

Action Plan for Critical Incident Investigation Report 2021 Recommendations

Many of the recommendations put forth in the Critical Incident Report are aligned with our current work that is underway at the Department of Health and Social Services. We are committed to working with other government departments to enhance program and service delivery to our patients.

Critical Incident Investigation Report Recommendations	Current Status	Actions Taken
<p>1. That the Government of Northwest Territories train community home support workers, particularly those providing support to Elders and individuals with disabilities to recognize acute medical conditions.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>All NWT regions organize annual educational opportunities for Home Support Workers (HSWs) and Long Term Care (LTC) staff including Elders in Motion, supportive care for clients with dementia, wound care, and palliative care training to name a few. Basic First Aid and CPR is also delivered annually by employers, staff are required to ensure they renew this training every three years. To further ensure Staff maintain their skills and competencies, Clinical Nurse Educators at NTHSSA are developing routine Skill Competency Lists that will include standardized annual training and education requirements.</p> <p>In December 2018, the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA) organized a meeting where all HSW’s and LTC staff met to reinforce knowledge/education provided earlier in the year on elder care, disabilities, acute medical conditions and Supportive Pathways. In total, in 2018 Supportive Pathways was delivered in Yellowknife (x2), Ft. Simpson (x2), Norman Wells and Ft. Smith (x2). In addition to the above, the NTHSSA continues to facilitate further training for its HSW and LTC staff. Since the initial meeting in December 2018, the following training has been conducted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May 2019 - Palliative Care 2 Day Course in Yellowknife for SW’s/HSW’s/RCA’s/NA’s. • December 2019 - Continuing Care Conference for PSW/HSW/RCA/NA with specific education on signs and symptoms of stroke, cardiac arrest, heart attack, diabetes (high and low blood sugar), respiratory distress and their role if

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		<p>they encounter a client with any of these signs and symptoms. Also included were sessions on dementia, oral health, and safe patient handling. Specialized session on substance use and a harm reduction approach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 2020 - Palliative care course (LEAP and Integrating a Palliative Approach to Care) took place in Inuvik. • September 2020-Online LEAP training for physicians. <p>As a direct result of restrictions surrounding the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, in person training has been temporarily reduced. In the 2020 fiscal year, NTHSSA delivered virtual Supportive Pathways training (training on how to support clients with Dementia) over the course of 7 weeks. Based on the most recent vaccine developments and the substantial expected inoculation across the Northwest Territories by March 31, 2021, the NTHSSA is seeking to resume its in-person training throughout the fiscal year ended March 31, 2022.</p>
<p>2. That the Government of Northwest Territories explores opportunities for trained nurses to oversee home care programs and community home support workers.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>All HSWs now report to Community Care Managers. Regular scheduled meetings are held onsite to support opportunities for sharing and learning.</p> <p>All regions have had their Nurses in Charge attended a NIC conference (in 2018) that provided education related to mentoring and supervising staff. As a result, NICs now hold daily meetings and HSWs are provided with educational opportunities on a weekly basis.</p> <p>The Department has updated the NWT Community Health Core Service Standards and Protocols. These Standards and Protocols came into force December 2020 and incorporate a standard focusing on Home Care. The Department conducted a Home and Community Care Review, out of this Review, recommendations have been finalized and next steps are being completed by a Home and Community Care Working Group.</p> <p>Funding has also been established for a Home and Community Care Nurse in Charge for the Sahtu and Beaufort Delta, these positions are currently being reviewed by Job Evaluation and will be posted once finalized.</p>

