

LEGISLATIVE RETURN

SUBMITTED BY: Hon. Pauline Frost, Minister of Health and Social Services



1. On _____,

asked the following question during the Oral Question Period
at page(s) _____ of *Hansard*

submitted the following written question – WQ No. _____

gave notice of the following motion for the production of papers – MPP No. _____

RE: _____

OR

2. This legislative return relates to a matter outstanding from discussion related to:

General debate on Vote 15, Health and Social Services, in Bill No. 207 - THIF

on November 7, 2018 at page(s) 3409 of *Hansard*.

The response is as follows:

Please see the attached summary in response to Ms. McLeod's question on the Territorial Health Investment Fund (THIF).

November 22, 2018

Date

Signature

Summary of Outcomes and Evaluation of Yukon's Territorial Health Investment Fund (THIF), 2014-2018

Background

An independent summative evaluation was conducted for Health and Social Services to assess the outcomes of \$25 million provided by Health Canada's Territorial Health Investment Funds for the period of April 1, 2014-March 31, 2017 with a one-year extension to March 31, 2018. Funds were identified to support system improvement and related activities in two sectors: mental wellness and chronic disease management. Yukon's activities focused on three main objectives: 1/ increasing access to care; 2/ improving quality of care, and 3/ strengthening collaborative approaches to enable providers to work together to deliver effective services. Evaluation methods included document review, stakeholder survey, key informant interviews and focus groups.

Overall Findings:

- THIF was implemented substantially as intended by the Government of Yukon's original proposal.
- Positive aspects of planning and implementation included incorporating a "bottom-up" approach to addressing projects (e.g. through working groups), open communication from the project teams with stakeholders, and project staff valuing and using stakeholder input.
- Areas for improvement included standardizing a project management process, incorporating evaluation early in the planning process, and adopting formal communications strategies.
- Some facilitators of success included having dedicated staff to do incremental project work, sufficient funding, supportive leadership and flexibility.
- Some barriers to success identified included: start up delays, short-term funding with expectation for long-term change, capacity of partners and stakeholder to participate, and staff turnover.
- 15 recommendations for improvement were identified in the report.
- General areas identified for improvement include enhanced overall communication of THIF's purpose, roles and outcomes; enhanced supports for project management, staff training and evaluation/measurement of program performance; as well as retention of existing working groups established for many of the projects such as capacity building and discharge planning.

Assessment of Outcomes:

- Data indicated that progress had been achieved in all of the desired outcomes of improved quality of care, access, and system capacity. Some measures to support this included the number of people trained, the number of clients reporting increased access to services and the number of trained stakeholders reporting applied training to practice.
- Some examples of positive health system change resulting from the THIF projects included:
 - Training for clinical skills and related knowledge led to improved quality of care, increased awareness of health system improvement, and other outcomes
 - Spirometry testing - a common test used to diagnose asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and other conditions that affect breathing- increased access to, and expanded Yukon's capacity to carry out spirometry testing
 - New best practices in wound care were introduced that improved quality of care
 - Integration of existing addiction, mental health, and treatment services enabled the newly-formed Mental Wellness and Substance Use (MWSU) Branch to improve access to services.

Stakeholder Survey Results:

- In March 2018, over 100 stakeholders involved in THIF were invited to participate in an online survey; the survey garnered 52 respondents.
- Overall, the responses support that THIF has made progress towards its outcomes of improving quality of care, increasing access to care, and increasing system capacity.

- Most stakeholders (89% and 85% respectively) agreed that their knowledge or skills increased as a result of working with THIF, and that awareness of evidence-based practice and commitment to participating in health system improvement increased.
- Most stakeholders agreed that THIF made positive changes to the health system that will result in improved health and wellness, better care provision for Yukoners (86% and 84%), reduce gaps in care coverage, and increase efficiency; noting that some projects were still underway.
- The majority of participants who completed follow-up surveys indicated they have shared their new knowledge and/or provided support to colleagues using their training (Note that a total of 3035 person-days of training was completed). Many care providers have made changes to their practice and observed positive health outcomes for their clients as a result.
- Agreement from stakeholders was not as strong regarding the strength of planning and implementation (compared to achievement of outcomes); however most surveyed stakeholders (71%) felt that THIF planning, implementation, and collaboration were successful.

Conclusion:

“THIF completed a great deal of work in a short period of time. It has fulfilled and in some cases exceeded the expectations of the proposal to Health Canada and, perhaps more important, built a solid groundwork for continued achievement” (Evaluation of the Yukon Territorial Health Investment Fund, p. 30, July 2018).