



December 05, 2024

ROBERT HAWKINS  
MLA, YELLOWKNIFE CENTRE

**Oral Question #376-20(1): Online Physician Booking Service**

This letter is in follow-up to the Oral Question you raised on October 29, 2024, regarding an Online Physician Booking Service.

During the pandemic, solutions were rapidly put in place by organizations that struck a balance between what would normally be thought to be suitable and those that were rapidly deployable in response to a Public Health Emergency. These solutions inherently carried more risk to personal health information and were not suitable nor expected to continue after the Public Health Emergency was lifted. Information system practices are guided by the applicable legislation, policies, and standards that are in place to ensure the ongoing protection of personal health information. These instruments inform technology investments and business processes.

The Department of Health and Social Services is addressing clinical information needs and a backlog of aging technologies. Investments and initiatives are being aligned to enable the most appropriate sequence of system replacements and new implementations. Aging core clinical information systems such as the Electronic Medical Record system and MediPatient hospital system are two key priorities under the NWT Electronic Health Record (EHR) initiative. Online patient scheduling capability is absolutely an investment the Department is interested in making and is also of significant interest to many NWT residents. Before we can implement this type of platform however, we must first replace the aging core clinical systems that are at or past end of technology life.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lesa Semmler".

Les Semmler  
Minister of Health and Social Services

- c. Clerk of the Legislative Assembly  
Director, Legislative Affairs and House Planning