

KEVIN O'REILLY—MLA FRAME LAKE
Transition to New Stanton
Committee of the Whole—2018-2019 Operating Budget Review
Dept. of Health and Social Services—March 1, 2018

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I am wondering if the Minister can tell us what the plan is for services in Yellowknife, moving forward with the new Stanton hospital? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. A bunch of the moves obviously are going to happen in subsequent fiscal years, given when the hospital intended to open and the transition supposed to happen, but, ultimately, what we are looking to do is there are going to be a number of positions in the new hospital that are in-patient OT/PT and other therapeutic services. Outpatient therapeutic or other outpatient therapeutic services such as OT/PT are intended to be in the old Stanton building. We will have to go through a transition phase as that building is renovated to meet the needs. I have had the opportunity to visit OT/PT as an example in the existing Stanton, and, in my opinion, it is sadly overcrowded and entirely too small to provide the high rate of services that I know are our residents' due, so I really applaud the people who are in there because they do amazing work in what I would consider adverse situations. They do good work. We are going to fix their space.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. I will remind the Minister to let us know when he is done talking so the sound team knows when to change the mics. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair, and I appreciate the response from the Minister. So I heard him talk about physiotherapy and occupational therapy. There are a number of other areas of the therapeutic services, such as audiology, speech, and so on. What is happening with those parts of rehab services in Yellowknife with the new hospital? Are they going to be in the old hospital, or are they going to be moved off site? What is happening with those? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I believe the information is online, but I will verify that for the Member. We are looking at using basically all the space in the old Stanton facility. Level 1 is going to be extended care. It's also going to have some other: transcription services, primary clinics, food and laundry services for extended care and long-term care. It's also going to have the outpatient rehab program, which includes occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech-language pathology, and audiology. Levels 2 and 3 are going to be long-term care.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I am pretty sure I heard the Minister say that all of these rehab services are going to continue to operate out of the old Stanton Hospital.

What happens, though, in the interim when the old hospital is being retrofitted to better accommodate those services? Where are they going to go? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, currently, speech and audiology are actually in the Stanton Clinic. I think it is called the clinic. It is the one beside McDonald's. They will stay there during the retrofit. Physio and occupational therapy, obviously, we are going to have to find alternate space during the transition phase. That hasn't been finalized as far as I am aware. I haven't been briefed on that in a couple weeks. When I know, you will know. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I have asked the Minister before about this, what the transition plan is for these services while old Stanton is being remodelled, and so on. The Minister seemed to be reading from some sort of list, and then he hasn't been briefed on this for a bit. Can the Minister then commit to give that information to committee, or at least what the current state of knowledge is on these services that are currently within the old Stanton and what is going to happen with them during the transition, and maybe a timeline that would go along with that? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I can provide a list, or the Member could read Hansard. I have just listed off all the services that are going to be in the old Stanton building. The only ones that are going to sort of need to be relocated because they don't exist in there now are extended care, physio, occupational therapy. The rest of them don't exist in the building now, so they won't be affected. We will be looking for temporary lease space to accommodate us during the retrofit of the old Stanton building. I don't know what that location is yet. That lease hasn't been let. I couldn't tell the Member what that location is going to be because it hasn't been selected yet. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I guess I am looking for more than just a list, something like a Gantt chart that shows each of the services, where they are going to be located where that is known, and the timing over the transition period. I guess that is what I really want to know. I think, as we get closer to when that transition happens, the public is going to need to know that information, as well. Can the Minister commit to give us that kind of information? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, we will provide some level of detail, recognizing that it hasn't all been finalized at this point. We are over a year out of this type of thing even starting. We are doing initial work. We are figuring those types of things out. I am happy to provide the Member with additional information as I become aware. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I understand this is in flux, but I am getting some questions about this. It is for members of the community, as well. I think we need to ramp up our communications as we get closer to that transition time, as well. I will just leave it at that. I understand the Minister has made the commitment. He will give us more information. I understand it is still in flux, but we need to start to think about how we are going to communicate this with the public, as well. That is all I have on this section. Thanks, Mr. Chair.