



August 2, 2024

Honourable David Eby
Premier of British Columbia
PO Box 9041 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E1
Via Email: premier@gov.bc.ca

Re: Follow-up on Request for Audit of Northern Health

Dear Premier Eby,

I am writing on behalf of the North Central Local Government Association (NCLGA) to address the critical need for a comprehensive review of healthcare services in Central and Northern British Columbia.

At the July 18, 2024, Regional Board meeting, the Peace River Regional District Board expressed their concerns about the ongoing diversions and emergency room closures within the Peace Region. In response, the Board passed a resolution to request a review of Northern Health, focusing on financial, operational, and workplace aspects.

Additionally, at the NCLGA Annual General Meeting held in Smithers, BC, in May 2024, the NCLGA membership endorsed a resolution (also submitted for endorsement by UBCM membership in September 2024, attached) that underscores the challenges faced by healthcare facilities in Central and Northern BC. This resolution emphasizes:

- Limited emergency room capacity,
- Insufficient operating room hours,
- Inadequate capital upgrades, and
- Severe staffing shortages.

Residents of these regions often endure long journeys to access essential medical procedures, leading to delays in receiving vital healthcare services.

We recognize the challenges that Health Authorities and the Ministry face regarding finances and recruitment. We acknowledge the difficulties encountered in communities, along with the realities of increased costs and staffing challenges. We are also aware of the capital plans and budgets in our Regional Health Districts.

Considering these challenges, the NCLGA calls upon the Provincial Government to undertake a comprehensive review of healthcare services throughout Central and Northern BC. The goal is to identify areas for improvement and use the findings to inform future healthcare planning initiatives.

We believe that a thorough review will provide valuable insights into the specific needs and issues within our healthcare system, paving the way for necessary enhancements. We appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to your positive response.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Judy Greenway'.

Judy Greenway
President
North Central Local Government Association

cc: Regional District Chairs in the NCLGA Operating Area
MLAs in the NCLGA Operating Area
MPs in the NCLGA Operating Area

Dr. Robert Halpenny, Chair of Interior Health Authority
Colleen Nyne, Chair of Northern Health Authority



RESOLUTION

NCLGA 2024: Urgent Investment in Healthcare for Central and Northern British Columbia

Sponsor: NCLGA Executive

Status: Endorsed by NCLGA Membership, May 2024

Submitted for endorsement by UBCM membership, September 2024

WHEREAS healthcare facilities in Central and Northern British Columbia (BC) are confronting a myriad of pressing challenges, including but not limited to limited emergency room capacity, insufficient operating room hours, inadequate capital upgrades, and critical staffing shortages; and

WHEREAS the residents of Central and Northern BC endure significant hardships as they are compelled to undertake extensive journeys to access essential medical procedures, owing to the dearth of specialized healthcare facilities in the region, thereby leading to considerable delays in receiving vital healthcare services;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the NCLGA and UBCM vehemently call upon the Provincial Government to undertake a comprehensive audit of healthcare services throughout Central and Northern BC, with the explicit aim of identifying areas for enhancement and utilizing the findings to inform future healthcare planning initiatives.