

**GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES RESPONSE TO
MOTION 36-17(5): WORKPLACE SAFETY AT STANTON TERRITORIAL
HOSPITAL**

MOTION

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Sahtu, that the Legislative Assembly strongly recommends that the Department of Health and Social Services clarify procedures for Stanton Territorial Hospital employees to follow when violent incidents occur, including procedures expressly for the use of physical restraint in these cases;

AND FURTHER, that the Department of Health and Social Services direct Stanton Territorial Hospital management to hire security personnel with recognized training in non-violent crisis intervention and physical-restraint techniques;

AND FURTHER, that security personnel at territorial health care facilities be hired as full-fledged employees of the Government of the Northwest Territories, guaranteeing continuity of service and benefits resulting from accumulated experience, institutional memory and professional training;

AND FURTHERMORE, that the Department of Health and Social Services review its policies and procedures pertaining to security at territorial health care facilities and report back to the House within 120 days.

GNWT Response

The Department of Health and Social Services (Department) recognizes the importance of the issue of workplace safety not only for Stanton Territorial Health Authority (Stanton), but for staff in all of the health facilities across the NWT.

A small working group including frontline staff and management from Stanton was established to provide a forum to advance safety and security initiatives.

In addition, an external review of infrastructure and policies was conducted of all Stanton facilities. The expert review included:

- The built environment;
- Furniture and fittings;
- Use of surveillance and communication tools;
- Policies, processes, workflows and business processes and any relevant service contracts that impact public and staff entrance;
- Risk assessment, incident response, security services and violence prevention program review; and,
- Recommendations based on best practice or industry leading practice.

The following measures have been put in place at Stanton including:

- Increased security presence, including the addition of guards with extensive experience and training in security services to provide leadership to the regular security staff;
- Improvements to infrastructure in response to staff requests and an external review of the physical environment;
- A renewed focus on training staff and security guards to ensure consistent skills are in place for dealing with violent scenarios; and,
- Improved communication with an emphasis on ensuring role clarity between staff and security personnel.

At this time, the Department is not considering changing the current contract with the security provider as they are meeting the security needs at Stanton. Furthermore, given challenges associated with retention, the Department will not be looking at hiring security personnel as employees of the Government of the Northwest Territories.

Information related to the work conducted by the working group and Stanton Territorial Health Authority was shared with the Authorities' Chief Executive Officers.