

President's Letter

January 17, 2016

NLMA Releases Findings from Provincial Forum; Proposes Terms of Reference for *Rebuilding NL Health*



**Christopher Cox,
MD, FRCS, FACS
President**

Dear Colleagues:

I am pleased to provide you with a [Summary Report](#) of the provincial *Forum to Determine the Need for a Review of Health Facilities and Services in Newfoundland and Labrador*. The NLMA hosted the Forum on October 19th in collaboration with the Leslie Harris Centre and the Centre for Applied Health Research of Memorial University. It was well-attended with more than 130 stakeholders representing providers, professional associations, regulatory bodies, RHAs, public sector unions, advocacy groups, community-based organizations, academia, municipalities, the business community and government.

The Summary Report we are releasing today provides a synthesized account of the views and opinions expressed during those discussions. 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 for a review that leads to health system reform.

We have updated our official position to reflect the guiding principles that emerged from the Forum. Our position statement entitled [Rebuilding NL Health](#), includes a proposed Terms of Reference that identifies the rationale, scope and process that would make for a successful review of all health facilities and services.

We propose that it should begin by identifying current staffing levels and capacities for each site in the province, as well as the current and forecasted demand for services. This data can then be used to identify the minimum and optimum volume standards for each site to ensure efficiency, quality and safety.

The results of the review would be used to implement a "Role Delineation Framework" that would assign each health service to a specific category of complexity. Once these categories are established, a Clinical Services Plan will be required to determine where services should be provided. This, in turn, would require a provincial Health Human Resources plan to ensure that each service is appropriately staffed.

If the outcome of the review results in some services being physically located in different sites than at present, ancillary plans will be required to maintain appropriate access for patients. This would include a medical transportation and accommodation plan; a service delivery information and communication technology plan; and, a plan for change management.

It is our hope that government will treat this proposal with a high degree of urgency. Without a plan, government will fail to address the root of its challenges in a rationale, evidence-based way.

One thing that all stakeholders at the Forum agreed on was that they are tired of simply talking about the problems facing our province's health care system. Now is the time for 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.

We invite you to read the [Rebuilding NL Health](#) position statement and [Summary Report](#). As always, your feedback and suggestions are welcome.

Sincerely,



Christopher Cox, MD, FRCS, FACS
President



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