

November 20, 2018

COR/2018/075708

Dear Applicant:

Re: Your request for access to information under Part II of the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* [Our File #: HCS/121/2018]

On October 22, 2018, the Department of Health and Community Services (the Department) 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 announce that the Department has decided to provide access to the requested information.

Please be advised that you may ask the Information and Privacy Commissioner to review the processing of your access request, as set out in section 42 of the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (the *Act*). 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.

The address and contact information of 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*.

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 contact the undersigned by telephone at 709-729-7010 or by email at MichaelCook@gov.nl.ca.



Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
Department of Health and Community Services

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael Cook".

Michael Cook
ATIPP Coordinator
/Enclosures

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

Health and Community Services

Service Agreements with Private and Community Ambulance Operators

October 17, 2018

Summary:

In September, the Provincial Government held public consultations seeking input on the development of new Emergency Health Services and Community Paramedicine legislation to govern the road ambulance program. Legislation is expected to be introduced during the fall session of the House of Assembly. One issue that has arose during the consultations and in local media of recent is the fact that notice was sent to all 48 private and community ambulance operators in March to inform them that the current service agreements would expire on September 22.

Anticipated Questions:

- What is happening with contract negotiations?
- Have new agreements been arranged with ambulance operators?

Key Messages:

- We met with the operator association presidents. Following this meeting, we sent service agreement amendments to all private and community ambulance operators, extending their contracts by 18 months.
- The majority of operators have agreed to the extension and have signed formal service agreements. We are working with the remaining operators who have not yet signed to finalize their agreements. We are continuing to honour the current agreements until new ones are signed. We expect all service agreements to be signed in the next few weeks.
- While we work together to get the amended agreements signed, ambulance services will continue to be provided. We agree that maintaining the integrity of our ambulance service is paramount. People need to know that they have a service they can rely on in case of an emergency.

Secondary Messages:

- The Public Procurement Act requires an open and transparent process.
- Over the coming months, we will be working with ambulance operators to hear their ideas on what services should look like in our communities before a Request for Proposals is issued.

Prepared by: Communications Division, Health and Community Services

Approved by:

Heather Hanrahan, Assistant Deputy Minister

John G. Abbott, Deputy Minister

Hon. John Haggie, Minister

KEY MESSAGES

Health and Community Services

Personal Care Homes

October 17, 2018

Summary:

The personal care home sector has raised concerns publicly that the Provincial Government is changing the rules around placement and subsidies. Individuals such as Bev Russell, Shawn Lane, Paul Oram, and Paul Lane have been extremely vocal in media saying that these changes have negatively impacted seniors and their families. Minister Haggie has responded publicly to these comments on VOCM Open Line and CBC Central Morning Show.

Anticipated Questions:

- Why did government change the rules?
- Why is government not providing subsidies anymore?
- Why was the personal care home sector not consulted on these changes?

Key Messages:

- We have met with industry representatives on a number of occasions to explain that there has been no change to the eligibility rules for placement in personal care homes. The regional health authorities have been directed to apply the current rules in a clear and consistent manner.
- Subsidies for placement in a personal care home continue to be available and continue to be provided based on a person's clinical need.
- The department and industry representatives are working together to determine what we can all do to improve the program and make it more responsive for those who rely on it.

Prepared by: Communications Division, Health and Community Services

Approved by:

Heather Hanrahan, Assistant Deputy Minister

John G. Abbott, Deputy Minister

Hon. John Haggie, Minister

KEY MESSAGES

Health and Community Services

Fitch Report

October 17, 2018

Summary:

In September, the Provincial Government held public consultations seeking input on the development of new Emergency Health Services and Community Paramedicine legislation to govern the road ambulance program. Legislation is expected to be introduced during the fall session of the House of Assembly. The idea of separate legislation was a recommendation from the comprehensive review of the road ambulance program completed by Fitch and Associates in 2013.

Anticipated Questions:

- What does the new legislation have to do with the Fitch report?
- What recommendations have been implemented?
- Why the delay to implement all recommendations?

Key Messages:

- We are developing new legislation to govern the road ambulance program. This is a recommendation in the Fitch Report.
- Moving forward with new comprehensive legislation is the foundation for enhancing services. It is essential to fully implementing several of the other recommendations.
- There are 10 recommendations in the Fitch report. One is completed. Eight are in progress. New legislation is the other recommendation.

Prepared by: Communications Division, Health and Community Services

Approved by:

Heather Hanrahan, Assistant Deputy Minister

John G. Abbott, Deputy Minister

Hon. John Haggie, Minister

KEY MESSAGES

Health and Community Services

Emergency Health Services and Community Paramedicine Legislation

October 17, 2018

Summary:

In September, the Provincial Government held public consultations seeking input on the development of new Emergency Health Services and Community Paramedicine legislation to govern the road ambulance program. Legislation is expected to be introduced during the fall session of the House of Assembly.

Anticipated Questions:

- What does new legislation mean for service delivery?
- Will people see changes in their ambulance services?

Key Messages:

- Maintaining the integrity of our ambulance service is paramount. People need to know that they have a service they can rely on in case of an emergency.
- New legislation will not affect the services people see in their communities.
- We are the only jurisdiction in Canada that doesn't have any dedicated legislation. New legislation will bring Newfoundland and Labrador in line with other jurisdictions, increase accountability and establish provincial ambulance performance standards.

Prepared by: Communications Division, Health and Community Services

Approved by:

Heather Hanrahan, Assistant Deputy Minister

John G. Abbott, Deputy Minister

Hon. John Haggie, Minister