

**MEETING SD 11-20-24** 

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

### FRIDAY, APRIL 19, 2024 DET'ANCHOGH KŲÉ - EAGLE ROOM 1:30 PM

#### **AGENDA**

- 1. Call to Order
- 2. Prayer
- 3. Review and Adoption of Agenda
- 4. Declarations of Conflict of Interest
- 5. Public Matters: Technical Briefing with Officials from the Department of Health and Social Services regarding Extended Health Benefits
- 6. In Camera Matters:
  - a. Debrief
  - b. Scheduling Hearings: Statutory Review of Mental Health Act
- 7. New Business

a.

- 8. Date and Time of Next Meeting: At the Call of the Chair
- 9. Adjournment



### **Extended Health Benefits**

Standing Committee on Social Development - Briefing

April 19, 2024

Government of Northwest Territories

# Objective of this Presentation

- To provide a brief overview of the current Extended Health Benefits Policy
- To provide an overview of the changes to the Extended Health Benefits Policy, to be implemented September 1, 2024.



# Current Extended Health Benefit Policy

- Eligibility is for residents without access to other insurance plans
- Residents with access to NIHB, MHB and employer-sponsored plans are not eligible for EHB unless diagnosed with a specified disease condition (SDC)
- EHB is currently for two groups Seniors 60 years and older and persons diagnosed with a specified disease condition (SDC)
- Seniors have access to a range of benefits including prescription drugs, MSE, dental treatment, medical travel and some coverage for eyewear
- Persons eligible for SDC are mostly covered for prescription drugs, and in certain cases, medical travel.



# Why Are We Making Changes?

- Current policy outdated doesn't meet the principles of good public policy equity, fairness and fiscal responsibility.
- The list of specified disease conditions is limited doesn't cover all disease conditions.
- Refocus the new policy on a person's financial ability to access benefits rather than on a diagnosis of a disease condition.
  - This is the most fair and equitable way to support residents.
- Due to ongoing significant cost increases (mostly drug costs), FMB directed review of cost drivers and a plan to address.



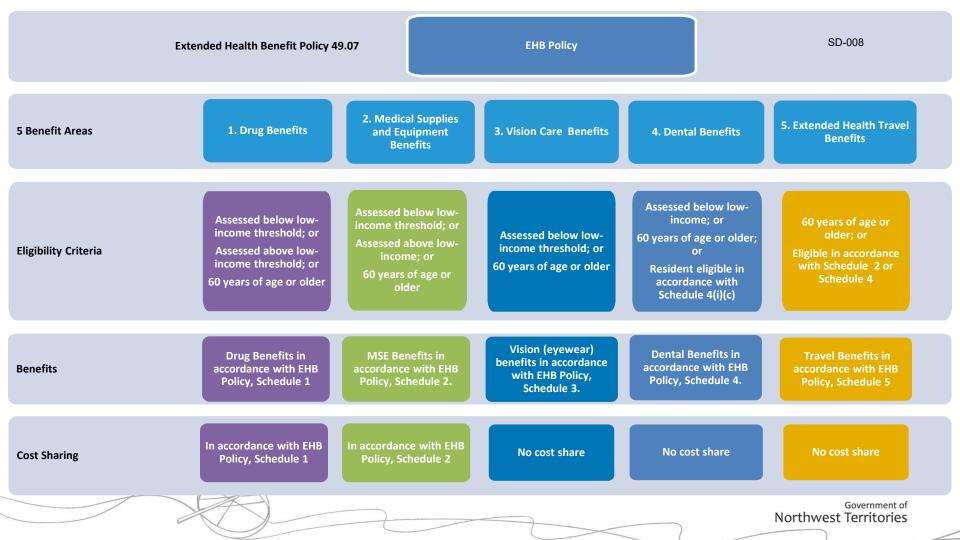
# What is Changing?

- No need for a specified disease condition to get benefits
- Income assessment determines eligibility for benefits
- <u>Residents with low-income</u> will have access to drug, MSE, vision care, dental benefits without cost sharing arrangement
- Residents above low-income threshold will have access to drug and MSE benefits with a cost sharing arrangement, with limits to what they must pay (family maximums)

## New Extended Health Benefits Policy

- <u>Income Assessment</u> applicants provide CRA Notice of Assessment; Net Income (Line 23600) for the most recent tax year.
  - Net Income and family make-up determine the benefits residents are eligible for and the cost-share portion, if required.
- <u>Income Thresholds</u> each year, regional income thresholds will be reviewed and revised in accordance with the Northern Market Basket Measure for the year.





# Implementation

- ABC is making changes to their information system to process claims under the new Policy.
- This work will be ready for September 1, 2024.
- Residents can apply for EHB benefits in June 2024.
- We will start to communicate detailed program benefits and application processes to the public in April 2024.



## Communications

- In the coming months leading up to September 1, there will be communications materials posted.
- This information will guide residents through the benefits available and the application process.



## Questions

