



Government of
Northwest Territories

June 06, 2024

ROBERT HAWKINS
MLA, YELLOWKNIFE CENTRE

Oral Question 203-20(1): RCMP Responding to Addictions-Related Calls

This letter is in response to the Oral Question you raised on May 28, 2024, regarding the Yellowknife Women's Society's recent report on over-policing of Indigenous women. Specifically, you inquired about alternatives to an RCMP response for intoxicated individuals who need assistance.

My response in the House highlighted the Street Outreach program in Yellowknife and non-profit organizations in other communities as important options for people requiring assistance while experiencing substance use issues. In Fort Liard, the Community Safety Officer pilot project is another lower-level intervention option that has been well received and that the department is supporting.

The systemic issues that drive substance use are complex and longstanding in the Northwest Territories. It is among the Priorities of the 20th Assembly to address root causes and the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) is taking action to respond with a multi-sector, cross-departmental response. The GNWT's recently released Homelessness Strategy aims to provide wrap-around supports for people experiencing addictions. The Department of Justice supports Integrated Service Delivery and continues to work with the Department of Health and Social Services, Indigenous governments, and community partners to find ways to address the issue of problematic substance use.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R.J. Simpson'.

R.J. Simpson
Minister, Justice

- c. Clerk of the Legislative Assembly
Deputy Minister, Justice
Legislative Coordinator, Executive and Indigenous Affairs