

## LEGISLATIVE RETURN

SUBMITTED BY: Honourable Pauline Frost



1. On May 4, 2017, Patti McLeod, Member for Watson Lake
- asked the following oral question at page(s) 248 of *Hansard*
- submitted the following written question – WQ No. \_\_\_\_\_
- gave notice of the following motion for the production of papers – MPP No. \_\_\_\_\_

RE: Services available in Watson Lake for people dealing with drug and alcohol abuse issues, including inquiry with respect to after hours \*

OR

2. This legislative return relates to a matter outstanding from discussion related to:

\_\_\_\_\_

on \_\_\_\_\_ at page(s) \_\_\_\_\_ of *Hansard*.

The response is as follows:

Currently, Health and Social Services provides the community of Watson Lake with two (one male and one female) full-time addiction program workers (through Alcohol and Drug Services), two (on-call) mental health support workers (through Mental Health Services) and three full-time social workers, although one is on parental leave. Home care provision is shared by a full-time registered nurse and three part-time home support workers.

The Watson Lake Community Hospital and Watson Lake Health Centre have two doctors, seven full-time registered nurses, two full-time licensed practical nurses, and two full-time community health nurses. The hospital is effectively the community crisis center, as it is a round-the-clock facility.

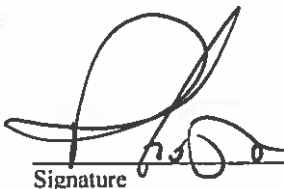
A Mental Health Services nurse currently visits the community one week per month, and Many Rivers Counseling Services has one counselor residing in the community and another who visits every other week. Child and Adolescent Therapeutic Service (CATS) has a half-time counselor in the community and the department also provides support and funding for the Health and Hope Women's Shelter, which is open 24 hours a day, and operates a crisis line.

In addition to these services, the community receives periodic itinerant services including those offered by the Child Development Centre, Hearing Services, the Children's Dental Program and physiotherapy and occupational therapy. Other support services in the community include regular weekly meetings offered by Alcoholics Anonymous.

The contact information provided on the Alcohol and Drug Service website includes a toll-free number for support after business hours: this is not intended to be crisis support service. After hours crisis support can be accessed through the local hospital. Addiction support workers in Watson Lake do provide their clients with a list of numbers for crisis intervention services: this list includes a toll free number that redirects clients' calls to the cell phones of local addiction workers.

May 10, 2017

Date

  
Signature



Health and Social Services

Box 2703, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6

January 12, 2017

Patti McLeod  
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Dear Ms. McLeod:

**Re: Drug and Alcohol Services in Watson Lake & Food Bank Funding**

Minister Frost has asked me to respond to your email inquiry of January 06th regarding drug and alcohol programs in Watson Lake.

The attached document provides a listing of all regular and itinerant services provided by the department to Watson Lake. Alcohol and Drug Services employs two full time equivalent Community Addiction Program workers. Two auxiliary- on-call Rural Support Workers are provided to the community through Mental Health Services. Additionally, Watson Lake has three full-time equivalent social workers; one of these positions is currently vacant and recruitment is ongoing.

A Mental Health Services Nurse currently visits one week a month however it is in the process of increasing to two weeks a month. Many Rivers counselling services has one counselor residing in Watson Lake, and an itinerant worker who visits bi-weekly. Child and Adolescent Therapeutic Services (CATS) also serves the community. Due to staffing shortages, there is no itinerant worker visiting the community at this time. When the position is filled, services will be offered one day every two weeks.

With regard to funding for the Watson Lake food bank, I can advise that funding will not be extended for 2017/18. As you will recall, funding for 2016/17 was a one-time offer in response to a crisis situation in the community.

Sincerely,



Brenda Lee Doyle  
A/Deputy Minister

Enc.(1)

c. Pauline Frost, Minister of Health and Social Services



## *Community Profile*

### Watson Lake

Population: 1460

#### Existing HSS Resources:

- **Watson Lake Community Hospital and Watson Lake Health Centre: 2 physicians, 6.9 FTE RNs, and 2 FTE LPNs, 2 FTE Community Health Nurses;**
- **3 FTE social workers; currently one position is vacant.**
- **2 FTE Alcohol and Drug Services Community Addiction Program workers;**
- **Home care is provided through a shared 1 FTE RN and 3 Home Support Workers (0.5, 0.4 and 0.4 FTE).**
- **Mental Health Services has 2 AOC Rural Support Workers.**