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<p>3. That the Government of Northwest Territories review and provide first responder training within the community of ... to ensure standard medical care is provided at the earliest opportunity.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>In support of communities, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA)-School of Community Government provides a training program for community government staff and volunteers aimed at developing first responders in the community. This training is on request of the community government and may include the following courses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency First Aid; • Standard First Aid; • First Responder; • Emergency Medical Responder; • Wilderness First Aid; and • Community Live Exercise. <p>This training is offered annually and specific course offerings (full courses or refresher training) are based on the needs identified by the community.</p> <p>The pandemic significantly impacted the School of Community Government's ability to deliver First Responder courses in 2020-2021.</p> <p>Respecting the Emerging Wisely direction, classroom-based courses were cancelled. However, recognizing the critical nature of first responder training, some training was delivered with approval of the CPHO, requested on a case-by-case basis. The CPHO restrictions required course delivery in large facilities to enable appropriate social distancing; this, in turn, decreased the class size, effectively doubling the cost of course delivery.</p> <p>To date, the following training has been provided by the MACA –School of Community Government (2019/2020):</p>
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Course	Location	Date	Attendance
Community Live Exercise (Full Scale Emergency Exercise)	<i>Fort Simpson Airport</i>	<i>June 2019</i>	<i>10</i>
Community Live Exercise (Full Scale Emergency Exercise)	<i>Ulukhaktok Airport</i>	<i>July 2019</i>	<i>20</i>
Community Live Exercise (Full Scale Emergency Exercise)	<i>Fort Providence Airport</i>	<i>October 2019</i>	<i>33</i>
Emergency Medical Responder	<i>Inuvik</i>	<i>May 2019</i>	<i>10</i>
Emergency Medical Responder	<i>Fort Simpson</i>	<i>September 2019</i>	<i>7</i>
Emergency Medical Responder	<i>Fort Smith</i>	<i>July 2020</i>	<i>6</i>
Emergency Medical Responder	<i>Hay River</i>	<i>August 2020</i>	<i>6</i>
Standard First Aid	<i>Gameti</i>	<i>September 2019</i>	<i>9</i>
Standard First Aid	<i>Tulita</i>	<i>September 2019</i>	<i>10</i>
First Responder	<i>Sambaa K'e</i>	<i>May 2019</i>	<i>8</i>
First Responder	<i>Ulukhaktok</i>	<i>July 2019</i>	<i>15</i>
First Responder	<i>Deline</i>	<i>August 2019</i>	<i>8</i>
First Responder	<i>Tulita</i>	<i>September 2019</i>	<i>9</i>
First Responder	<i>Fort Smith</i>	<i>July 2020</i>	<i>11</i>
Wilderness First Aid	<i>Yellowknife</i>	<i>April 2019</i>	<i>10</i>
Wilderness First Aid (2 course deliveries)	<i>Yellowknife</i>	<i>February 2021</i>	<i>14</i>

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<p>4. That the Government of Northwest Territories review methods and practices of medical transportation within the community of ... to ensure patients are transported to the health centre in a suitable and medically equipped ambulance.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Community governments decide the appropriate level of emergency services for the safety and protection of their residents. Municipal legislation provides community governments with the discretionary authority to establish emergency services, allocate funding, and set fees for those services. Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA) supports community governments in developing and maintaining municipal programs and services essential to good community life.</p> <p>Emergency medical services vary across communities in the Northwest Territories. There are currently five communities (Inuvik, Yellowknife, Hay River, Fort Smith and Fort Simpson) who provide community-based ground ambulance services, including patient care and transportation to a local hospital or health center. The GNWT currently supports community ground ambulance services through emergency medical responder training and an annual ground ambulance and highway rescue funding appropriation.</p> <p>Some communities also provide inter-facility transfer services, with support through the Health and Social Services (HSS) Authorities, which includes transportation of a patient between a hospital/health center and the airport. The Stanton Territorial Hospital manages the provision of medevac services (i.e. air ambulance) in all NWT communities.</p>
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<p>5. That the Government of Northwest Territories reviews and continuously monitors community health centres to ensure a full complement of health care providers.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The Department of Human Resources works closely with the Health and Social Services Authorities (HSSAs) to ensure their staffing needs are met. When positions are not able to be staffed indeterminately or by a job share, they are filled with casual and locum staff. All staff are provided an orientation by the Nurse in Charge, the staff educator and/or the Manager of Community Health Centres.</p> <p>NTHSSA has developed a standardized mandatory onboarding process for all Community Health Centre (CHC) staff which includes an onboarding checklist, as well as a second checklist for continuing competency specifically for Community Health Nurses (CHN) in the Primary Care and CHC setting. Further, the NTHSSA employs Community Nurse Educators (CNE) in all regions, who monitor CHN competencies and address educational need as needed both individually and as groups.</p> <p>Quarterly reports are completed and submitted to Authority Senior Management to ensure all current and new staff are up to date with their training needs, as well as for the purposes of meeting reporting requirements as set by Accreditation Canada. All onboarding checklists and education are housed on the new CHC Website, allowing for greater compliance tracking capabilities, as well as ensuring the delivery of a standardized orientation. The responsibility of ensuring that staff are up to date in their training needs is the collaborative responsibility of the NIC, the Clinical Nurse Educator and the Regional Manager of Community Health Centres.</p>
<p>6. That the Government of Northwest Territories review their Clinical Practice Guidelines for Primary Community Care Nursing as it relates to Cerebrovascular Accidents (Stroke) and ensure that all the community nurses follow it.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Community Health Nurses use the NWT Clinical Practice Guidelines (CPGs) for Primary Community Care Nursing, as a tool for clinical guidance on assessment, interventions and treatment/referrals. These existing CPGs have a specific guideline for stroke management.</p> <p>The Department is in the process of updating the current CPGs. The Department has collaborated with subject matter experts and the stroke management CPG is undergoing final approvals. This CPGs evidenced based and includes the appropriate protocols for assessment and treatment. This evidenced based work will be shared with the HSSAs for dissemination to nursing staff in Spring 2021.</p>

