

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

**QUESTION 679-18(3):  
CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

**March 12, 2019**

**MS. GREEN:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Yesterday he reported on the draft child and family services quality improvement plan by chapter and verse, yet the plan itself has not been made public. How does doing consultation with Indigenous entities at this point provide them with real input into the plan? Thank you.

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

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Throughout the entire process, the department has been reaching out to staff in the Indigenous governments to make sure we are getting feedback and ideas from them. At the same time, I have also had some correspondence back and forth with a number of the Indigenous governments, and my deputy had an opportunity to meet with the Tlicho Government to provide some presentation on what we have heard, what we have seen, in order to get some feedback from them. We have put together a draft quality improvement plan that has been presented to committee. We have taken committee's input. We have modified and we will be modifying the quality improvement plan. Now that we have it at this stage, we are to take it back to the Indigenous governments to seek once again any additional information, any additional clarity, any additional recommendations that they would like incorporated, and we will incorporate them in. We have always said this is a living document. We want to be able to evolve it as more information becomes available, as more issues become available, but there is definitely opportunity to hear from them, get their input, and make this quality improvement plan even stronger, like we did by working with committee.

**MS. GREEN:** Thanks to the Minister for that response. In his statement yesterday, the Minister said the plan will address the recommendations in the OAG's report as well as "additional gaps that were found." Will the Minister please describe these additional gaps?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** The quality improvement plan isn't just based on the Auditor General's report. It is based on the recommendations from the Auditor General's report. It is based on our findings from our own internal audits. It is based on input and guidance and recommendations we got from the committee. It will be based on input and guidance that we get from other parties. Throughout the entire process, the document itself has grown far beyond just the document that is responding to the Auditor General's recommendations. That is what I was referring to. As far as other information, the committee yesterday made a number of recommendations on how we could improve our plan. We are incorporating those into the document.

**MS. GREEN:** I am now going to turn to a few specific recommendations that the OAG

made that the department agreed to complete by the end of this month. One of the key findings was that the health authority staff maintain minimum contact with clients, which was a failing of the department in the audit. The Minister has said that he has set up quality reviews in this area. What does that mean in terms of actually meeting the contact requirements with the youth and children?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** I will get that information from the department so we can actually be explicit with the actual numbers. I do want to point out that there are over 80 action items in the quality improvement plan. Those build on the recommendations of the Auditor General, internal findings, and committee recommendations. A number of those actions have been completed. Nine of them are already completed out of 80 action items. Nineteen of them are ongoing, which means we have already made the improvements and now it is a matter of implementing them on an ongoing basis. Thirty-two of them have been initiated. We are doing the work. Fifteen action items have yet to be initiated, but they weren't intended to be initiated right at the beginning. They are timed out over time.

There are four items where we haven't met our timelines. I am happy to provide that information to the Member so that she can see some of the areas where we are struggling. One of those areas was an area I talked about yesterday in Committee of the Whole. It was based on the recommendations provided to include a gender-based analysis. It is going to take a bit more time. As committee said, we want to get this right. We agree. We want to get this right.

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

**MS. GREEN:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. What I am trying to gauge is how the planning and bureaucratic process is going down to the front line and to the clients in order to make substantive changes that the OAG had talked about. Another of the things the OAG report flagged was an increased risk to children in care because perspective guardians hadn't been screened properly. The Minister reported yesterday on changes to screening. My question is: has the front-line staff be trained in these new protocols so that they are in effect now? Thank you.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** The process around guardianship has changed. We put some policies in place around that. Training has occurred for many of the individuals. I can't say that every individual has received that training, but every individual will receive that training. When the deputy minister met with committee in December, he outlined a number of the actions in the Auditor General's report that we have actually take action on and completed. There was a significant list there. Since then, we have even more action items that we have completed. We have committed to providing updates and reports to committee, and we will do so. We will be able to demonstrate what areas we have made progress and what areas we haven't made progress. More importantly, we will be able to provide statistical information and front-line information that shows where improvements are already visible and where files are being monitored appropriately and where there is still work to be done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.