



Office of the Premier

Box 2703, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6

January 17, 2006

Ms. Patricia McGarr
Executive Director
Yukon Registered Nurses Association
204, 4133-4 Avenue
Whitehorse, YT
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Dear Ms. McGarr:

Thank you for your letter of November 29, 2005. I am pleased to provide the context and to clarify the comments quoted in the Yukon News on November 23, 2005.

It has been recognized nationally by all orders of government that the state of health for aboriginal Canadians is deplorable. That is why a national strategy has been developed to address a number of health determinants such as delivery of health care, education, housing, and economic development.

In conjunction with the tremendous work of health care professionals here in Yukon, this strategy combined with your efforts will impact positively in raising the standard of health for aboriginal Canadians.

My comments were part of a larger discussion at the Yukon Medical Association annual general meeting in which I addressed the many factors that affect the health of Yukon First Nations people living in remote communities, such as poor housing, education and limited economic opportunities. As a result of representations to First Ministers on these same issues, the Territories have received improved funding commitments from the Government of Canada to enhance health care services, economic development, education and housing. This funding will benefit First Nations people in the Yukon.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to the nursing profession and other health care providers for the splendid job they do in providing health care services in our Yukon communities. We appreciate the heavy responsibilities that are undertaken by such individuals, often without benefit of professional peers nearby. We believe that our competent and committed health care providers can take credit for gains in health status that have been achieved among the Yukon population.

The dedicated, caring and professional work done by nurses and other health care providers throughout the Yukon is much appreciated. As Yukoners, we rely on the work and commitment of our health care providers every day of the year.

Sincerely,

Dennis Fentie
Premier

