

JULIE GREEN—MLA YELLOWKNIFE CENTRE
Yellowknife Adult Day Program
Committee of the Whole—2018-2019 Operating Budget Review
Dept. of Health and Social Services—February 28, 2018

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, during the business plan review, we talked quite a bit about the need to have an adult day program in Yellowknife, and I see that there is now a request for proposals out. Can the Minister please tell us what kind of a day program he is asking potential bidders to bid on? That is to say, does it include people with both cognitive disabilities as well as frailty? How many people will be served? How long a contract is this, and so on? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the RFP is just recently out; I shared it with the Member. We're trying to provide a day program for those, basically, in most need in the Yellowknife area. It's certainly not a broad-ranging program or a program for all residents of the Yellowknife area. It will be for certain individuals and, honestly, I can't remember what we put out as a term on that. So I will have to get back with that information. I'm blanking completely. So I apologize.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I recognize that the Minister said that they were going to provide for those with the greatest needs. Could he tell us what that means? How are they defining the greatest needs? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, there was a bit of a summary and a report done on a review of the day program that was offered at Avens, which is no longer available. We're trying to build upon that report to meet the needs of different individuals here in Yellowknife. We don't see it necessarily the same as some of the day programs in some of the other communities, which are mostly drop-in and anybody can come. We are trying to provide a support to residents of Yellowknife who have family members who are high-needs, or their family is working and they need to make sure that they're not alone for a certain amount of time, and it may change on a day-to-day basis. We have to be flexible on anything we do on this particular one. Frankly, I want to be a little cautious about saying what it's going to look like, because we haven't received any RFPs at this point. So I know it sounds vague and I apologize, but I want to be cautious about overstating it until we actual see some of the RFPs. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess it would be helpful to know whether this program is going to serve both of these cohorts; the people with the cognitive issues, the people with the frailty issues. Is this program for both of them? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I believe the RFP says, "frail elders." So I think that's where the priority is being placed, but I accept the need for flexibility and we'll see what kind of proposals we get. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I realize that the previous program attempted to serve both populations. We have seniors in both populations. So a program that serves only one group of needs and not the other group of needs is necessarily going to be incomplete. I caution the Minister that, if he chooses to serve one group and not another group, there will be lots of questions from myself and others about why one group has been left out. I don't know if he wants to respond to that? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the Member's point, and I accept what she's saying. When the assessment was done, it was felt that the highest need was for frailty, and we wanted to make sure that we nailed the highest need. I take the Member's point and we'll certainly continue to have those discussions with the deputy and the department to make sure that they're considering that. Like I said, we haven't seen any proposals yet, and if we find that we have missed something in the future, we're certainly willing to explore it again. Thank you, Mr. Chair.