Response to Applicant - Partial Access Granted
Form 4B

November 20, 2018

s.40(1)

Re: Your request for access to information under Part II of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (CSSD/30/2018)

On October 22, 2018, CSSD received your request for access to the following records:

- Any messaging prepared for the fall sitting of the house of assembly during the month of October 2018.

I am pleased to inform you that a decision has been made by the Minister of Children Seniors and Social Development to provide access to some of the requested information. In particular, access is granted to the following records:

- Key messages drafted for the fall sitting of the House of Assembly for the Minister of CSSD, during the month of October 2018.

Access to the remaining records, and/or information contained within the records, has been refused in accordance with the following exceptions to disclosure, as specified in the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (the Act):

1. Section 27(2)(b) - Section 27. Cabinet Confidences (2) The head of a public body shall refuse to disclose to an applicant
   (b) information in a record other than a cabinet record that would reveal the substance of deliberations of Cabinet.

2. Section 29 (1)(a) - Section 29. Policy Advice or Recommendations
   (1) The head of a public body may refuse to disclose to an applicant information that would reveal
   (a) advice, proposals, recommendations, analyses or policy options developed by or for a public body or minister;
3. **Section 40 (1) - Section 40. Disclosure Harmful to Personal Privacy**  
(1) The head of a public body shall refuse to disclose personal information to an applicant where the disclosure would be an unreasonable invasion of a third party’s personal privacy.

As required by 8(2) of the Act, we have severed information that is unable to be disclosed and have provided you with as much information as possible. In accordance with your request for a copy of the records, the appropriate copies have been enclosed.

Please be advised that you may appeal this decision and ask the Information and Privacy Commissioner to review the decision to provide partial access to the requested information, as set out in section 42 of the Act (a copy of this section of the Act has been enclosed for your reference). A request to the Commissioner must be made in writing within 15 business days of the date of this letter or within a longer period that may be allowed by the Commissioner. Your appeal should identify your concerns with the request and why you are submitting the appeal.

The appeal may be addressed to the Information and Privacy Commissioner is as follows:

Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner  
2 Canada Drive  
P. O. Box 13004, Stn. A  
St. John’s, NL. A1B 3V8

Telephone: (709) 729-6309  
Toll-Free: 1-877-729-6309  
Facsimile: (709) 729-6500

You may also appeal directly to the Supreme Court Trial Division within 15 business days after you receive the decision of the public body, pursuant to section 52 of the Act (a copy of this section of the Act has been enclosed for your reference).

**For Government Departments:**  
Please be advised that responsive records will be published following a 72 hour period after the response is sent electronically to you or five business days in the case where records are mailed to you. It is the goal to have the responsive records posted to the Completed Access to Information Requests website within one business day following the applicable period of time. Please note that requests for personal information will not be posted online.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me by telephone at (709) 729-6370 or by e-mail at michelemurray@gov.n.ca.

Sincerely,
Kind Regards,
Michelle Murray
ATIPP Coordinator

Michelle Murray B.A., B.S.W., M.S.W.
Program & Policy Development Specialist /ATIPP Coordinator
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Enclosures
Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act

Cabinet confidences
27. (2) The head of a public body shall refuse to disclose to an applicant
(a) a cabinet record; or
(b) information in a record other than a cabinet record that would reveal the
substance of deliberations of Cabinet.

Policy advice or recommendations
29. (1) The head of a public body may refuse to disclose to an applicant information that
would reveal
(a) advice, proposals, recommendations, analyses or policy options developed by or
for a public body or minister;

Disclosure harmful to personal privacy
40. (1) The head of a public body shall refuse to disclose personal information to an
applicant where the disclosure would be an unreasonable invasion of a third party's
personal privacy.

Access or correction complaint
42. (1) A person who makes a request under this Act for access to a record or for correction
of personal information may file a complaint with the commissioner respecting a decision,
act or failure to act of the head of the public body that relates to the request.

(2) A complaint under subsection (1) shall be filed in writing not later than 15 business
days

(a) after the applicant is notified of the decision of the head of the public body, or the
date of the act or failure to act; or

(b) after the date the head of the public body is considered to have refused the
request under subsection 16(2).

(3) A third party informed under section 19 of a decision of the head of a public body to
grant access to a record or part of a record in response to a request may file a complaint
with the commissioner respecting that decision.

(4) A complaint under subsection (3) shall be filed in writing not later than 15 business
days after the third party is informed of the decision of the head of the public body.

(5) The commissioner may allow a longer time period for the filing of a complaint under
this section.

(6) A person or third party who has appealed directly to the Trial Division under
subsection 52(1) or 53(1) shall not file a complaint with the commissioner.
(7) The commissioner shall refuse to investigate a complaint where an appeal has been commenced in the Trial Division.

(8) A complaint shall not be filed under this section with respect to

(a) a request that is disregarded under section 21;

(b) a decision respecting an extension of time under section 23;

(c) a variation of a procedure under section 24; or

(d) an estimate of costs or a decision not to waive a cost under section 26.

(9) The commissioner shall provide a copy of the complaint to the head of the public body concerned.

Direct appeal to Trial Division by an applicant

52. (1) Where an applicant has made a request to a public body for access to a record or correction of personal information and has not filed a complaint with the commissioner under section 42, the applicant may appeal the decision, act or failure to act of the head of the public body that relates to the request directly to the Trial Division.

(2) An appeal shall be commenced under subsection (1) not later than 15 business days

(a) after the applicant is notified of the decision of the head of the public body, or the date of the act or failure to act; or

(b) after the date the head of the public body is considered to have refused the request under subsection 16(2).

(3) Where an applicant has filed a complaint with the commissioner under section 42 and the commissioner has refused to investigate the complaint, the applicant may commence an appeal in the Trial Division of the decision, act or failure to act of the head of the public body that relates to the request for access to a record or for correction of personal information.

(4) An appeal shall be commenced under subsection (3) not later than 15 business days after the applicant is notified of the commissioner’s refusal under subsection 45(2).
KEY MESSAGES

Children, Seniors and Social Development
Act to Amend the Smoke-Free Environment Act
October 18, 2018

Summary:
The SFEA came into force in 1994 and has had numerous amendments overtime. Smoking is prohibited in all indoor public places including restaurants, bars (including decks), bingo halls, schools, recreational facilities, private clubs to which a member or invited person has access and works places. On October 17, 2018, the Act to Amend the Smoke-Free Environment Act, 2005, was proclaimed and came into force aligning with the federal Cannabis Act and the provincial Cannabis Control Act and the amended provincial Liquor Corporation Act and Highway Traffic Act. The amendments to the Smoke-Free Environment Act, 2005 will further protect public health by applying the same prohibitions in place for smoking tobacco, vapour products (electronic cigarettes) and hookah/water pipe to the smoking or vaping of cannabis. While the SFEA prohibits smoking in a motor vehicle, while children under age 16 are present, the CCA, provides the same prohibition and further extends prohibition to all age groups.

Anticipated Questions:

- What amendments has the Provincial Government made to the Smoke-Free Environment Act to ensure the province is prepared for the legalization of cannabis?
- Is the smoking and vaping of cannabis prohibited in indoor public places and workplaces just as tobacco smoking, vapour products (e-cigarette use) and hookah/water pipe smoking is?
- Does government allow the smoking of medicinal cannabis in public indoor places?

Key Messages:

- The protection of public health and safety remains a primary objective for the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.
- As a government we are pleased to proclaim an Act to Amend the Smoke-Free Environment Act, 2005. Our government is fulfilling its commitment to protect the public, in particular, children and youth and workers from exposure to second-hand smoke with the implementation of amendments to the Smoke-Free Environment Act, 2005.
- The Smoke-Free Environment Act, 2005 prohibits the smoking of tobacco, vapour products, hookah water pipes and cannabis in indoor public places and work places. To protect the public from the use of cannabis, our government has limited the consumption of cannabis products to a private dwelling.
- With a stronger Smoke-Free Environment Act, 2005, our government will ensure the appropriate restrictions are in place now that cannabis has become legal; thereby, providing greater public health protection and a consistent approach in indoor public places and workplaces.
• Since 1994, the Smoke-Free Environment Act aims to protect public health by reducing the public and employees exposure to the harms of second-hand smoke in indoor public places and workplace. The most recent changes to the Smoke Free Environment Act, 2005 to include cannabis maintains a consistent and progressive approach with respect to smoke-free policies and protecting public health.

Secondary Messages:
• Our government is following through on its public commitment made last fall to restrict the use of cannabis for recreational purposes to private residences and prohibit its use in public places, vehicles and workplaces.

• A limited exception applies for medical cannabis. A person with a valid authorization to use medical cannabis under the federal Cannabis Act may consume medical cannabis in an outdoor public place where smoking or vaping is permitted by the Smoke-Free Environment Act, 2005, but cannot consume cannabis in a mobile vehicle.

• Strengthening the Smoke-Free Environment Act, 2005 will help our government mitigate the risks associated with cannabis use in indoor public places and workplaces, as well as help prevent youth uptake.

• Since a common form of cannabis use is smoking, it is imperative that the same restrictions that are in place for tobacco smoking, vapour products (e-cigarette use) and hookah/water pipe smoking be applied to the smoking and vaping of cannabis.

