



# *Yukon Registered Nurses Association*

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29 November 2005

Premier Dennis Fentie  
Government of Yukon  
Box 2703  
Whitehorse, Yukon  
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Dear Premier Fentie:

Nurses and other health care workers were very distressed to read comments attributed to you in the Yukon News on Wednesday 23 November, regarding the state of health care for First Nation Yukoners in remote communities. The section of concerns reads, *“The problem is especially evident in remote communities, where the state of health care is “deplorable” for First Nation Yukoners, said Fentie.”*

There is no doubt that First Nations’ people territorially and nationally face tremendous health challenges which must be addressed. The reasons for the poor health status of First Nations’ people are complex and we would agree with your comments that many factors contribute to this. We would also suggest that a lack of services to address these issues is a major contributing factor.

We suspect that you did not mean to imply that the “health care” that is being delivered in remote communities of the Yukon is deplorable. This was a significant blow to the well-qualified nurses and other health care providers in the communities, who feel very demeaned by these comments.

We hope that you will take an opportunity to clarify your intent in the interest of restoring morale in these dedicated personnel, many of whom are employed by government. It is of the utmost importance that those providing health care in the rural communities, often under difficult and challenging conditions, feel supported and respected.

Yours truly,

Patricia McGarr, RN  
Executive Director  
Yukon Registered Nurses Association

c.c. The Editor, Yukon News