

November 15, 2017

The Honourable Dr. John Haggie
Minister of Health and Community Services

Dear Minister Haggie:

It has been my pleasure to work with you in Cabinet since December 2015. I am honoured that you are continuing to serve the people of our province in your capacity as Minister of Health and Community Services. I am placing my trust in you to support better health services and outcomes for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

As we approach the mid-point of our mandate, we have a strong Cabinet. We are guided by our plan for sustainability and growth, The Way Forward. It focuses on strengthening our economy and creating private sector jobs, delivering better services, improving outcomes to promote a prosperous Newfoundland and Labrador, and improving public sector efficiency. I am asking you to deliver on this plan by leading the following:

Mental Health and Addictions

- Implementing our multi-year plan, Towards Recovery: The Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan for Newfoundland and Labrador, to respond to recommendations from the All Party Committee on Mental Health and Addictions; and
- Responding to the growing opioid addictions issue by continuing to implement the province's opioid action plan.

Community Services

- Implementing the Home Support Action Plan;
- Streamlining the financial assessment process for community support services and residential long-term care services;
- Supporting the Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development to implement client focused interventions to support individuals with complex needs; and
- Implementing an individualized funding model in partnership with the Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development and Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour, beginning with the provision of community support services in 2018.

Health Services

- Expanding primary health care teams;
- Improving primary health care services for adolescents;
- Developing and implementing a prescription monitoring program;
- Developing a comprehensive plan to expand health professionals' scope of practice, including working with midwives and other health professionals to implement regulated midwifery;
- Creating a dementia management program to allow timely identification and assessment of individuals with dementia, and ensure that effective treatment and care plans are in place to support them and their caregivers;
- Leading the development of a provincial autism strategy in collaboration with your colleagues to address the lack of communication between government departments responsible for providing autism-related services, eliminating the use of IQ70 to determine service needs and provision of autism related services, and supporting children with autism beyond grade three through Applied Behaviour Analysis;
- Supporting a cardiovascular Centre of Excellence, including improving diagnostic services and timelines to reduce waitlists for detection and diagnosis of cardiovascular disease;
- Providing support to the Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information (NLCHI) to continue with the implementation of the Electronic Health Record including consultation with NLCHI and the Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association on full implementation of the electronic medical records program;
- Supporting NLCHI to expand its data collection and analysis of the healthcare system and identify new health information systems to improve patient care;
- Defining the requirements for a centralized ambulance dispatch centre;
- Implementing child health risk assessments for school-aged children in collaboration with the Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development and Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development; and
- Implementing healthy living assessments for seniors in collaboration with the Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development.

Healthy Living

- Conducting a thorough review of health outcomes in all areas of the province's health system and setting meaningful and measurable goals;
- Requiring regional health authorities to measure the health indicators of people in their regions and report on these indicators to government;
- Implementing the Chronic Disease Action Plan, which complements ongoing work by the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development in the vital areas of primary prevention, health promotion and healthy active living, and includes implementation of a diabetes prevention and management program, starting with the establishment of a province-wide diabetes database to support evidence-based decision making;

- Working with the Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development to develop and implement a healthy living action plan, which includes:
 - Increasing awareness and engaging individuals to take action for healthy living;
 - Leading the promotion of healthy eating habits through a combination of awareness campaigns and community outreach, and offering wellness coaching in schools;
 - Creating communities that support healthy living, including engaging the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Environment in this work; and
 - Focusing on chronic disease prevention and management program and an innovative youth wellness program.

Health Infrastructure

- Working with the Minister of Transportation and Works on:
 - Overseeing the construction of the Corner Brook Long Term Care Facility;
 - Replacing the Western Memorial Regional Hospital;
 - Identifying a plan for replacing the existing Waterford Hospital with in-patient services as well as more services provided in community and closer to home by March 2018; and
 - Planning for the expansion of long term care bed capacity in the Central Health region.

Together, Cabinet is responsible for achieving the targets set out in The Way Forward. Achieving these targets is critical to attaining inclusive growth, improving employment levels and reducing poverty and realizing financial sustainability. To support reaching these targets, I ask all Ministers to consider the impact of their decisions on the health of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians through our Health in All Policies approach. You must also consider whether your decisions are best positioning our province for economic and private sector job growth.

As Premier, I expect you to be open and transparent. We must use evidence and research and engage with the public, stakeholders and our Indigenous partners to inform our decisions. We must ensure that we are focused on service excellence. I have asked all Ministers to reduce red tape, adopt Lean continuous improvement principles and publish business standards for all major programs by March 31, 2018. I also expect all Ministers to work together to support our commitment to being a government that is digital-by-design.

In fulfilling your responsibility as Minister, you must ensure collaboration in a positive and constructive manner with your Cabinet colleagues. I take this opportunity to remind you that, as you carry out your responsibilities as a Member of the House of Assembly and Member of Cabinet, adhering to the Code of Conduct and the Conflict of Interest guidelines are mandatory to ensure you discharge your duties with the highest ethical standards.

Deputy Ministers are your key source of support and will provide you with advice in meeting your responsibilities. I expect you to develop a positive, respectful and trusting relationship with your Deputy Minister and the public service.

At the end of the day, Newfoundlanders and Labradorians want to see results. You must track and report on your progress towards completing the work outlined in this letter. We will continue to highlight our progress in our annual Way Forward report cards and annual performance reports. Together, we will improve health, social and economic outcomes and deliver high quality services for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dwight Ball", with a horizontal line underneath.

DWIGHT BALL
Premier