• This approach is also in line with the views of those who participated in public consultations including the general public – an overwhelming 87% per cent of respondents to an online survey supported restricting locations where cannabis may be smoked or vaped in the same way as tobacco. Also, groups such as the Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association and Canadian Medical Association supported this approach.

• As a government, we must reinforce that smoking is harmful and, by making these legislative changes, we build on progress made with respect to policies for the prevention and reduction of harm of tobacco, vapour products and hookah (water pipes).

• Progressive changes over the years to tobacco legislation is one component of our comprehensive approach to tobacco control that also includes public education and awareness, taxation, school and community programs, and cessation supports and services.

• As indicated in The Way Forward, our commitment is to reduce smoking rates by four per cent by 2025. The current provincial smoking rate is 21.7 per cent.

Prepared by: Michelle Hunt-Grouchy, Director of Communications & HLSR Division

Approved by: Donna Ballard, Deputy Minister
KEY MESSAGES

Children, Seniors and Social Development
Access to Personal Records
October 23, 2018

Summary:

It alleges that the department has an unreasonable backlog of requests waiting to be filled, and that this is because CSSD is understaffed and is redacting too much information from files before releasing them. In March 2018, CSSD responded to a media request about an individual who had asked for a copy of his records and was unhappy about the length of time it was expected to take to fulfill the request. In August 2018, CSSD received an ATIPPA request for the number of requests received each year since 2014, the average time it has taken to complete requests, and the number of requests that have not been completed, by year. The response to the applicant showed that the average time to complete a request is 504 days (approximately 16 months).

Anticipated Questions:

• Why does it take so long for CSSD to process requests for personal records?
• Why don’t the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (ATIPPA) and its timelines apply to these requests?

Key Messages:

• The Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development receives a high volume of requests for personal records related to individuals who have been or are currently involved with the child protection, foster care and adoptions systems.
• We recognize the difficulties that are created by delays in releasing these very sensitive records, and are currently in the process of assigning additional resources on a short-term basis to help address the backlog issue.
• In cases where the courts order CSSD to provide documents, the department works with the courts through its solicitor to ensure that reasonable timelines are met. The 504 days of wait time is in relation to client requests not court matters.
• When responding to any requests to access information concerning children and youth receiving services from CSSD, the department must review materials in accordance with:
  o The Access to Information and Protection of Privacy (ATIPP) Act and
  o The Children and Youth Care and Protection (CYCP) Act
• Any information that falls under the CYCP and ATIPP Acts, must be redacted in order to ensure the private and personal information of a child or youth is protected. It is our number one priority to always ensure the best interests of children and youth.
Secondary Messages:
• Often the records being requested are historical in nature, were created decades ago, exist only in hard copy and handwritten formats and are held in secure, off-site storage.

• In many cases records contain a large number of documents in a variety of formats, both written and electronic. As an example, a recent request resulted in the release of more than 10,000 pages of information.

• In cases where an individual requests their own records from the department, all documents must be reviewed in significant detail as required by the CYCP Act, to ensure that only the information to which the individual is entitled is released.

• Under the CYCP Act, an individual is only entitled to their own personal information; therefore, the personal information of others (siblings, parents, foster families, etc.) must be redacted before the documents can be released.

• As a result, wait times for these types of requests vary and may require an extended period of time to complete.

• CSSD records are governed by the CYCP Act rather than ATIPP Act as they primarily involve personal information of the children concerned, rather than information respecting governmental operations. The processes in place for the management of access to and disclosure of information under the ATIPP Act are not suitable for the management of this sort of information. People do not have to file ATIPP requests in order to receive their personal information in regards to child protection records held by CSSD.

• CSSD receives information from the general public regarding concerns for the safety and well-being of children and youth. The individuals who make these reports are afforded protection of their identity under the CYCP Act. If individuals did not have this protection they might not report concerns thus children and youth would be placed at risk.

• CSSD provides access to information for a number of different reasons. The majority of requests come from individuals seeking access to their own records, and courts seeking information for legal proceedings.

• There is a legislative obligation to provide disclosure for court matters to address active child protection matters to ensure health, safety and well-being of children. CSSD works with the courts to ensure disclosure is received in a timely manner.

Background:
• There are 194 requests awaiting processing – dating back to June 2015.
• There are a substantial number of requests annually:
  o 2015-16 - 102 new requests
  o 2016-17 - 79 new requests
2017-18 - 74 new requests.

The volume of information required to be reviewed can be significant; files can range from 1 to 10,000 pages or more.

Court-ordered requests for custody and access cases take priority and impact regular application processing. Court-ordered requests are never waitlisted, as opposed to the regular client-initiated disclosure requests which are not connected to a court case. Delivery dates may need to be negotiated with the courts as it may take longer to complete a request due to the size of the file.

Prepared by: CSSD Communications

Approved by: Donna Ballard, Deputy Minister
KEY MESSAGES

Children, Seniors and Social Development
Inclusion-based Accessibility Legislation
October 18, 2018

Summary:
It is under the Minister’s mandate to “work with advocacy groups and community stakeholders to promote a more inclusive province, including leading a review of existing legislation and regulations in the province with the goal of enacting a new inclusion-based Disabilities Act.” In this context, inclusion is when individuals have access and choices about participating in all aspects of life, such as going to school, getting a job, picking up groceries, participating in community events, etc.

Anticipated Questions:

- What is the status of the new inclusion-based disabilities legislation?

Key Messages:

- Our government is committed to safe and sustainable communities, and a key component is ensuring inclusion for all people.
- We know citizens of our province still experience barriers on a daily basis; barriers that exclude people from participating in their communities, and in society as a whole.
- We want to be an inclusive province where individuals have access and choices about participating in all aspects of their life, such as going to school, getting a job, getting to a doctor’s appointment, picking up groceries, going to a movie and participating in community events.
- The Disability Policy Office is working closely with the Provincial Advisory Council for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities and the Coalition of Persons with Disabilities-NL to develop an engagement process that will help raise awareness about the benefits of inclusion and to inform the development of new inclusion-based accessibility legislation.
- Details about this engagement process are currently being finalized and will be announced in the coming weeks.

Secondary Messages:

- Inclusion benefits all residents of our province, and is good for business and our economy.
- We are committed to creating environments that better promote greater participation in our communities, employment opportunities and public services.

Background:

- Currently, four provinces have accessibility-related legislation: Nova Scotia (2016); Quebec (2004); Ontario (2005); and, Manitoba (2013). These acts are prescriptive
pieces of legislation that create accessibility standards across multiple areas or themes including: delivery of goods and services; transportation; labour and education; and, the built environment.

- NL’s legislation may address similar themes. These same themes are reflected in the proposed federal legislation (Bill C-81) – two readings have occurred in parliament.

- Nationally, these pieces of law use the terminology “accessibility” versus “disability”. This reflects a more strengths-based approach versus a deficits-based approach. Of note, much of the international law still uses “disability.”

- The Federal Government’s Bill C-81 (An Act to Ensure a Barrier-Free Canada or Accessible Canada Act) received first reading on June 20, 2018.

Prepared by: Michelle Hunt-Grouchy, Director of Communications,

Approved by: Donna Ballard, Deputy Minister
KEY MESSAGES

Children, Seniors and Social Development
Accessible Taxi Program
October 18, 2018

Summary:
The Accessible Taxi Program, which has an annual budget of $50,000 for two grants, actively addresses transportation barriers by supporting companies or agencies that are able to commit to delivering 24/7 accessible and affordable taxi services. In 2017-18, five taxi companies were provided with grants of $25,000 each as additional funding was available from the Age-Friendly Transportation Program. In total, seven grants were distributed – two under the Accessible Taxi Program and five under the Age-Friendly Transportation Pilot Project, but two taxi companies did not meet requirements (one from each program).

Anticipated Questions:

- Will the government expand this program so even more people can avail of accessible taxi services?

Key Messages:

- We recognize that transportation is essential to participation and inclusion in society.
- Challenges and barriers still exist for persons with disabilities, especially in rural areas.
- The Accessible Taxi Program is actively addressing transportation barriers by helping taxi companies add accessible taxis to their fleet.
- Our government granted an extra four grants last fiscal year to support accessible transportation options throughout the province.

Secondary Messages:

- A total of 12 grants have been provided for accessible taxis since the program opened: four to Newfound Cabs in St. John’s; one to Jonavex Cabs in Dildo; one to Blagdon’s Taxi in Grand Falls Windsor, one to Pittman’s Taxi in Norris Point; two to Star Taxi in Corner Brook, one to Bursey’s Taxi in Conception Bay South, one to Lewisporte Taxi in Lewisporte, and one to My Taxi Cabs in Bay Roberts.

- In St. John’s, as an example, ridership of accessible taxis has gone from zero in 2015 when this option did not exist to well over 2,000 trips a month.

Prepared by: M. Hunt-Grouchy, Director of Communications, & Disability Policy Office (Susan Tobin)

Approved by: Donna Ballard, Deputy Minister
KEY MESSAGES

Children, Seniors and Social Development
Accessible Vehicle Funding
October 18, 2018

Summary:
The Accessible Vehicle Funding Program was introduced in 2012 to increase options for accessible transportation and address costs associated with accessibility. The program provides grants up to $25,000 to individuals and their families to retrofit or acquire an accessible vehicle for personal use. The program initially operated on a first come – first serve basis; however, each year the program was expended within a few days. Complaints were received that this process was unfair placing people without access to technology at a disadvantage for application. The application process is now open for continuous intake, approving applications as funding permits.

