

CONFIDENTIAL

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COMMUNICATIONS PLAN
Department of Health and Community Services
Summer 2008

<u>Consulted with:</u> M. Hennessey, HCS J. Strong, HCS J. Maddigan, HCS J. Jeans, HCS F. Stratton, HCS R. Boyd, HCS C. Bradbury, HCS	<u>Date Drafted:</u> May 17, 2008 <u>Revised:</u> May 30, 2008	<u>Announcement Date:</u> TBD, various
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COMMUNICATIONS ANALYSIS**PUBLIC ENVIRONMENT*****General******ERPR Testing / Commission of Inquiry***

- Media coverage of the public hearings of the Commission of Inquiry has been consistent, with varying levels of coverage depending on the witness and the nature of the testimony.
- There has been substantial daily media coverage, with coverage as well nationally.
- Most recently, the focus of the coverage has been on comments by the Premier and Minister of Justice regarding the approach by Commission counsel in questioning witnesses. The Premier first shared these comments following a meeting he had with the Minister of Health and Community Services and pathologists and oncologists relating to the shortage and turnover of pathologists, which has come under intense scrutiny since the beginning of the inquiry.
- Commissioner Cameron has recently ruled that Commission counsel may cross examine and that this is not outside the appropriate procedural guidelines for the Commission, as was

put forward in an application by the Provincial Government.

- The Premier, the current government and the Justice minister have been criticized in the media because of their comments on the line of questioning by Commission counsel.
- As well, this issue has been brought forward in the House of Assembly, with multiple questions by opposing parties to government on why it is inserting itself into the process and if it will limit the activities of the inquiry by not granting the extension requested by Justice Cameron or not providing the necessary funds.

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

- The activities of the Commission of Inquiry will continue throughout the summer months and beyond. The daily media coverage of the commission hearings will keep the spotlight on the health care system, while highlighting some of its shortfalls.

Target Audiences/Key Stakeholders***Internal***

- Premier's Office
- Cabinet Secretariat
- Communications Branch
- Cabinet
- MHAs
- Department of Health and Community Services
- Department of Transportation and Works (as per capital infrastructure)
- Department of Finance

External

- Regional Health Authorities
- Newfoundland and Labrador Health Boards Association
- Health care professionals –NLMA, AAHP, ARNNL, NLASW
- Memorial University, including Medical School, Pharmacy and Social Work Schools
- Schools of Nursing
- College of the North Atlantic
- Child and Youth Advocate
- Canadian Cancer Society of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Seniors, and those interested in seniors issues
- Seniors Resource Centre of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Personal Care Home owners/operators

- Provincial Wellness Advisory Council
- Unions – CUPE, NAPE, NLNU
- Professional Associations – Association of Registered Nurses of Newfoundland and Labrador, NLNU, NLMA, Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Social Workers, etc.
- General public
- Media
- Opposition

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

Key Messages – Commission of Inquiry

- On behalf of our government, I reiterate our unwavering commitment to a transparent and thorough process as we work to gain a thorough understanding of exactly what happened with respect to hormone receptor testing.
- The work of the Commission of Inquiry is vital in this regard.
- Our government looks forward to receiving the report of Justice Cameron with her recommendations.

Prepared by: Glenda Power (1377)