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<p>7. That the Government of Northwest Territories review protocols at the Inuvik Hospital for dispatching medivacs including who is responsible to initiate the medivac and ensure this information is part of all orientation to new staff including all resident doctors in training.</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>It has been established that all new employees in the emergency department at the Inuvik Regional hospital are orientated to the procedures and protocols related to Medivacs.</p> <p>Through the NTHSSA’s ongoing accreditation process, standardization in Med Response is occurring. Since December 2019, an orientation to Med Response is included in the new standardized mandatory onboarding process for all NTHSSA CHC staff and the program continues to yield synergies across the system, ensuring patient movement requests are processed collaboratively. Specific improvements include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Over 25 Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)’s have been established and are readily available on the internal NTHSSA website; 2. Flow sheets have been developed to support Med-Response staff in operationalizing their SOP’s; and, 3. Contracted Air Ambulance service providers have received CAMTS (Commission of Accreditation of Medical Transportation System) accreditation, which included ensuring Med-Response dispatch met those standards.
<p>8. That the Government of Northwest Territories review triage coding protocols to ensure patients are coded appropriately and receive the standard of care associated with each code.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The Canadian Triage and Acuity Scale (CTAS) is a nationally recognized tool that is used to assess patients and provides a clinical decision making process to correctly identify a patient’s needs, set priorities and implement appropriate investigation and treatment. CTAS scoring has been implemented across the Territory in acute care Emergency Departments. Audits are being completed by NTHSSA quarterly within the Inuvik and Stanton Emergency Departments to ensure patients are seen within the timeframe for their CTAS score. The Stanton audits are reported to senior leadership each quarter .The results of these audits guide management’s decisions and teams are actively working towards improving this rate.</p> <p>Currently, Med Response is utilizing CTAS scoring for the triaging of all clients. All Health organization across the Territory, regardless of whether a Health Centre or hospital, has access to the Med Response Program.</p>

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		<p>The Tlicho Community Service Agency (TCSA) is in the process of arranging online CTAS training for new staff, to take place in the first quarter of 2021. However, there is no current plan for full CTAS implementation across TCSA facilities.</p> <p>When not using Med Response’s assistance, both NTHSSA and TCSA use NTHSSA’s Walk-In Triage Policy in their Community Health Centre’s. This Policy outlines criteria for triaging individuals in a timely manner to determine immediate and urgent needs. If a client presents in distress or serious injury the Community Health Nurse is informed immediately.</p> <p>The Department is working on updating the Community Health Centre Administrative Standards. This will ensure there will be a standard for all nurses in community health center settings to be informed and trained in triage assessment and scoring.</p>
9. That the Government of Northwest Territories reviews the charting process in the Inuvik Hospital with a view to improving the flow and documentation.	Completed	In the NTHSSA Regions, including the Inuvik Regional Hospital, charting standards are in place. Each month charts in the emergency department are retrospectively audited for medication reconciliation, falls risk, and adherence to CTAS guidelines and tracking information. This information is reported quarterly to NTHSSA Senior Leadership.
10. That the Government of Northwest Territories explore establishing stroke protocols including directly transporting the patient to the Stanton Hospital in Yellowknife if there is a high suspicion of stroke so that there is appropriate treatment in a timely manner.	Ongoing	The clinical pathway for stroke management is outlined for Community Health Centres in the CPGs followed by immediate correspondence with Med-Response and ER physicians. The Department has collaborated with subject matter experts and the stroke management CPG is undergoing final approvals. This CPG is evidenced based and includes the appropriate protocols for assessment and treatment. This evidenced based work will be shared with the HSSAs for dissemination to nursing staff in Spring 2021.
11. That the Government of Northwest Territories explores establishing a stroke centre at the Stanton Hospital in Yellowknife.	Completed	The Department and NTHSSA have met with Alberta Health Services Neurologists to explore the feasibility of establishing a stroke centre at Stanton Territorial Hospital. Due to our geography, and the time to access care, precludes our ability to have a viable stroke center in the NWT at this time. As an alternate, The Department has collaborated