Anticipated Questions:

• How many people were provided funding last year?

Key Messages:

• We recognize that transportation is essential to participation and inclusion and that the Accessible Vehicle Funding Program is making a real difference in people’s lives.
• The allocated budget for 2018-19 is $350,000. This is unchanged from previous years.
• The application process is open for continuous uptake with eligible applicants being approved as funding permits.

Secondary Messages

• In 2018-19, 20 individuals were funded through the Accessible Vehicle Funding Program.

• Throughout the province, 123 individuals and families now have accessible transportation because of this program.

Prepared by: Michelle Hunt-Grouch, Director of Communications & Disability Policy Office (Susan Tobin)

Approved by: Donna Ballard, Deputy Minister
KEY MESSAGES

Children, Seniors and Social Development
Action Plan for Inclusion
October 18, 2018

Summary:
The 2015-2018 Action Plan for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities advanced inclusion and facilitate increased participation in all aspects of society. It removed existing barriers and prevented new barriers. Barriers include those which are attitudinal, systemic, physical and technological;

Anticipated Questions:

• Is the Action Plan on target and what are the outcomes to date?

Key Messages:

• The objectives noted in the Action Plan for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities are on target. We are seeing results that show greater inclusion and accessibility in our communities.
• Integrating the knowledge and experience of persons with disabilities continues to be vital in the successful completion of actions outlined in the plan. By working collaboratively, we are having a significant impact.
• A total of 36 actions are completed and we are actively working on the remaining commitments. Our annual update is available on the Disability Policy Office website and in print.
• Achieving full inclusion in our province requires a societal shift in how we view accessibility. We are starting to see that shift in our daily lives, our built environment and in decision-making, though much work remains.

Prepared by: Michelle Hunt-Grouchy, Director of Communications & Disability Policy Office (K. Hutchings, D. Barrett)

Approved by: Donna Ballard, Deputy Minister
KEY MESSAGES

Children, Seniors and Social Development
Adult Protection Act
October 18, 2018

Summary:
The Adult Protection Act is modern legislation working to ensure the protection of adults who may not understand the risks associated with abuse and neglect. It is an Act designed to protect all adults in the province who meet the criteria of an adult in need of protective intervention (adults who lack capacity and are abuse/neglected), regardless of where they live. The only exemptions would be persons who are receiving services under the Children and Youth Care and Protection Act or persons who are certified or under a community treatment order under the Mental Health Care and Treatment Act.

Anticipated Questions:

• How many reports have been received under the Adult Protection Act?
• How many adults are under the care and custody of the Adult Protection Act?

Key Messages:
• Our government is committed to protecting the health and well-being of all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.
• We recognize that every adult has the right to live his/her lifestyle of choice; every adult has the right to be involved in decision-making; and every adult has the right to the most effective, but least intrusive forms of support.
• As a government, we are committed to ensuring the safety of those in neglectful or abusive situations, who represent some of our most vulnerable citizens.
• The Adult Protection Act is centered on the individual and is supportive, non-intrusive and community-based.

Secondary Messages:
• The Adult Protection Act protects vulnerable adults who are at risk of abuse or neglect and who do not understand or appreciate that risk.

• Since the Act was proclaimed in June 2014, there have been almost 1,300 reports received with less than 10 percent of these reports having to proceed to investigation.
  • 75% of reports were about adults over the age of 60
  • 25% of reports were about adults under the age of 60

• This is a result of our efforts to constantly grow public awareness about the act; and our strong collaborations with government and community partners.
  • We continue to provide education and public awareness to community and key stakeholders about the Adult Protection Act.
We have also established and maintain excellent working relationships with partners such as the Regional Health Authorities, RNC, RCMP, and the Office of the Public Trustee to operationalize the **Adult Protection Act**. These ongoing collaborations provide us with the opportunity to put the necessary supports in place, in consultation with the adult, to help mitigate the risk.

Currently, we have six adults in the province under the care and custody of the Provincial Director of Adult Protection. It is important to note that this Act is of last resort and while we wish to never have to declare another adult in need of protective intervention; regrettably, we know this is not the reality.

- [NOTE: Five of the adults live in long-term care facilities; one adult lives in a personal care home. The adults day-to-day care is managed by the Regional Health Authority where they reside. There is an annual formal review by a provincial review committee of each adult’s status.]

We all have a legal moral obligation to report a suspected case of adult abuse or neglect. Reports can be made 24 hours per day using the North American toll-free line: 1-855-376-4957.

**Background:**

- From June 30, 2014 until March 31, 2018, there have been 1,242 adult protection reports provincially.

- When an adult protection report is received, it is initially assessed to determine whether it meets the adult protection criteria.

- If the report initially meets the adult protection criteria (alleged abuse/neglect and the adult appears to lack capacity), it proceeds to an evaluation.

- At the end of the evaluation a decision is made. Either there is no further intervention or the risk is mitigated with the provision of professional/supportive services.

- 90% of the reports are either screened out initially or resolved following the evaluation (risk is mitigated).

- The Public Trustee protects the financial assets of an adult who is declared by Court Order to be an adult in need of protective intervention. The Public Trustee will manage the financial affairs of that adult, if there is no private arrangement in place at the time of declaration. This person is appointed by the Provincial Government under the **Public Trustee Act**.

- If following an adult protection investigation, there is no way to mitigate the risk of abuse and neglect without declaring the adult to be in need of protective intervention, the Provincial Director of Adult Protection makes application to Court for that declaration. If the declaration is granted by the judge, the adult is then under the care and custody of the provincial director who is responsible for making decisions about the adult’s care. Part of the decision-making process includes where the adult will live.
Prepared by: Michelle Hunt-Grouchy, Director of Communications & Seniors and Aging Division

Approved by: Donna Ballard, Deputy Minister
KEY MESSAGES

Children, Seniors and Social Development
Auditor General’s Report on Changing Demographics
October 23, 2018

Summary:
In June 2017, Terry Paddon, Auditor General, submitted his Report to the House of Assembly on Performance Audits of Departments and Crown Agencies. Part 3.2 of the report addresses government’s preparedness for changing demographics focused on the Departments of Finance, Health and Community Services, Children, Seniors and Social Development, and Municipal Affairs and Environment. Specific to CSSD, the AG noted, “The Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development has not performed an assessment of the future impact of an aging population on its operations related directly to seniors and related to its role in providing expertise and knowledge to departments on seniors and aging” (p. 44). Overall, the AG concluded that government is not prepared for the impact of changing demographics and that it has not assessed future service needs nor planned for future costs.

Anticipated Questions:

- How is government preparing for a changing demographic?
- What actions has government taken to ensure NL is ready for an aging population?

Key Messages:

- This government has an enhanced focus on seniors in an effort to chart a path forward to ensure seniors remain healthy, active, engaged citizens – living in their own homes and active in their own, age-friendly communities for as long as possible.
- In The Way Forward, we have committed to a number of initiatives which will help address the potential impacts of an aging population. These, and other initiatives, include:
  - Office of the Seniors’ Advocate
  - Healthy Living Assessment for Seniors
  - Housing and Transportation Services for Seniors
  - Primary Health Care Teams
  - Seniors Benefit and NL Income Supplement
  - Financial Assessments for Long-term Care and Community Support Services
- As we move forward, we will continue to listen to our older adults and their families, hear what their priorities are, and work together to ensure that our programs and services address our changing demographics.
**Background:**

- In Newfoundland and Labrador, we have one of the most rapidly aging populations in Canada. Presently, our median age is over 45 and about 19 per cent of our population is aged 65 and over. In the next 10 years, this is expected to increase to over 27 per cent.

- Population aging is a global trend primarily driven by aging “baby boomers,” declining birthrates, and increased longevity. Population aging has profound and far reaching implications for program and service delivery.

- As the number of people over the age of 65 increases so will the total cost of providing health care in the province. Based on Newfoundland and Labrador population projections and the 2014 data from CIHI (the Canadian Institute for Health Information), health care costs could increase by approximately $900 million by 2036.

- An interdepartmental working group is being assembled to address the AG’s report, as well as monitor *The Way Forward* initiatives related to healthy aging.

**Prepared by:** M. Hunt-Grouch, Director of Communications & Seniors and Aging Division

**Approved by:** Donna Ballard, Deputy Minister
KEY MESSAGES

Children, Seniors and Social Development
Age-Friendly Transportation Pilot Project
October 18, 2018

Summary:
Seniors have identified transportation issues as one of the main barriers to social participation and engagement. They want transportation that is available, accessible and affordable. Seniors, older adults, as well as people with mobility challenges, are benefiting from the Age-Friendly Transportation Pilot Project. This pilot project is currently under review and the next call for proposals is expected in the coming months following consultation with the Provincial Advisory Council for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities and the Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors.

Anticipated Questions:

- Will you commit to continue and expand this program which benefits so many older adults?

Key Messages:

- Our government recognizes that accessible, affordable transportation supports active living and healthy aging, as well as promotes social inclusion and gives people choice and control.
- Currently, our government supports transportation services throughout the province with such programs as:
  - Accessible Vehicle Funding Program (ongoing intake) - $350,000
  - Para Transit/Go-Bus (ongoing) - $94,500 (Funding to the City of St. John’s to provide a parallel transit system for people with disabilities)
  - Accessible Taxi (annual call) - $50,000
  - Age-Friendly Transportation (new call expected this fall 2018) - $300,000
- Given that the need for transportation is not just about age or ability, both of CSSD’s advisory councils - the Provincial Advisory Council for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities and the Provincial Advisory Council on Aging and Seniors - are providing input into what the next call for proposals for the Age-Friendly Transportation Pilot Project will look like.
- A new call for proposals is anticipated later in the fall.

Prepared by: M. Hunt-Grouchy, Communications & Seniors and Aging Divisions

Approved by: Donna Ballard, Deputy Minister
KEY MESSAGES

Children, Seniors and Social Development
CYA Status Report on Recommendations 2017-18
October 23, 2018

Summary:
Annually, the Child and Youth Advocate (CYA) releases a report on the status of recommendations from previous reports. In previous years, the CYA’s status reports would be based on the calendar year. However, the CYA has indicated a new format will be implemented to ensure status reports align with the fiscal year. This year, the status report includes all of the 2017 calendar year and the first three months of 2018. The Office of the Child and Youth Advocate has made a total of 201 recommendations to various government departments and agencies since 2006 up to March 31, 2018. The total number of recommendations reviewed in this report is 187 as 14 recommendations have been previously classified as no longer applicable and are no longer included in the overall status of recommendations report. In addition, the Advocate is no longer including an update on Child Death Review Committee recommendations, as the Office is intending to undertake its own monitoring process.

Anticipated Questions:

- What progress has CSSD made on fulfilling the recommendations and is the department committed to completing all recommendations?

Key Messages:

- Our government values the role of Child and Youth Advocate and the recommendations of the Office, and we are committed to working collaboratively with the Advocate and her staff.
- CSSD and other government departments and agencies have made significant progress on the recommendations with four per cent being outstanding.
  - Fully Implemented: 95% (177 of the 187 recommendations)
  - Partially Implemented: 4% (8 outstanding of the 187 recommendations)
  - Not Implemented: 1% (2 outstanding of the 187 recommendations).
- Work is continuing towards implementing all of the outstanding recommendations.
- To put another way, there are 10 outstanding recommendations, five of which are still outstanding for CSSD. Two of the five should be concluded this fall 2018, one by spring 2019, and work is ongoing for the other two.

Secondary Messages:

- The recommendations brought forward by the Child and Youth Advocate are consistent with the recommendations of the Clinical Services Review and other reviews completed on the service delivery of CSSD, and validate our efforts to date towards laying a strong foundation to address the challenges in child protection services.
• Through investigative reports, the Child and Youth Advocate has identified serious systemic issues, and we are firmly committed to addressing these issues to ensure the safety and well-being of all children and youth in the province. The Child and Youth Advocate has an important role in helping us meet that commitment. We will also continue to review all our existing programs and services and focus on addressing any identified issues.

• We are dedicated to creating a culture of organizational accountability, excellence and consistency across all CSSD programs and regions. This is about getting back to the basics of case management and service delivery.

• To date, significant progress has been made regarding the transformation of service delivery for children, youth and their families through the following:
  o New Organizational Model
  o Continuum of Care Strategy
  o New Legislation
  o New Protection and In Care Policy and Procedures Manual
  o New Documentation Policy and Guidelines
  o New Adoptions Policy and Procedures Manual
  o New Training Unit
  o New Quality Assurance Division
  o New Integrated Service Management system
  o New Structured Decision-Making model

Prepared by: Michelle Hunt-Grouch, Director of Communications

Approved by: Donna Ballard, Deputy Minister
KEY MESSAGES

Children Seniors and Social Development
CYA Report: No Second Chance
October 17, 2018

Summary:
On October 11, 2018, the Child and Youth Advocate (CYA) released a report on an investigation into the death of a child who had been receiving services from CSSD. The CYA has made four recommendations:
1. When considering an application to rescind a temporary custody order, CSSD must thoroughly review and document the status of existing conditions including non-compliance.
2. CSSD must ensure policy compliance in requiring all Family Centered Action Plans to be jointly developed and signed with the family, and verified by the supervisor.
3. CSSD must ensure best possible access to mental health services for children by ensuring timely updates to RHA mental health service providers when there are planned changes in a child’s circumstances.
4. HCS, RHAs and CSSD must collaborate to enhance the availability of mental health and addictions services throughout the province for children, youth and their families with a particular focus on children and youth deemed at risk and in receipt of protective services.

Anticipated Questions:

- What is CSSD doing to address the issues raised by the Child and Youth Advocate?

Key Messages:
- This was a tragic loss. It is important that we reflect upon the circumstances of the case and that we learn from them.
- We are committed to implementing all recommendations made by the Child and Youth Advocate in the report.
- In the several years since this tragedy occurred, we have already made significant progress in this regard by taking steps to improve the services we provide to children and their families, including implementing the Structured Decision-Making (SDM) Model and the Triple P Parenting Program.
- CSSD and HCS jointly recognize that children, youth and their families involved in the protective intervention program require better access to mental health and addictions services. As a result, both departments are continuing to work collaboratively to improve access to these services.
- We will continue to work with the Child and Youth Advocate to support the safety and well-being of our province’s children and youth.

Secondary Messages:
- The Provincial Government is committed to creating a culture of accountability, excellence and consistency across all CSSD programs and regions for the benefit of children, youth and their families.
• A number of reports and investigations have been carried out by the Child and Youth Advocate over the past several years. Considerable progress has been made on the recommendations. We know there is more work to do.

• Through the leadership of the Quality Management Division, the department is focused on developing a culture of organizational learning and continuous improvements.

Recommendation Specific Messages
• We have policies in place that assess changes in family circumstances and social workers are required to work with their supervisors when deciding when children can be reunified with their families.
• It is very important for families to be involved in all decisions affecting their children. Social workers have been fully trained in SDM which emphasizes the importance of collaboration with families in the development of case plans. We look at the strengths of families and their needs as we work together for the safety, permanency and well-being of children.
• Our policies require information sharing with members of the child’s in care planning team especially when there has been a change in a child’s circumstances which may require changes to the case plan. We agree all service providers working with children need to work together to provide the best possible support and service and that timely updates among service providers are required when there are changes.

Background
• The province’s first Child and Youth Advocate was appointed in 2002 simultaneously with the proclamation of the Child and Youth Advocate Act.
• The Structured Decision-Making (SDM) model is a comprehensive assessment and case management framework for child protection that uses a series of tools to help social workers assess families and make critical decisions throughout the life of a case (e.g. case opening or case closing decisions).
• SDM is the most evidence-informed model available to support child protection decision-making and was developed by the Children’s Research Center.
• The Triple P Parenting Program provides supports to families to enhance safety and reduce risk to children.

Prepared by: CSSD Communications

Approved by: Donna Ballard, Deputy Minister
KEY MESSAGES

Children, Seniors and Social Development
Children, Youth and Families Act (CYFA)
October 24, 2018

Summary:
The review of the Children and Youth Care and Protection Act (CYCPA) was publically announced and commenced on June 30, 2016. This review resulted in a new Children, Youth and Families Act (CYFA) being passed in the House of Assembly in May 2018. This new act replaces the CYCPA and will come into effect in spring 2019.

Anticipated Questions:

- The Children and Youth Care and Protection Act is fairly new legislation. Why are you replacing it?
- When will the new act be proclaimed?
- How much will it cost to implement the changes in the new legislation?

Key messages:

- The protection and care of at risk children and youth is a core value of our government, and the new Children, Youth and Families Act is key in helping ensure this protection.
- The new Children, Youth and Families Act (CYFA) will come into effect and replace the Children and Youth Care and Protection Act (CYCPA) in the spring of 2019.
- The new act (CYFA) builds on the principles of the previous act (CYCPA) and is child and youth centered, family focused and culturally responsive.
- While still maintaining a focus on children and youth in need of protection, new provisions under the CYFA are aimed at:
  - Improving information sharing to assist in the protection of children and youth
  - Enhancing the focus on maintaining children and youth in their family homes
  - Expanding permanency options for children and youth in foster care
  - Strengthening service delivery to Indigenous children, youth and their families
  - Identifying and supporting youth in need of protection
  - Developing a licensing regime for out of home placements

Background:

- Based on consultations, extensive changes were required to the Act. Since the recommended changes would require amendments to over half of the Children and Youth Care and Protection Act, it was determined a new act was warranted.
- A Bill to replace the Children and Youth Care and Protection Act was introduced and passed in the House of Assembly in May 2018.
- A work plan has been approved which outlines the timelines and tasks required to achieve a spring 2019 proclamation. These activities include regulations, policy and
forms development, staff training, and Indigenous and key stakeholder information sessions.

- As part of the 2019-20 budget process, CSSD officials are finalizing any costs associated with the new Act.

**Prepared by:** Michelle Hunt-Grouchy & Child Protection and Youth Services Division (C. Smith/M. Shallow)

**Approved by:** Donna Ballard, Deputy Minister
KEY MESSAGES

Children, Seniors and Social Development
Healthy Active Living
October 23, 2018

Summary:
Newfoundland and Labrador has some of the highest rates of chronic disease in Canada. Contributing to these poor outcomes are the province’s poor rates of breastfeeding, smoking, physical activity, obesity and vegetable and fruit consumption. Implementing healthy living initiatives to achieve a healthier tomorrow is an action outlined in the Provincial Government’s The Way Forward.

