MAR 18 2014

Dear [Redacted]: s.30(1)

Re:  Your request for access to information under Part II of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act [Our File #: HCS 008 2014]

On January 23, 2014, the Department of Health and Community Services received your request for access to the following records/information:

“I am requesting details regarding the family caregiver program. In particular I am requesting:

The projected budget for the pilot project as prepared by budgeting personnel within the department. This should include details such as the projected/expected uptake by each region, the amount of money that is projected to be spent in each region, and other related categories within that total budget for the pilot project.

This should also include an explanation as to why the department has made a policy decision to only allow NEW home support clients to be eligible for this program. It is my understanding that people already receiving home support cannot apply.”

On February 6, 2014, the Department wrote to notify you that, with the approval of the Information and Privacy Commissioner, it was extending the 30-day time limit for responding to your request for an additional 30 days. The Department advised at that time that it expected to respond to your request by or before March 23, 2014.

The Department has reviewed your request in the context of the Act. I am pleased to inform you that access to this information is granted.

The projected budget for the family caregiver program pilot project is $8.2 million annually. The projected uptake in each regional health authority (RHA) is estimated to be one hundred percent. Regarding the amount of money that is projected to be spent in each region, while it is anticipated that $8.2 million will be fully expended on the program, funding will not be provided to the RHAs in advance of the program’s implementation; rather, amounts will be allocated to
the RHAs based on actual uptake and expenditure data as the program progresses. As such, the actual amounts that will be spent per region are not known at this time.

During the development of the paid family caregiving program, it was determined that the paid family caregiver option for home support will first become available to new home support clients only. This will ensure that there are no disruptions to existing home care client arrangements, and will allow the Department to evaluate the program on an ongoing basis. In turn, this will inform decision making with respect to any future extension of the program’s benefits to current home support clients. The program will undergo a full evaluation following 18 months of operation.

Section 43 of the Act provides that you may ask the Information and Privacy Commissioner to review the processing of your access request or you may appeal to the Supreme Court Trial Division. A request to the Commissioner shall be made in writing within 60 days of the date of this letter or within a longer period that may be allowed by the Information and Privacy Commissioner.

The address and contact information of the Information and Privacy Commissioner is as follows:

Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner
2nd Floor, 34 Pippy Place
P. O. Box 13004, Stn. A
St. John’s, NL A1B 3V8

Telephone: (709) 729-6309
Facsimile: (709) 729-6500
Email: oipc@gov.nl.ca

In the event that you choose to appeal to the Trial Division, you must do so within 30 days of the date of this letter. Section 60 of the Act sets out the process to be followed when filing such an appeal.

Please be advised that a copy of our response to your request will be published on the Office of the Public Engagement’s website five business days after the response is mailed to you. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact Brian Bennett, the Department’s Privacy Manager, at (709) 729-7007, or by email at BrianDBennett@gov.nl.ca.

Sincerely,

Bruce Cooper
Deputy Minister

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