



**NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION**

NLMA releases findings from Provincial Forum; Proposes plan for Rebuilding NL Health

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St. John's, NL – NLMA President Dr. Christopher Cox today released the findings from the provincial *Forum to Determine the Need for a Review of Health Facilities and Services in Newfoundland and Labrador*. The NLMA hosted the provincial forum on October 19, 2016 in collaboration with the Leslie Harris Centre and the Centre for Applied Health Research of Memorial University. The NLMA has now used these findings as the basis for its proposal to government entitled *Rebuilding NL Health*, which provides specific suggestions on the scope and process for how a review should be conducted.

“For many years, physicians have been alerting the government to the growing pressures on our health care system. We felt it was time for physicians to present government, and the public, with advice on how to address these pressures,” said Dr. Cox.

“The Summary Report we are releasing today provides an overview of the views and opinions expressed by more than 130 health system stakeholders who attended the forum. While we do not presume to speak on behalf of all stakeholders, the majority agreed that health care spending in this province is not sustainable and there is a significant need to review all health facilities and services in order to facilitate meaningful health system reform,” he added.

Dr. Cox explained that the review proposed by the NLMA would identify the existing and projected demand for all health services in the province in order to determine the minimum and optimum volume standards at each site. The results of the review would then be used to create a clinical services plan that would identify the most suitable locations for each service.

“We recognize that embarking on this process may result in changes to where services are located. However, delivering better health care services does not have to rely solely on physical structures or facilities. We know it can be achieved by improving the way we deliver primary health care, and through better use of technology and medical transportation,” said Dr. Cox.

At the core of the NLMA’s proposal, is the recommendation that the review be headed by an independent office that has the freedom to engage patients and the public.

“This will require strong political leadership and a plan for change. If the government does not conduct such a review, we will be unable to address the root of our challenges in a rationale, evidence-based way,” said Dr. Cox.

“Now is the time to take action so that we can move towards a system that is more efficient, stable, high quality and focused on keeping people healthy in their communities.”

- 30 -

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