Anticipated Questions:

• With high rates of obesity and low physical activity, how will the Provincial Government improve health outcomes among our residents?

Key Messages:

• This government is committed to improving the health outcomes of the people of the province as outlined in The Way Forward.

• We have set a number of healthy living actions and targets in The Way Forward focusing on (all targets are by 2025):
  o Breastfeeding (increase breastfeeding initiation rate by 7%);
  o healthy eating (increase rate of vegetable and fruit consumption by 5%);
  o anti-smoking (reduce smoking rate by 4%);
  o obesity (reduce obesity rate by 5%) and,
  o physical activity (increase physical activity rates by 7%).

• We have developed a Healthy Active Living Action Plan, which is moving through the approval process and is expected to be released in 2018. The draft action plan has been developed and informed by research, best practice and consultations with many government and non-government partners.

• We support a number of healthy active living programs and initiatives, including the Community Healthy Living Fund, which provides funding to communities and organizations for projects, programs and initiatives that demonstrate direct measurable results towards the targets outlined in "The Way Forward".

Secondary Messages:

• The Healthy Active Living Action Plan supports a Health-in-All Policies approach and will require working together with our schools, communities, community groups, health, recreation, sport and various other partners. It will build on and enhance successful ongoing initiatives.
Prepared by: M. Hunt-Grouchy, Director of Communications & Healthy Living, Sport and Recreation Division

Approved by: Donna Ballard, Deputy Minister
KEY MESSAGES

Children, Seniors and Social Development
Healthy School Planner
October 18, 2018

Summary:
The Healthy School Planner is a free, evidence-based online tool designed to help
schools create healthier learning environments. The Planner helps schools explore
healthy eating, physical activity, mental health and tobacco use and provides
recommendations for an action plan to support student’s health and learning.

Anticipated Questions:

- Are you on target to achieve The Way Forward goal of having 100 schools
  complete the planner?

Key Messages:
- The Way Forward committed that, by 2017, our government will expand funding for
  up to 100 schools to action initiatives identified through the Healthy School Planner.
- Since June 2016, 122 schools have completed the planner and our government has
  supported the schools to action physical activity projects identified through the
  Planner. We are pleased to say that we have exceeded The Way Forward goal.
- Our government has invested $600,000 over the past three years to support schools
  to implement the Healthy School Planner.
- Schools can apply for grants up to $3,000 ($4,000 for Labrador schools) to action
  their school project.

Prepared by: Michelle Hunt-Grouchy, Director of Communications & Healthy Living,
Sport and Recreation Division

Approved by: Donna Ballard, Deputy Minister
KEY MESSAGES

Children, Seniors and Social Development
Individualized Funding
October 23, 2018

Summary:
The Way Forward includes a government commitment to begin implementation of an Individualized Funding model starting with the provision of Community Support Services provided by the Department of Health and Community Services by 2018. Community organizations have advocated for this approach which is evidenced to offer greater value for money than traditional forms of service delivery when implemented with comprehensive planning, support, and flexibility.

Anticipated Questions:

• Will government be able to deliver this program on time?

Key Messages:

• We have committed to developing and implementing an Individualized Funding model by 2018, starting with the provision of Community Support Services provided by the Department of Health and Community Services. Implementation has started with an initial cohort group who access services from the community supports program of the Department of Health and Community Services.

• This model will enable individuals to self-direct the supports they receive and how they are used.

• We are working with government departments and agencies, the Provincial Advisory Council for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities, Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Community Living, Coalition of Persons with Disabilities-NL and individuals to inform the development of framework for individual support that is flexible, portable and responds to a person’s needs.

Secondary Messages:

• Supports for individuals are currently provided through a number of programs, departments and often with different application processes and eligibility. This can be confusing, inefficient and sometimes inequitable.

• The new Individualized Funding model will be more responsive to the needs of those accessing supportive supports and programs.

• We anticipate the program will be expanded in the future beyond the Community Support Services provided by the Department of Health and Community Services to other supports and services delivered by other departments and agencies.

Prepared by: M. Hunt-Grouchy, Director of Communications & DPO (K. Hutchings)

Approved by: Donna Ballard, Deputy Minister
KEY MESSAGES

Children, Seniors and Social Development
Intergovernmental and Indigenous Affairs Secretariat
Innu Inquiry
October 22, 2018

Summary:
The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Innu entered into a Memorandum of Understanding on July 5, 2017, that outlined their mutual intent to pursue an inquiry into the treatment, experiences and outcomes of Innu in the child protection system. Since that time, the Provincial Government and Innu Leadership jointly completed a draft Terms of Reference for the Inquiry. Following a funding announcement on March 13, 2018, MP Yvonne Jones relayed to Innu leadership the Federal Government’s plan to be a full participant in a province-led inquiry into Innu children in care and fund Innu participation in the inquiry. As part of Budget 2018, the Provincial Government allocated $1 million for the inquiry.

Anticipated Questions:

• When will the Innu Inquiry start?

Key Messages:
• Under the constitution, it is the Federal Government’s responsibility to provide child protection services on Reserve; however, in the absence of specific federal services in this area, the Federal Government contracts with CSSD to provide for the delivery of child protection on Reserve (Natuashish and Sheshatshiu).
• Consistent with the rest of Canada, our province is experiencing an over-representation of Indigenous children in the child protection system and the Innu Nation and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador have agreed to hold an inquiry into the treatment of Innu children in the foster care system.
• Budget 2018 allocated $1 million to start this work and advance discussions with the Federal Government. We welcomed word that the Federal Government will be participating in the inquiry into the treatment, experiences and outcomes of Innu in the child protection system.
• There are discussions ongoing to finalize the Terms of Reference and federal participation, then the Inquiry can begin.
• Our government is absolutely committed to working to reduce the number of Indigenous children in care. We have consulted extensively with Indigenous governments and organizations to develop our new Children, Youth and Families Act, which has provisions that will strengthen service delivery for Indigenous children, youth and their families.

Prepared by: Communications & Policy, Planning & Information Management Divisions

Approved by: Donna Ballard, Deputy Minister
KEY MESSAGES

Children, Seniors and Social Development
Level 4 Placements
October 23, 2018

Summary:
In 2012, CSSD announced and implemented a level system for out-of-home placements for children/youth with four levels of care. Levels 1 to 3 are family-based (kinship, foster care, and specialized foster care). Level 4 is staffed residential placements, and includes group homes, individualized living arrangements, and emergency placement homes.

Anticipated Questions:

- What actions is the government taking to ensure Level 4 placements are used on an as-needed basis?

Key Messages:

- The majority of children receiving child protection services reside at home with their families and receive supports and services to mitigate identified risks. Keeping children safely at home with family is our overall main goal.
- However, when children are unable to safely remain with their families, staffed residential placements are only used when a family-based placement is unavailable or the child/youth has needs that require a staffed residential placement.
- CSSD continues innovative pilots to address the need for more family-based placements:
  - Family-based Care Pilot with Key Assets provides family-based placements for children/youth with complex needs and large sibling groups.
  - Foster Families Support Pilot with Waypoints provides training and in-home supports to current foster parents with the goal of reducing foster home breakdowns/closures and increasing interest in fostering.

Secondary Messages:

- Service providers of staffed residential placements are expected to meet all 22 service standards set by CSSD to ensure quality care.
- Social workers visit children and placements monthly and complete monthly and annual reviews on each placement to ensure standard compliance.

Prepared by: Michelle Hunt-Grouch, Director of Communications & In-Care and Adoptions Division

Approved by: Donna Ballard, Deputy Minister
KEY MESSAGES

Children, Seniors and Social Development
Multi-year Funding
October 24, 2018

Summary:
In The Way Forward: A Vision for Sustainability and Growth in Newfoundland and Labrador, a commitment to deliver a strategic, one-window multi-year approach to community grant funding was outlined. Phase one of multi-year funding proceeded last spring with an initial group of 22 community groups, representing a broad cross-section of society. Evaluations of this initial implementation is still ongoing to inform next steps.

Anticipated Questions:

• When will government add more organizations to the list for multi-year funding?

Key Messages:

• Community groups in our province provide important and valuable services and programs to our citizens. They do excellent work in a variety of areas to meet social, wellness, cultural and other community needs.
• As part of The Way Forward, we made a commitment to multi-year funding for community groups, providing a greater certainty for funding which allows these organizations to focus their efforts on delivery of services and programs and make longer-term decisions around staffing.
• Phase one of multi-year funding proceeded last spring with an initial group of 22 community groups, representing a broad cross-section of society. We are still evaluating this initial implementation to inform next steps.
• This is a new and innovative approach for both community groups and government and an approach that considers the benefits it will provide to the people of the province along with ensuring these decisions are fiscally responsible.

Secondary Messages:

• All other community groups received their current funding levels for this fiscal year. We have a strong evaluation process to monitor the progress of phase one to determine if it is meeting the needs of both community groups and government.

• Multi-year funding is available for a maximum of three years, at which point organizations must re-apply.

