

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

**QUESTION 612-18(3): YELLOWKNIFE ADULT DAY PROGRAMMING**

**February 25, 2019**

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services. We spoke earlier in this sitting about the need for an adult day program in Yellowknife, and he said that his officials were meeting on February 21<sup>st</sup> to discuss this issue and he would be able to outline the concrete directions being taken following that meeting. Today I am calling on him to do just that. Mahsi.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On February 21<sup>st</sup>, that meeting did take place. From this meeting, it is clear that there is a shared interest between parties to work together to build a model of care that really meets the inclusion and care needs of seniors in Yellowknife, while also filling some of the service gaps by building on the capacity that already exist within the city. There is a lot of capacity within the city. I am pleased that the meeting resulted in the formation of a steering committee to support the development of a concrete program development plan. This plan will see the authority and the department working to identify some social inclusion needs of individual seniors and the development of options for program enhancement that are required to meet the needs of these seniors and their families. Through this process, it is expected that we will identify seniors, individuals who with some extra support will be able to get the supports they need to attend different functions, different mechanisms, different events around town, and get that social inclusion that they're looking for in a safe and reliable way. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. GREEN:** I appreciate the response from the Minister. Can the Minister tell us who is going to deliver the program to the adults who need it?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** I think it will be a wide variety of stakeholders. Some of the events that already occur that these individuals can't get to will continue, so they will be working to find ways to get them to those events. We haven't absolutely 100 percent articulated who will be the individuals or the group who get those people to those events, and that's something that we're working on the detail with our stakeholders right now.

**MS. GREEN:** It sounds like the program is busing seniors around to different places in Yellowknife, which I find a little confusing. As the Minister knows, there are roughly two groups of seniors who need this program; people who are frail but cognitively intact, and people who are cognitively frail but may otherwise be fine. I'm a little unclear about not having a central place that is a base for providing these services. Is there, in fact, going to be that?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** I don't see this as being a bus ride. That is not the intent. That's not what the Members and I discussed when we met late last year. What we're talking about is having an opportunity to provide a client-centred approach that really

builds upon the existing organizational strength and moves us away from more of an institutional model. There was a lot of discussion about not having a model which is a place to plunk somebody, take somebody, and get support just there, but to find ways to get them engaged in community. Find them a way to be supported. It doesn't necessarily absolutely mean that we won't have a go to location, but some of those things are the things that we're looking to finalize and build into our model as we go forward.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize to the Minister. I'm still a little confused about how this is going to work. Previously, the Minister had issued two RFPs for a service provider, and there was no uptake. It was my understanding that there was not a non-profit in Yellowknife that was able to deliver this service. I'm still a little confused about who is delivering this service, and when this service is going to be delivered.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** When I met with the Yellowknife MLAs, and then we followed up and met with stakeholders, it was clear that there are a lot of stakeholders who want to be involved. A lot of stakeholders have something they can add to the idea of supporting our seniors who are either cognitively or physically impaired to engage and have socialization, getting to the community. There are a number of stakeholders who want to be involved. There are lots of opportunities to figure out how to get that engagement to occur. What we're looking at right now is how to work with those partners. The GNWT is clearly going to have a role, but we want to have the steering committee to actually help us quantify exactly what role each of us as parties would play. Recognizing that this has taken a long time and recognizing that the stakeholders recognize that this is important, they will be meeting in March, early March, to start putting together those pieces. I will keep the Member and all Yellowknife Members up to date on that work. I recognize how important it is, and we want to get it right. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.