

Thompson, Robert

From: Power, Glenda
Sent: Thursday, February 21, 2008 4:08 PM
To: Thompson, Robert; Keats, Don
Subject: Speaking notes
Attachments: Speaking Notes_ERPR database.doc

see attached.

G



Glenda Power
Director of Communications
Department of Health and Community Services
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
P.O. Box 8700
St. John's, NL
A1B 4J6
709.729.1377 office
709.685.1741 cell
glendapower@gov.nl.ca

**Speaking Notes for Minister Wiseman
Update on ER/PR Database project
February 21, 2008 @ 3:15 p.m.
Media centre**

- Good afternoon and thank you for being here today.
- As you just heard in the technical briefing, we now have new information from the development of the ER/PR database.
- The information that has been gathered tells a very significant story.
- We now know that:
 - 1013 patients had been re-tested
 - Of those, 293 were deceased by late 2006
 - And we know 34 patients need to be contacted about their re-testing.
- Behind these numbers are individuals and families who have been impacted in a profound way. And that fact is never far from my mind or from the attention of our government.
- Today we are able to say though that we have the most accurate and comprehensive database on ER/PR testing which gives us a more complete picture than we've ever had before.
- It is a direct outcome of our government's actions in May of last year when we established the role of Secretary to Cabinet for the Management of Health Issues, which led to the engagement of the Newfoundland Centre for Health Information to compile the database.
- When we became aware last May of the inadequacy of the previous record keeping related to ER/PR re-testing at Eastern Health, we responded and that response has brought us here today.
- In May, our government appointed Robert Thompson as Secretary to Cabinet for the Management of Health Issues. In this role, Mr. Thompson has the responsibility for preparing the Provincial Government for full and open participation in the commission of inquiry on Hormone Receptor Testing.
- Through this piece of work, we engaged the Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information for its wealth of expertise regarding database management in the health system.
- We will be providing this information to the Commission of Inquiry to help them in its full examination of the issues around ER/PR testing.

- As well, Eastern Health and the other appropriate health authorities are now working to contact the 34 patients who were identified through the database development as needing contact.
- As well, Eastern Health now has the ER/PR re-test results for their deceased patients for the period of 1997-2005 and Pat Pilgrim will speak to that shortly.
- Our focus now is on the valuable lessons we have learned and it is imperative that we take action to ensure that the patients of our health care system are never faced with a situation again like we have experienced with ER/PR testing.
- Even though the work of the Commission is still underway, we know that change is needed now - so today we are committing \$2.4 million to enhance data management capabilities and quality assurance measures within the health care system.
- Budget 2008-09 will include \$2.1 million for the consolidation of clinical information systems within Eastern Health, a plan for consolidation of similar systems in other regional health authorities, a needs assessment for electronic document tracking systems for each health authority, and funding for 5 new data management professionals throughout the system.
- These investments will help improve response times and completeness of data when searching for patient information in the future, and ensure that more tools are available when managing a response to an adverse event.
- Enhanced data management is a critical component as we look at the lessons we've learned. In addition, we also recognize the fundamental necessity of comprehensive quality assurance programs. That is why our government is initiating province-wide accreditation for all laboratories and diagnostic imaging services in cooperation with our four health authorities. We are also allocating \$100,000 in 2008-09 for the necessary planning for such accreditation.
- The Provincial Government has also approved an additional \$175,000 per year for Eastern Health to follow through on education, training and quality assurance activities related to ER/PR testing. In particular, this funding will allow for pathologists and technologists to participate in relevant training programs each year, and allow for external reviewers to visit the Eastern Health laboratory to assess current practice against best practices elsewhere.
- Another significant component of our work in strengthening the health care system crosses across all the health authorities and the province - our government will immediately establish a Quality Network team which will be led by my department to assess quality assurance initiatives, infection control programs, patient safety, risk management programs and best practices. The Quality

Network team will work to assess processes and ensure standards across the health care system.

- I am confident that these actions we are taking today as a result of valuable lessons learned will serve to strengthen our health care system and thereby enhance the provision of quality health services for all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.
- I will now take questions from the MEDIA.