Prepared by: Michelle Hunt-Grouch, Director of Communications & Renee Ryan, Director of Policy, Planning & Information Management

Approved by: Donna Ballard, Deputy Minister
Background:

Community groups selected for phase one for multi-year funding are:

1. Aboriginal Sport and Recreation Circle
2. AIDS Committee of Newfoundland and Labrador
3. Association of New Canadians
4. Bay St. George Status of Women Association
5. Canadian Mental Health Association
6. CNIB
7. Coalition of Persons with Disabilities
8. Community Sector Council
9. Corner Brook Status of Women Council
10. Choices for Youth
11. CHANNAL
12. Gateway Status of Women Council
13. Gender Status of Women Council
14. Kids Eat Smart
15. Labrador West Status of Women Council
16. Mokami Status of Women Council
17. Newfoundland and Labrador Aboriginal Women’s Association
18. Seniors NL
20. Stella’s Circle Community Services
21. St. John’s Status of Women Council
22. Vera Perlin Society Inc.
KEY MESSAGES

Children, Seniors and Social Development
Number of Children in Care
October 18, 2018

Summary:
From June 2013-17 the number of children and youth in care increased by 155 (18 per cent). This increase happened due to a difference between entry and exit of children/youth from care, entry being higher than exit, and children/youth were staying in care for a longer period. In recent quarters (June 2017 - March 2018), CSSD has seen the number of children and youth in care decrease slightly by 44 (4 per cent).

Anticipated Questions:

- What actions is CSSD taking to reduce the number of children in care?

Key Messages:

- We are very concerned about the number of children and youth in care and are committed to working with families, communities and Indigenous governments to address these concerns.
- There are a range of supports and services provided to families to prevent children from coming into care. This includes services and supports under our protective intervention program.
- We feel it is best to keep children at home with their families when possible; however, where removal is necessary we work closely with parents to develop a plan to reunify the child with their family.

Secondary Messages:

- We are also concerned about the over-representation of Indigenous children and youth in care, which is a shared concern with other jurisdictions in Canada.

- CSSD continues to work with the NG, MIFN, SIFN, and IRT to build placement resources in Inuit and Innu communities, which will reduce the need to have children/youth placed outside their communities, and subsequently allow more children/youth to remain connected with their families and cultures.

- The new Children Youth and Families Act received Royal Assent May 31, 2018 and includes provisions to:
  - require that a cultural connection plan be included in the plan for the child filed with the court for indigenous children and youth,
  - strengthen permanency planning options for children and youth in care
  - establish a regulated licensing process for agencies, family based and residential placement providers that will further strengthen the placement options for children and youth in care.

- It is important that we all work together to engage in the process of improving outcomes for children and youth in the child protection system.
KEY MESSAGES

Children, Seniors and Social Development
OCYA Inuit Review
October 24, 2018

Summary:
The Child and Youth Advocate (CYA) announced on April 18, 2018, that her office would commence a review into Inuit children and youth in care as requested by the Nunatsiavut Government. This is a separate review than the one requested by the Innu Nation regarding Innu children and youth.

Anticipated Questions:

- Has CSSD cooperated with the Child and Youth Advocate’s review of Inuit children and youth in care?

Key Messages:
- CSSD has been fully cooperating with the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate (OCYA) as this review into Inuit children and youth in care has advanced.
- We have already provided 85 per cent of requested information to the OCYA and will continue to provide the remainder of information requested. We have also had direct meetings with the OCYA and are fully cooperative with the process.
- The over representation of Indigenous children and youth in care is not confined to Newfoundland and Labrador and is an issue experienced across Canada. This is a broad systemic issue.
- In an effort to change this trend, social workers collaborate with our Indigenous partners on case planning in the best interest of children and youth.
- CSSD is partnering with the Nunatsiavut Government to increase placement resources in Inuit communities to decrease the number of Inuit children and youth in care being placed outside of their communities or the Labrador region.

Secondary Messages:
- CSSD has facilitated meetings between OCYA staff and CSSD staff in each of the CSSD offices in the NG zone and in Happy Valley-Goose Bay.
- In Labrador, efforts continue in working with the Indigenous leadership, departmental staff and foster parents to develop and implement creative approaches to increase more foster homes and other placement options. This will allow for more children who need out-of-home placement to remain in their community, closer to home and within their culture.
- To decrease the number of Inuit children and youth in care being placed outside of their communities, CSSD and the NG are partnering to provide staffed placement resources and increase foster home capacity in Hopedale and Nain.

Prepared by: Communications & Policy, Planning & Information Management Divisions
Approved by: Donna Ballard, DM
KEY MESSAGES

Children, Seniors and Social Development
Poverty Reduction / Supports for Low Income
October 23, 2018

Summary:
The Provincial Government is committed to preventing and alleviating poverty. Budget 2018 invests over $280 million in approximately 100 poverty reduction initiatives (an increase from $270M in Budget 2017 and $250M in 2016).

Some examples of poverty reduction initiatives:
- $65.1 million for the Newfoundland and Labrador Income Supplement
- $56.3 million for the Seniors’ Benefit
  - For a combined total investment of $121 million, which benefits 155,000 individuals and their families receiving the Income Supplement and 47,000 seniors and their families receiving the Seniors’ Benefit.
- $8.3 million for the Supportive Living Program, which provides funding to local non-profits to provide housing and supports to individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness.
- $4.1 million in funding for the Home Energy Savings Program, which provides lower income households with grants of up to $5,000 for cost-effective upgrades in existing homes with electric heat, focusing on insulation and air sealing. It is delivered through the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation.
- Increased funding for Women’s Centres across the province

Anticipated Questions:

- What is government’s overall plan for poverty reduction and what concrete examples can you give to show you are reducing poverty/supporting low income?

Key Messages:
- Through Budget 2018, we are investing over $280 million in approximately 100 poverty reduction initiatives, the largest funding commitment our province has ever provided for poverty reduction.
- As a government, we value the role of public engagement and partnership in creating policies and programs that support and empower people. We are committed to continuing our work with community partners to identify priorities and gaps related to poverty.
- In addition to initiatives under The Way Forward that are reducing poverty, such as adopting a Health-in-All Policies approach, implementing recommendations from both the Report on the Premier’s Task Force on Improving Educational Outcomes as well as that of the All Party Committee on Mental Health and Addictions, we are working on a provincial housing and homelessness plan.
- We are also focusing our efforts on such initiatives as private sector job creation and economic growth, and implementing an individualized funding model for persons with disabilities.
Secondary Messages:

- The Federal Government engaged provinces and territories in the development of *Opportunity for All: Canada’s First Poverty Reduction Strategy*, which was released in August 2018.

- *Opportunity for All* aligns well with ongoing poverty reduction work in Newfoundland and Labrador.

- We will continue to work closely with the Federal Government and other provinces and territories during the implementation of the strategy.

Prepared by: Michelle Hunt-Grouchy, Director of Communications

Approved by: Donna Ballard, Deputy Minister
KEY MESSAGES

Children, Seniors and Social Development
Protective Intervention
October 23, 2018

Summary:
The Protective Intervention Program (PIP) is designed to promote the safety and well-being of children who are, or are at risk of, being maltreated, either through harm caused by the parent or through the parent’s failure to protect the child from harm by another person, as defined in the Children and Youth Care and Protection Act (the Act). The Act provides authority for social workers, within CSSD, to assess risk to the child, take whatever action is considered appropriate to mitigate that risk when there is a concern of child maltreatment, and develop a plan to identify the services and supports required to reduce identified risks to the child. Social Workers use a decision making model called Structured Decision Making® (SDM®) for the PIP to assist with critical decisions in the life of a case (i.e., case opening or case closing).

Anticipated Questions:

- How many families are involved in PIP?
  - There are currently 2,519 families involved in PIP as of March 31, 2018.
- What is CSSD doing to mitigate risk and maintain children with their families?

Key Messages:

- CSSD makes every effort to support children and families to reduce risk and maintain children at home. The majority of children receiving services from CSSD are residing in their family home (75-80%).
- Through the Protective Intervention Program (PIP), CSSD provides supports and services to families to enhance safety and reduce risk to children.
- CSSD has developed policies to standardize these supports provided to families in areas such as transportation, respite, child care, and parenting capacity assessments, to name a few.
- CSSD also works to connect families with supports and services available in their own communities such as mental health and addictions counselling.

Secondary Messages:

- CSSD completed research and a jurisdictional review on parenting programs. The Triple P Positive Parenting Program® (Triple P) was identified as one of the most effective parent coaching programs worldwide and has been studied over 250 times. It is used in every jurisdiction in Canada.

- The department’s Intervention Services program began providing Triple P delivery in April 2017 in an effort to enhance safety and reduce risk to children in the Protective Intervention Program, including to parents whose children are in Kinship placements.
- CSSD is currently piloting Triple P to a group of parents whose children are in care and placed in Level 4 Placements.

**Prepared by:** Michelle Hunt-Grouchy, Director of Communications & Erin Daley/Duane Pauls/M Shallow

**Approved by:** Donna Ballard, Deputy Minister
KEY MESSAGES

Children, Seniors and Social Development
Revised Canada’s Food Guide
October 23, 2018

Summary:
In October 2016, Health Canada announced a new Healthy Eating Strategy for Canada with the vision of making the healthy choice the easy choice for all Canadians. One of the main components of this Strategy includes a revision to Canada’s Food Guide. The release of this new guide is anticipated in late Fall 2018.

