

Response to Applicant – Full Disclosure

September 21, 2021

Dear Applicant:

**Re: Your request for access to information under Part II of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act [Our File HCS-215-2021]**

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On August 6, 2021, the Department of Health and Community Services received your request for access to the following records:

*A copy of the plan to which Minister Haggie referred in an NTV news item on Tuesday, August 3 for addressing the physician shortage and/or how the province provides health care, containing a short, medium and long term approach. Any document that assesses the supply and demand for physicians in the province, a human resource plan for physicians, or any plans that government is taking to recruit and retain doctors.*

The Department of Health and Community Services is working on short, medium and long term strategies with stakeholders such as the Regional Health Authorities and local post-secondary institutions, to try and address recruitment and retention challenges. For example, increasing LPN and PCA seats throughout colleges in the province, introducing the Advanced Care Paramedic Program in NL, conducting a core staffing review to ensure we have the right skill mix in facilities, implementing virtual care solutions as a creative way to address immediate gaps in primary care. Health Accord NL is also consulting widely on options to improve care in the province and government looks forward to their report which will also include ways to improve the health care system and introduce more primary care teams.

Further information may also be found in the Primary Health Care Framework for Newfoundland and Labrador which is available on the Department of Health and Community Service website <https://www.gov.nl.ca/hcs/phc-framework/>

Please be advised that you may ask the Information and Privacy Commissioner to review the processing of your access request, as set out in section 42 of **the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 2015** (the Act) (a copy of this section has been enclosed for your reference). A request to the Commissioner must be made in writing within 15 business days of the date of this letter or within a longer period that may be allowed by the Commissioner.

The address and contact information of the Information and Privacy Commissioner is as follows:

Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner  
2 Canada Drive  
P. O. Box 13004, Stn. A  
St. John's, NL. A1B 3V8

Telephone: (709) 729-6309  
Toll-Free: 1-877-729-6309  
Facsimile: (709) 729-6500

You may also appeal directly to the Supreme Court within 15 business days after you receive the decision of the public body, pursuant to section 52 of the Act (a copy of this section has been enclosed for your reference).

Please be advised that this request will be published three business days after the response is sent electronically to you or five business days in the case where records are mailed to you. The goal is to have the responsive records posted to the Completed Access to Information Requests website within one business day following the applicable period of time. Please note that requests for personal information will not be posted online.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me by telephone (709) 729-7010 or by e-mail at [kimberlyryan@gov.nl.ca](mailto:kimberlyryan@gov.nl.ca).

Sincerely,



Kimberly Ryan  
Manager, Privacy and Information Security

Enclosures

#### Access or correction complaint

42. (1) A person who makes a request under this Act for access to a record or for correction of personal information may file a complaint with the commissioner respecting a decision, act or failure to act of the head of the public body that relates to the request.

(2) A complaint under subsection (1) shall be filed in writing not later than 15 business days

(a) after the applicant is notified of the decision of the head of the public body, or the date of the act or failure to act; or

(b) after the date the head of the public body is considered to have refused the request under subsection 16 (2).

(3) A third party informed under section 19 of a decision of the head of a public body to grant access to a record or part of a record in response to a request may file a complaint with the commissioner respecting that decision.

(4) A complaint under subsection (3) shall be filed in writing not later than 15 business days after the third party is informed of the decision of the head of the public body.

(5) The commissioner may allow a longer time period for the filing of a complaint under this section.

(6) A person or third party who has appealed directly to the Trial Division under subsection 52 (1) or 53 (1) shall not file a complaint with the commissioner.

(7) The commissioner shall refuse to investigate a complaint where an appeal has been commenced in the Trial Division.

(8) A complaint shall not be filed under this section with respect to

- (a) a request that is disregarded under section 21 ;
  - (b) a decision respecting an extension of time under section 23 ;
  - (c) a variation of a procedure under section 24 ; or
  - (d) an estimate of costs or a decision not to waive a cost under section 26 .
- (9) The commissioner shall provide a copy of the complaint to the head of the public body concerned.

#### **Direct appeal to Trial Division by an applicant**

**52.** (1) Where an applicant has made a request to a public body for access to a record or correction of personal information and has not filed a complaint with the commissioner under section 42 , the applicant may appeal the decision, act or failure to act of the head of the public body that relates to the request directly to the Trial Division.

(2) An appeal shall be commenced under subsection (1) not later than 15 business days

(a) after the applicant is notified of the decision of the head of the public body, or the date of the act or failure to act; or

(b) after the date the head of the public body is considered to have refused the request under subsection 16 (2).

(3) Where an applicant has filed a complaint with the commissioner under section 42 and the commissioner has refused to investigate the complaint, the applicant may commence an appeal in the Trial Division of the decision, act or failure to act of the head of the public body that relates to the request for access to a record or for correction of personal information.

(4) An appeal shall be commenced under subsection (3) not later than 15 business days after the applicant is notified of the commissioner's refusal under subsection 45 (2).