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		<p>with subject matter experts and the stroke management Clinical Practice Guideline is undergoing final approvals. This Clinical Practice Guideline is evidenced based and includes the appropriate protocols for assessment and treatment. This evidenced based work will be shared with the HSSAs for dissemination to nursing staff in Spring 2021.</p>
<p>12. That the Government of Northwest Territories implements a process to respond to patient and family concerns related to the care that they receive within the health care system.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The Department has established a Territorial System Quality Committee and is working with the three HSSAs to address and improve responses to patient and family concerns across the system.</p> <p>In March 2019, the Department sponsored 17 health and social service providers from across the NWT to attend four days of Investigation Training in Yellowknife, through the Justice Institute of British Columbia (JIBC).</p> <p>A territorial-wide electronic incident-reporting program was implemented in July 2019. This tool allows the NTHSSA to gather important information surrounding incidences in a centralized location through a streamlined reporting process. Using this tool, the NTHSSA regularly builds reports reviewed by management, allowing the organization to identify trends and reduce organizational risks.</p> <p>The NTHSSA is currently pursuing the implementation of additional reporting, tracking, and resolution of complaints from both inside and outside the organization. The NTHSSA’s current goal is to have this implemented within the first half of the fiscal year ending March 21, 2022. In the interim, a standardized territorial complaints process has been implemented, allowing for patients to contact Regional Quality Risk Managers directly.</p> <p>A quality framework has been drafted by the NTHSSA. Implementation of the full framework will be a phased in approach and remains ongoing, as it will reflect additional reporting, tracking and resolution of complaints. The NTHSSA is actively working towards finalizing and implementing these initiatives and as such, is committed to ensuring this framework is aligned and operational in 2021. This framework will give patients, clients</p>

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		<p>and their families a central point of contact where they can raise concerns, ask questions and be provided timely response to their concerns.</p> <p>The framework will include a quality process for dealing with concerns, reviews, and investigations and for making recommendations on how to improve the health and social services system. These recommendations will be monitored regularly to track progress.</p> <p>The NTHSSA is also collaborating with the Department of Health and Social Services to explore the establishment of a dedicated office for the purposes of client engagement. This office will be a centralized point of contact for patients, clients, and their families to raise questions and concerns and receive response in a timely manner. Active planning for the establishment of this office is ongoing, with an intended launch date within the first half of the fiscal year ended March 31, 2022. Based on current planning, this office will be supported by the Territorial Manager, Clinical Education and Client Experience, the Territorial Specialist Client Experience and the Quality Risk Managers in each region.</p>
<p>13. That the Government of Northwest Territories in partnership with communities, recruit and train Indigenous first responders, nurses, and physicians from within the communities and surrounding areas to decrease turnover and transiency, ensuring continuity of care. This is in keeping with number 23 in The Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Report.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The recruitment of all GNWT employees and internships is done through the Department of Finance which follows the Affirmative Action Policy. The Department of Finance has programs available for all employees to apply on should they want or need training in a certain areas.</p> <p>MACA has developed a Volunteer Fire Fighter Recruitment and Retention Toolkit to all NWT communities. This toolkit provides volunteers, Fire Chiefs, senior administrative staff, and community governments with an overview of best practices to consider in the recruitment and retention of volunteer fire fighters. The toolkit is available on MACA’s website at the following location: http://www.maca.gov.nt.ca/sites/maca/files/volunteer-fire-fighter-recruitment-and-retention-toolkit.pdf</p> <p>Aurora College offers a Bachelor of Science in Nursing program. Their mission statement</p>

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		<p>is focused on Student Success and is committed to supporting the development of our Northern Residents through excellence in education, training and research that is culturally sensitive and responsive to the people we serve.</p> <p>The Inuvialuit Regional Corporation has sponsored a two-year Practical Nursing program that started in September 2018. In June 2020, this program had three graduates (two from the Beaufort Delta Region and one from the Yellowknife Region). The Practical Nursing Program will begin again in Yellowknife in the Fall of 2021, there will be 24 available seats. The Department of Health and Social Services will continue to work with the Health and Social Services Authorities and Aurora College to plan for future continuing care programming needs.</p> <p>The Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE) provides financial assistance to eligible Northwest Territories residents to assist with postsecondary education-related expenses. This Student Financial Assistance (SFA) program assists to remove financial barriers that may exist for education.</p>
<p>14. That the Government of Northwest Territories develop and initiate policies for the implementation of mandatory and ongoing cultural safety training, with content designed and delivered in partnership with the Indigenous community, for all health care workers. Cultural safety training should be grounded in an anti-oppression framework and include concepts of unconscious and perception bias (racism), Indigenous view of family including next of kin. This is</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The Government of the Northwest Territories’ Aboriginal Culture and Awareness Training is undergoing a renewal process. The training will be renamed as Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training and includes the revised goals: (1) to create awareness and understanding of the impact of colonization; (2) to have all GNWT employees understand their individual and collective role in reconciliation; and (3) to provide the necessary foundation and tools to move towards cultural safety. The expected launch of the revised training is January or February 2021.</p> <p>The Department released the “Caring for Our People: Cultural Safety Action Plan 2018-2020 (Action Plan) in February 2019. The Action Plan consists of actions that target all parts of the Health and Social Services (HSS) system and are organized under four categories: (1) create an organizational culture of cultural safety; (2) strengthen staff capacity for cultural safety; (3) honour traditional knowledge and healing approaches in</p>

