

March 8, 2021

Mrs. Liz Hanson, Chair
Special Committee on Civil Emergency Legislation

Dear Mrs. Hanson;

I am writing to provide the Yukon Legislative Assembly's Special Committee on Civil Emergency Legislation with information regarding Yukon Hospital Corporation's (YHC's) experience with Yukon's *Civil Emergency Measures Act* and offer the following on the specific questions put forward by the Committee:

How was the Yukon Hospital Corporation hindered or helped by Yukon's *Civil Emergency Measures Act* when attempting to maintain the safety and wellness of Yukoners during an emergency?

- YHC implemented Continuous Masking slightly prior to the CEMA order and this order helped to strengthen acceptance of YHC's decision by the public and staff.
- Travel restrictions were one of the most important ways for the hospital to evaluate risk. While Yukon hospitals have maintained distinct restrictions for visitors based on hospital risk, CEMA restrictions on travel served to protect from additional travel associated risk and created public awareness of the need to assess this risk for access to hospital facilities.
- While CEMA direction on Critical Service Providers enabled Yukon hospitals to maintain staffing levels, in critical areas the guidance lacked clarity.
- YHC used CEMA direction related to self-isolation to add authority and clarity to our revised staff illness policy. Guidance from the Chief Medical Officer of Health was also used to inform how to address staff illness and return to work under the critical worker designation.

Have ministerial orders relating to the Yukon Hospital Corporation been used under Yukon's *Civil Emergency Measures Act*, and if so, how?

- See above.

Are there any aspects of the current legislation that may have prevented the Yukon Hospital Corporation from reacting as it would have liked during an emergency?

- Vague guidance under the Critical Worker Designation led to challenges providing important training for a patient care project due to competing priorities external to Yukon hospitals, despite careful risk mitigation and approval by the CEMA office.

From the Yukon Hospital Corporation's perspective, are there currently any gaps in the legislation?

- There are gaps in processes to support application of CEMA around its notifications, communication, and exemption processes. However, YHC established communication processes with the CEMA office that were initially lacking, and these challenges were largely mitigated.

Does the Yukon Hospital Corporation have any suggestions for improvements to Yukon's *Civil Emergency Measures Act*? Please provide details and examples.

- Establish processes for early notification to YHC of CEMA orders.
- Collaborate with YHC around its needs for and improved critical worker designation.
- The process for alternative self-isolation plans can be cumbersome with the requirement of ministerial approval for these plans as many of these requests are urgent in nature and can occur at any time of day, 7 days a week which can be challenging for hospitals which operate 24/7.
- Ensure officials are aware that granting urgent CEMA exemptions that apply to hospitals can impact existing hospital safety protocols resulting in potential impacts to public and staff safety. Suggest that early advance notice - to the extent possible - will result in an improved process.

Sincerely,



Warren Holland,
Executive Director, Quality & Strategy
Yukon Hospital Corporation