Anticipated Questions:
• Is the province prepared for the launch of the new Canada’s Food Guide?

Key Messages:
• We have committed in The Way Forward to create communities that support healthy living and have defined a target to increase vegetable and fruit consumption.
• The new Canada’s Food Guide, which is anticipated to be released in late fall 2018, will complement provincial efforts in supporting Newfoundlanders and Labradors to make healthier choices.
• Integration and implementation of the new Canada’s Food Guide will require support from the Regional Health Authorities and our community partners.
• CSSD healthy living officials are already working with our partners in anticipation of the new guide and in preparation for its launch. We are committed to reviewing policy, programs and resources and revising them as needed.
• A renewal of our province’s School Food Guidelines is planned for 2019, which will align with the new Canada’s Food Guide.

Background:
• Health Canada has engaged CSSD healthy living and communications officials on dissemination and outreach plans for the new Canada’s Food Guide, which includes a social marketing campaign, traditional media, social media and print communications. These materials will be provided by Health Canada.
• CSSD is engaged with EECD, Food First NL, regional health authorities, school districts and other partners in an assessment of current School Food Guidelines.
  o CSSD provides annual funding in the amount of $105,000 to Food First NL.
  o In 2017-18, CSSD provided one-time funding in the amount of $50,000 to Food First NL to support the planning and implementation of the school food guidelines assessment.
• If Health Canada includes a policy around 100% fruit juice and chocolate milk not being sold or served at public institutions, the Provincial Government will consider how federal policy impacts programs and policies in NL.
KEY MESSAGES

Children, Seniors and Social Development
Seniors
October 24, 2018

Summary:
Newfoundland and Labrador has one of the most rapidly aging populations in Canada. Presently, the province’s median age is over 45 and about 19 per cent of the population is aged 65 and over. In the next 10 years, this is expected to increase to over 27 per cent.

Anticipated Questions:

• What is government doing to support seniors?

Key Messages:

• Our government has an enhanced focus on seniors in an effort to chart a path forward to ensure seniors remain healthy, active, engaged citizens – living in their own homes and active in their own, age-friendly communities for as long as possible.

• In The Way Forward, we have committed to a number of initiatives and we are actioning programs that make the lives of older adults and seniors better. These, and other initiatives, include:
  o Office of the Seniors’ Advocate
  o Healthy Living Assessment for Seniors
  o Housing and Transportation Services for Seniors
  o Primary Health Care Teams
  o Seniors Benefit and NL Income Supplement
  o Financial Assessments for Long-term Care and Community Support Services

• We are committed to working with our community partners to ensure that our programs, policies and services are responsive to the needs of seniors and their families.

Secondary Messages/Examples:

• The Provincial Government has committed to a number of initiatives within The Way Forward as well as others, which will help address the potential impacts of an aging population, including:
  o We created an Office of the Seniors’ Advocate (Dr. Suzanne Brake) to work with seniors and stakeholders to identify, review, and analyze systemic issues, make independent recommendations, and promote awareness to the general public.

  o We appreciate the importance of supporting seniors and those that earn a lower income. Our Seniors’ Benefit and Income Supplement help put more money in the pockets of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.
In Budget 2018 we announced $121 million in these valuable programs – $65.1 million for the Income Supplement reaching approximately 155,000 individuals and their families and $56.3 million for the Seniors’ Benefit benefitting approximately 47,000 seniors and their families.

- As our population continues to age, we are ensuring that the resources are in place for residents to be full and active participants in their communities.
  - Our government invests $95,000 annually for the **Age-Friendly Newfoundland and Labrador Communities Program**. This program offers funding to incorporated municipalities, and Indigenous governments and communities throughout the province to support planning for changing demographics.
  - Recent projects under Age-Friendly NL Communities Program include:
    - Town of Cormack - $7,800 to support programs focusing on social inclusion, physical activity, and healthy eating. Cormack completed an age-friendly community assessment and action plan in 2010-11.
    - Town of Gambo - $8,500 to update their age-friendly assessment and action plan from 2011-12.
    - Town of Grand Falls-Windsor - $8,700 for expansion of their Meals-on-Wheels pilot into a program. Grand Falls-Windsor independently completed an age-friendly community assessment in 2010 without government funding.
    - Town of Isle aux Morts - $7,500 to support recreation programs that promote physical activity and social inclusion. Isle aux Morts completed an age-friendly assessment and action plan in 2015-16.
    - Town of New-Wes-Valley - $8,500 to support an Age-Friendly Summit and to update their age-friendly assessment and action plan from 2010-11.
    - Town of Placentia - $8,500 to support their annual Age-Friendly Fair and Expo. Placentia Area Chamber of Commerce is also working in partnership with the Town to complete an age-friendly assessment and action plan.
    - Town of St. Lawrence - $8,500 to continue work on an accessible walking trail. St. Lawrence completed an age-friendly assessment and action plan in 2009-10 and identified outdoor spaces as a priority.
    - Town of Summerford - $8,500 to complete an age-friendly assessment and action plan.
With our changing demographics, it is even more important that older adults and seniors are supported to remain independent and continue to be able to make valuable contributions to their communities, which includes having access to accessible, age-friendly transportation.

- In 2017-18, our government invested $300,000 for the Age-Friendly Transportation Pilot Project to support age-friendly and accessible transportation. This funding included supporting five Age-Friendly Transportation Pilot Projects throughout the province:
  - St. John’s Transportation Commission (Metrobus) – Community Bus Service
  - Clarenville – Regional Extended Seniors’ Transportation (CREST) Bus Service
  - Springdale – Care2Ride Program
  - Bay St. George South Area Development Association – Ride for Ages
  - Twillingate – New World Island – Community Wheels Project

  (NOTE: A sixth project, Canadian Red Cross Society – Community Transportation Service, discontinued its transportation service as of March 31, 2018, due to realignment of organizational priorities at the national and provincial levels. No funding was provided to the Society.)

Prepared by: Michelle Hunt-Grouchy, Director of Communications

Approved by: Donna Ballard, Deputy Minister
KEY MESSAGES

Children, Seniors and Social Development
Seniors’ Advocate
October 18, 2018

Summary:
In July 2017, the Provincial Government proclaimed the legislation to establish an Office of the Seniors’ Advocate. During the fall 2017 House of Assembly sitting, Suzanne Brake was named as the first Advocate.

Anticipated Questions:

• Why hasn’t the Seniors’ Advocate been provided with more powers in the protection of seniors?

Key Messages:

• In our platform document, A Stronger Tomorrow: Our Five Point Plan, we committed to establishing an Office of the Seniors’ Advocate (OSA) and proposed it be independent of government, reporting to the House of Assembly and work to improve the health and well-being of seniors. We made this commitment for the benefit of all seniors in Newfoundland and Labrador and we delivered on this commitment.
• The Seniors’ Advocate is an Officer of the House of Assembly and works with the Citizens’ Representative, but will not duplicate or impede its mandate.
• The Seniors’ Advocate works with seniors and stakeholders to identify, review, and analyze systemic issues related to seniors, make independent recommendations, and promote awareness to the general public.
• Dr. Suzanne Brake has built a career around seniors and their care Dr. Brake is a strong advocate on behalf of seniors in our province.
• Seniors and seniors’ organizations throughout the province asked for this office for some time. The response to Dr. Brake’s appointment has been very welcomed and she is continuing to engage with these groups and communities throughout the province.

Background:

• and budget 2016 committed $500,000 per year for the office.

• Regulations were developed, in consultation with key stakeholders, and the act came into force in July 2017.

• On November 8, 2017, government announced the appointment of Dr. Suzanne Brake as the province’s first Seniors’ Advocate.
The OSA is located in the Sir Brian Dunfield Building (NL Housing) and can be reached at 709-729-6603 or SuzanneBrake@SeniorsAdvocateNL.ca.

Prepared by: Michelle Hunt-Grouchy, Director of Communications & Seniors and Aging Division

Approved by: Donna Ballard, Deputy Minister
KEY MESSAGES

Children, Seniors and Social Development
Service Animal Act
October 24, 2018

Summary:
Service animals are trained to assist persons with disabilities. The NL Service Animal Act was enacted in 2012 and protects the right of persons with service animals to enter a public facility and access services. The 2012 act broadened the protection to persons with any type of disability and a service animal trained to provide assistance to a person with a disability and having the qualifications prescribed by the regulations and used by a person with a disability. Regulations have not yet been developed. The act does not deal with comfort or emotional support animals, or therapy animals. The Department of Justice and Public Safety is responsible for the Service Animal Act.

Anticipated Questions:

• We have heard disturbing stories of people with service animals being turned away from public spaces. What is government doing to raise awareness?

Key Messages:

• Our government is highly committed to protecting the rights of all individuals to access services and facilities available to the public. We support inclusion and accessibility throughout everything we do.

• The Service Animal Act is in place to ensure people with service animals can access public services. That includes retail, hotels, government services, theaters – any place that the public is permitted to go.

• We want to ensure that people offering services are aware of the Service Animal Act and familiar with their own obligations under this piece of legislation. We have produced promotional materials to help with the awareness. These are being distributed throughout the province.

• Government is committed to supporting a Human Rights Commission that functions as efficiently and effectively as possible in providing services to those who lodge complaints of discrimination and harassment.

• The Human Rights Act, 2010 recognizes the dignity and worth of every person and provides for equal rights and opportunities without discrimination that is contrary to law.

