

ORAL QUESTION—JULIE GREEN, MLA YELLOWKNIFE CENTRE

QUESTION 47-18(2): LONG-TERM CARE COSTS

February 23, 2016

MS GREEN: I have some questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Yesterday in the House the Minister said that there were a total of 259 individuals who would need long-term care beds in the next 10 years. And he said that the cost of each bed was \$130,000 per year. But his total figure for that investment was \$200 million, so I didn't really follow the math on how he got to \$200 million. I wonder if he could explain that figure.

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi. Minister of Health and Social Services?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: For clarity, we know we need 259 beds by 2026, and based on our traditional procurement method, that takes you anywhere from \$800,000 to \$1.5 million per bed to build using traditional procurement, which is around \$200 million to build or provide those 259 beds. We do have an average of around \$130,000 per bed to operate beds, which works out to about \$33.5 million at today's dollar for providing services for 259 beds.

MS GREEN: Thanks to the Minister for that clarification. My question, then, is could we save on the building costs by repurposing Stanton Territorial Hospital, for example, as a long-term care facility for elders?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: That's one of the suggestions that's been thrown out during the election and since the election. As I indicated yesterday, we're going to have to look outside of the box on this one. We're going to have to consider all opportunities for the construction and the provision of these 259 beds, so we're open to pretty much anything at this point. As I indicated yesterday, I'm in the process of writing a letter, I'll have it to committee this week to share that report with them. I'm also going to be seeking an opportunity to have a briefing with committee so that we can go through some of the details and we can start getting some input from Members. Because this is a huge problem, in my mind, this is something we need to have a plan to deal with over the next 10 years, and given the sheer cost of this challenge in front of us, we're going to have to be creative, we're going to have to think outside the box. So absolutely, we're looking at all opportunities.