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<p>in keeping with number 23 in the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Report.</p>	<p>care; and (4) improve client and community experience.</p> <p>Objective 2 of the Action Plan includes commitments related to staff training and learning needs in regards to cultural safety, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure that the majority of the health and social services workforce complete the online GNWT Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training. ○ Develop a toolkit to support culturally safe and respectful communication between staff and clients. ○ Establish regional specific onboarding processes for locum practitioners working with Indigenous peoples for communities ○ Identify, test and evaluate nationally recognized cultural competency training programs that are best suited for the NWT ○ Require staff to include in their performance evaluation learning plan annual goals focused on building or enhancing cultural competencies <p>With regards to the action to pilot cultural competency training, 13 pilot cultural competency training sessions were held between December 2018 and July 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The pilots generally included a mix of guest speakers and a series of activities. ○ The pilot content has included: Indigenous medicine teachings; Indigenous experiences of residential schools and inter-generational impacts; settler colonialism and privilege; understanding racism at interpersonal and systemic levels. ○ Pilot activities have included: the blanket exercise; historical timeline exercise; self-reflection exercises, and sharing circles. ○ Six pilots were hosted in a land-based setting. ○ To date, approximately 225 staff have participated in a pilot training session. ○ Findings from the pilot trainings will be used to inform the final NWT Cultural Competency Training Framework which is expected to be completed in winter or spring 2021.
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Staff will be trained in a sequenced approach starting with the Government of the Northwest Territories Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training (expected to launch in Jan/Feb 2021), and followed by the final NWT HSS cultural competency training package
<p>15. That the Government of Northwest Territories explores recruiting and retaining Indigenous Elders to work collaboratively on cultural safety training.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The Department has developed the Cultural Safety Action Plan. The development of the ensuing training will explore the inclusion of an advisory role for Indigenous Elders. As of April 2019, there is one resident elder advisory role filled at Stanton Territorial Hospital. The resident elder attended the 3rd pilot training held in January 2019 and provided feedback to that model.</p> <p>The Department established an Indigenous Advisory Body (IAB) in 2018 to provide guidance and advice on how to incorporate cultural safety, Indigenous traditions, cultures and healing practices with the NWT health and social services system. Members are appointed by Indigenous governments, some of which are Elders. The IAB will be asked about how they would like to be involved with the cultural competency training at their next meeting Jan 12-14, 2021.</p> <p>Elders engaged in the delivery of the pilot cultural competency training sessions worked collaboratively on the framing of their sessions, and provided feedback and guidance to inform the ongoing development of the training framework based on the experience and evaluation of each pilot session.</p>

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<p>16. That the Government of Northwest Territories affect change within their health-care system to recognize the value of Aboriginal healing practices and use them in the treatment of Aboriginal patients in collaboration with Aboriginal healers and Elders where requested by Aboriginal patients. This is in keeping with number 22 in the Calls for Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Report.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The GNWT has supported the efforts of the Arctic Indigenous Wellness Foundation (AIWF) to establish an Indigenous Healing Centre at the Stanton Territorial Hospital Campus with the goal of having traditional healing available to all Indigenous patients in the future.</p> <p>The Arctic Indigenous Wellness Foundation continues to work on the following initiatives that have helped increase access to indigenous healing practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elder to Youth/Elder to Homeless Cultural and Skills Programming • Mental Wellness for Indigenous Boys and Men-Movember • Traditional Medicine Revitalization • Research Development in Indigenous Healthcare Delivery • Traditional Medicine & Food Gardening Program <p>The Department has updated the NWT Community Health Core Service Standards and Protocols. These Standards and Protocols came into force December 2020 and incorporate the commitment to build a culturally respectful and safe health and social services system.</p>
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