard to my commitment to identify community governments that have taken action to provide public transportation options for citizens, including seniors or persons with disabilities within the Northwest Territories, the Department will take a look into what is currently available and provide a summary by later this year on what is out there.

The NWT Disability Program Review and Renewal Project will also take a broader look at the issue of transportation services under the pillar of “accessibility”, and work with our NGO partners to assess potential for the government to work with our partners to expand these services to meet the needs of the residents of the Northwest Territories.

Thank you.



Glen Abernethy
Minister of Health and Social Services

c. Mr. Tim Mercer
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Mr. David Hastings
Legislative Coordinator, Executive