

**ORAL QUESTION—JULIE GREEN, MLA YELLOWKNIFE CENTRE**

**QUESTION 189-18(3):  
PUBLIC EDUCATION CAMPAIGN AND RESOURCES FOR CANNABIS  
LEGALIZATION**

**March 1, 2018**

**MS. GREEN:** Mahsi. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Mr. Speaker, Northerners have clearly stated that they want government to take an informed and active role on cannabis awareness, particularly for youth. My question is: what efforts is the Minister making to ensure various kinds of cannabis education materials are ready to go when legalization happens? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are a number of things happening, both at a national level as well as the territorial level. There are a lot of good documents out there that we are looking to find ways to share, distribute, and make people aware of. At the same time, we have started developing a campaign within the Department of Health and Social Services focused on not just but primarily on the impacts of cannabis on the developing brain.

We have developed a proposal and submitted it to the federal government asking for \$2 million over the next five years to do this work and get that information out. Obviously, we are not waiting for that to be approved. We are trying to compile other information sources, other data sources, and other ad campaigns that are out there to make sure we are getting as much information out as possible. We haven't rolled out a significant amount at this point, but we are planning to do more over the coming months, up until the time it goes live, and obviously after, as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. GREEN:** I thank the Minister for that response. Has the Minister considered using materials from another sources such as the one I referenced from Drug Free Kids Canada?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** As I said, there are a lot of organizations out there like Drug Free Canada who have already done really, really good work as far as putting together information in a readable, usable format. The materials that the Member has referred to are actually available on the Drugs Free Kids Canada organization website where you see the brochure, but you can also order it online and get copies for yourself.

I do have a copy myself. I have talked to the department since the Member and I have talked to see what we can do to get a quantity of those materials to distribute among stakeholders throughout the Northwest Territories. I don't know what the catch is. I know it is free. Hopefully, we will be able to do it. We are exploring that, as well.

**MS. GREEN:** I wonder if the Minister can tell us what role his department will have with schools and teachers in cannabis education.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** When it comes to public health and prevention,

encouraging people to live healthy lifestyles, it is certainly a responsibility of the Department of Health and Social Services. As we have moved forward with other initiatives like Healthy Family and those types of things, we have worked with our partner departments. We see an opportunity here and a need, obviously, to work with Education, Culture and Employment to get that information out to youth and others. We will certainly be working with Education, Culture and Employment.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral Questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

**MS. GREEN:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the Minister for that answer. The Minister mentioned that there was an application to the federal government for \$2 million over five years. Is there any additional money being budgeted for public education in the next fiscal year, or is everything dependent on Canada saying yes to this proposal? Thank you.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** We have estimated some costs for enforcement-related activities that Health and Social Services are responsible for, complaints-based reviews of cannabis use in communities and whatnot. We believe we have enough money in our existing budget to do that work. If the demand proves higher than we expect as far as complaints, we will certainly have to explore new options.

When it comes to advertising, we do have the application out to the federal government for \$2 million. The federal government announced in their budget that they do have some money available for this type of thing. We are hoping to get that money. If we don't get that money, or don't get all of that money, we will certainly be having discussions with the FMBS and Members to see about exploring new opportunities for revenue. At this point, I believe we are on the right track. Should we need more, we will certainly be looking for it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.