#### Itinerant Services:

- **Child Development Centre;**
- **Child & Adolescent Therapeutic Services;**
- **Hearing services: 1-2x/year;**
- **Physiotherapy and occupational therapy: infrequently;**
- **Many Rivers counselor;**
- **A Mental Health Services nurse from Haines Junction visits once per month;**
- **Children's Dental Program visits schools annually for children from K-12 (alternating between a visiting dentist and dental therapist).**

#### Potential Enhancements

- **1 FTE funding for CAP worker that is currently unfunded  
Budget: \$174K**

(6) supporting development of local markets for Yukon agriculture products, including providing the Fireweed Community Market with a renewed multi-year funding agreement;

(7) exploring opportunities to improve the ability of farmers and gardeners to sell and market their products;

(8) working with farmers, market gardeners, processors, and industry associations to maximize the effectiveness of the Growing Forward 2 funding program;

(9) consulting with farmers, market gardeners, processors, and industry associations on the details of the agriculture funding agreement that will replace the Growing Forward 2 agreement;

(10) supporting the development of community greenhouses and community gardens;

(11) reviewing the operation, structure and fees for the mobile abattoir to maximize its effectiveness and ensure it does not unfairly compete with small businesses offering similar services;

(12) exploring the feasibility and effectiveness and of developing an agriculture production tax credit aimed at increasing the production of locally grown food and other agriculture products; and

(13) ensuring fuel for farming purposes, including irrigation, working in fields and electricity production for off-grid farms is exempt from a carbon tax.

**Mr. Istchenko:** I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Minister of Highways and Public Works, the Minister of Community Services and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources to convene a meeting immediately with the Kluane First Nation, Kluane Lake Athletic Association, local businesses and local residents to discuss and move forward on the critical maintenance required to the Destruction Bay marina, which is the main access point for Kluane Lake.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to continue to meet the commitment of the previous government to the early opening of campgrounds and to ensure access roads and campsites are graded and well-maintained prior to opening the gates.

**Ms. White:** I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to immediately initiate a review of Yukon's minimum wage in the Legislature prior to BC's minimum wage increase scheduled for September 2017.

**Speaker:** Are there any further notices of motions?

Is there a statement by a minister?

This then brings us to Question Period.

## QUESTION PERIOD

**Question re: Watson Lake alcohol and drug services**

**Ms. McLeod:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

On January 6, I asked the Minister of Health and Social Services for information regarding what services are available in Watson Lake for people dealing with drug and alcohol abuse issues.

On January 12, the response I received back was simply a list of departmental employees in the community. On February 21, I requested a meeting with the Minister of Health and Social Services, and it wasn't until March 27 that I finally got to meet with the minister.

At the meeting, I raised my original request, dating back to January 6, and I have not received a response to that request yet. I also raised the fact that the department website directs members of the community dealing with drug and alcohol abuse to call Whitehorse, and how this is a problem for those seeking help.

As it is May 4 and I still have not received the information I originally requested on January 6, will the minister today share with us what services are available in Watson Lake so I can share them?

**Hon. Ms. Frost:** Thank you for the question. I will commit today to provide a detailed list of the services provided in Watson Lake to the member opposite.

**Ms. McLeod:** Of course we know that drug and alcohol abuse is a major issue in our communities and, sadly, we have all lost too many members of our communities to these issues. Residents of all communities require access to resources and supports in their home community. As I stated earlier, I have been asking for a list of services available to my constituents. The website directs people from the communities to call Whitehorse if they are in trouble and need help. This is either in the morning or in the evening — 24/7 you call Whitehorse. This is a real problem and I hope the government addresses it.

Will the minister commit to providing better access to drug and alcohol abuse services to our communities? Will she also commit to having her website fixed so that members of Watson Lake and all communities know who they can contact in their own communities if they are in urgent need of help?

**Hon. Ms. Frost:** I would like to say at this time that yesterday, in response to the mental wellness process and the 11 new positions that were created for mental wellness and the strategies for meeting the needs of Yukoners, we responded appropriately to the requests and the pressures from Watson Lake. As I understand it, we have two positions currently in the community. We fund and provide supports for the women's shelter in Watson Lake. We have responded in a timely fashion to the pressures received from Watson Lake.

I stated in the first response that I will get a list for distribution, if required, to the member opposite of all the programs currently provided to the community of Watson Lake.

**Ms. McLeod:** I appreciate the response, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to take the minister at her word that she will provide that information in a timely fashion. I'm a little