Secondary Messages:

• No one can deny services to a person because they have a service animal.

• Service animals are now trained to help people with various types of disabilities, including diabetes, autism, vision, mobility, hearing, and deaf.

• Service animals provide valuable services for individuals and are an essential link to an individual's independence, safety and well-being.
Prepared by: Communications Division & DPO

Approved by: Donna Ballard, Deputy Minister
KEY MESSAGES

Children, Seniors and Social Development
Smoking and e-cigarette use in NL Students
October 23, 2018

Summary:
Smoking rates among youth are higher in NL than the national rate. The increase in use of electronic cigarettes among youth is concerning. There are concerns about the appeal of vaping products among youth and their potential to promote tobacco use. Experimentation may lead to regular use, nicotine addiction and lead some youth to start to smoke tobacco products.

Anticipated Questions:
• What is the province doing to prevent young people from starting to use electronic cigarettes?

Key Messages:
• Our goal is to prevent children and youth from starting to smoke.
• One of our first orders of business as a government was amending the Tobacco Control Act (now called the Tobacco and Vapour Products Control Act) in June 2016 to further protect the public, in particular children and youth, from the harms of flavoured tobacco products (including menthol) and hookah smoking, and the potential harms of electronic cigarettes. These amendments came into full effect on July 1, 2017.
• We are taking a comprehensive approach that includes public education and awareness, legislation, taxation, school and community programs, research and working with partners.
• In March 2018, our government provided $50,000 to the Alliance for the Control of Tobacco (ACT) to develop and implement a plan to prevent and reduce youth smoking, with a focus on preventing and reducing the use of e-cigarettes among youth.
  o The work includes engaging key stakeholders, reviewing curriculum outcomes in particular in junior and senior high, developing promotional materials along with resource development under the umbrella of a comprehensive school approach.
• On October 1, 2018, our government launched SkillsPass NL training courses for workers in tobacco and vapour retail industries.
  o The Responsible Tobacco and Vapour Products Retailing course, which was launched by SNL, is divided into two streams. This course will help employers/employees understand and comply with tobacco legislation, keep harmful substances out of the hands of minors and avoid serious fines and penalties.
• Health Canada is developing a youth vaping prevention marketing campaign aimed at reducing the uptake of vaping products among youth aged 13-18.
  o The campaign aims to increase youth aged 13-18, and parents and teachers of youth aged 13-18, awareness of the harms and risks associated with
vaping products. The province will collaborate with Health Canada to leverage this campaign with the prevention plan being developed by ACT.

Background:
- The **Tobacco and Vapour Products Control Act:**
  - Prohibits the sale of tobacco and electronic cigarettes to persons under the age of 19.
  - Prohibits the sale of flavoured tobacco products, including menthol cigarettes.
  - Restricts where tobacco and vapour products can be sold. For example, prohibited from selling in recreational facilities, temporary facility, schools, and theatres.
  - Restricts the display and promotion of tobacco and electronic cigarette products in retail stores.

- The 2016-2017 Canadian Student, Tobacco and Alcohol and Drug Survey (CSTADS) reports that:
  - **Cigarette Use:**
    - 27% of NL students in grades 7-12 have tried smoking a cigarette. The national rate is 18%. Both remain unchanged from 2014-15.
    - 8% of NL students in grades 7-12 were current cigarette smokers compared to the national rate of 3% (unchanged from 2014-15).
    - 12% of NL students in grades 7-12 smoked cigarettes in the past 30 days. National rate is 6%. Both unchanged from 2014-15.

  - **Electronic cigarettes:**
    - 38% of NL students in grades 7-12 reported having tried an electronic cigarette. An increase from 30% in 2014-15. The current national rate is 23%, an increase from 20% in 2014-15.
    - Over half (53%) of NL students in grades 10-12 reported trying an e-cigarette. National rate is 33%.
    - 22% of students in grades 7-12 had used an e-cigarette in the past 30 days, an increase from 15% in 2014-15. National rate is 10%, an increase from 6.5% in 2014-15.
    - Almost one third (32%) of students in grades 10-12 reported using an e-cigarette in the past 30 days. The national rate is 15.

- In March 2018, $50,000 was provided to the Alliance for the Control of Tobacco (ACT) to develop and implement a plan to prevent and reduce youth smoking, with a focus on preventing and reducing the use of e-cigarettes among youth.

  - To facilitate this work, ACT has formed a working group (to date 3 meetings held) made of key partners including the NL English School District, Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of School Councils, Memorial University Faculty of Education and School of Pharmacy, Regional Health Authorities, Departments of Education and Early Learning and Children, Children, Seniors and Social Development and Service NL.
Plan development will include an examination of available research and best practice; determining the needs of key target groups including teachers (curriculum/resources), parents and youth in the province. It will include reviewing curriculum outcomes; in particular in junior and senior high, resource development under the umbrella of a comprehensive school health approach and consider youth sources of electronic cigarettes.

- Under the **Smoke-Free Environment Act, 2005**, the use of tobacco and electronic cigarettes is prohibited in all indoor public places and workplaces and in motor vehicles carrying children under the age of 16. These measures help to protect youth from exposure to secondhand smoke and vapour and reduces the visibly of smoking in our communities thereby helping to denormalize smoking.

- The Federal Government, **Tobacco and Vaping Products Act (TVPA)** became law on May 23, 2018. This law aims to protect youth from nicotine addiction and inducement to tobacco use. The amendments will provide further protection related to electronic cigarette by regulating the manufacture, sale, labeling and promotion of vaping products.

**Prepared by:** M. Hunt- Grouchy, Director of Communications & B. Squires / M. Healey, Healthy Living, Sport and Recreation Division

**Approved by:** Donna Ballard, DM
KEY MESSAGES

Children, Seniors and Social Development
Universal Design
October 23, 2018

Summary:
Universal Design is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without adaptation or specialized design. Universal Design principles can be applied to any product, environment or communications. The Action Plan for the Provincial Framework for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities includes two actions to promote the use of Universal Design principles: to inform new Provincial Government building projects, and sharing of information and promotion of Universal Design with private and community stakeholders.

Anticipated Questions:

• As Minister Responsible for the Status of Persons with Disabilities, what are you doing to ensure government considers Universal Design principles?

Key Messages:

• We recognize the benefits of the application of Universal Design principles and its use designing technology, instruction, services, buildings, products, and environments. The application of Universal Design principles benefits everyone.

• The Disability Policy Office is engaging with the Universal Design Network to identify specifications that meet Universal Design principles. This Network will be sharing its expertise with Transportation and Works (TW) promoting universal design techniques and features to TW officials throughout the province.

• Our government is promoting Universal Design through a partnership with the Coalition of Persons with Disabilities. A web-based interactive Universal Design tool was created and is available to the construction industry, home builders, architects and the general public. This tool depicts low cost, universal design elements in a residential home.

Secondary Messages:

• Going forward, we are looking at the promotion and consideration of Universal Design in government initiatives such as procurement, service delivery, new buildings and education.

• The Department of Transportation and Works is completing a study into the implications of incorporating Universal Design and accessibility features into government projects.

Prepared by: Communications Division & DPO

Approved by: Donna Ballard, Deputy Minister
KEY MESSAGES

Children, Seniors and Social Development
Youth Homelessness
October 23, 2018

Summary:
Ending homelessness will be a key component to a new Comprehensive Housing and Homelessness Plan, including a focus on youth homelessness. The 2018 Point in Time Count carried out by End Homelessness St. John’s showed that a high proportion of homeless adults had involvement with the child protection system as children and youth. Finalization of this draft strategy is awaiting the finalization of a bilateral agreement with the Federal Government on funding from the National Housing Strategy. The Youth Services Program is focused on areas of a youth’s life to improve their quality of life such as financial support, housing stability, relationships, life skills, education and emotional well-being.

Anticipated Questions:

• What is the government doing to end youth homelessness?
• How will you ensure youth who have availed of your programs are able to transition to adulthood and reduce instances of youth homelessness?

Key Messages:

• We recognize we need better outcomes for the at-risk children and youth in our province. The Provincial Government is currently working on a new Comprehensive Housing and Homelessness Plan. Ending youth homelessness will be a key component of this plan.
• We committed to reviewing our Youth Services Program to ensure it is more responsive to the unique needs of vulnerable youth as they transition to adulthood. I am pleased to say we fulfilled this commitment.
• The outcome of the review resulted in changes to the new Act Respecting Children, Youth and Families. Provisions in the new Act will assist in identifying and supporting youth who are in need of protection and remove restrictions so that all vulnerable youth under a youth services agreement can receive services until their 21st birthday.

Secondary Messages:

• The voluntary Youth Services Program is the primary mechanism by which CSSD serves vulnerable youth, including those aging out or opting out of foster care.

• We also continue to work closely with our partners such as Choices for Youth, as we try to best address issues facing the vulnerable youth of our province and to provide the necessary supports needed to transition to independence.
We have entered into a multiyear funding grant with Choices for Youth, for three years in order to provide continued financial support for the important programs and services that Choices for Youth offers to support vulnerable youth.

Prepared by: M. Hunt-Grouchy, Director of Communications & Poverty Reduction (Aisling Gogan) and Youth Services (Michelle Shallow)

Approved by: Donna Ballard, Deputy Minister