



FEB 21 2020

JULIE GREEN
MLA, YELLOWKNIFE CENTRE

Oral Question 29-19(2): Stanton Territorial Hospital Issues

This letter is in follow up to the Oral Question you raised on February 7, 2020 regarding Stanton Territorial Hospital Issues.

Concerning the previous Minister's commitment to expedite the staffing process, a variety of steps have been taken to improve nurse recruitment and retention, including:

- identifying and reducing challenges and delays to hiring;
- improved advertising efforts for posted job ads;
- an increased presence at nursing conferences and job fairs; and
- support for existing staff to receive specialized training and practicum experiences.

There have also been increased efforts to improve workforce planning to achieve a more accurate understanding of current and future staffing needs.

Advertising and in-person recruitment efforts continue to evolve and expand as we seek out new platforms, recruitment fairs, and conferences. We are also developing three talent pools: one for health and social services professionals, including nurses; one for physicians; and one for students and youth who have engaged with the NWT Health and Social Services System and may be seeking employment opportunities in the future.

Further, the Department of Finance has streamlined a number of registered nursing competitions into a few larger, Northwest Territories-wide competitions. The intention is to improve the efficiency of the staffing process by reducing the number of active competitions.

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Efforts have also been underway to strengthen our retention of nurses. The Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA) has re-established Clinical Nurse Educators positions to support novice nurses. Stanton has retained their Clinical Nurse Educator. In a similar vein, the NTHSSA will be launching an Authority-wide orientation and onboarding program which will help new employees integrate into their new roles, environment and communities.

Finally, I would like to clarify a point of confusion. As previously stated, the vacancy rate across Stanton for frontline nursing positions was 10.3 percent as of December 31, 2019, which represents 19 of 185 total positions. We believe that the 285 total positions that you referenced in the House reflects all nursing positions at Stanton, including relief positions and nursing management positions. The most up-to-date number remains 185 frontline, indeterminate full time and part time Registered Nurse nursing positions at Stanton, which excludes relief positions and nursing management positions.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D Thom". The letters are cursive and somewhat stylized.

Diane Thom
Minister of Health and Social Services

c Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Legislative Coordinator
Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs