

News Release

New funds, staffing planned for Baffin Regional Hospital

IQALUIT, Nunavut (January 18, 2006) – Minister of Health and Social Services Leona Aglukkaq today announced major changes planned for Baffin Regional Hospital to improve patient safety and staff support.

"The department has approved \$2.3 million in new funding so we can increase staffing in a number of key areas at the hospital," said Aglukkaq. "These changes will not only improve our ability to offer the services now available but also position the hospital for its expansion into new facilities in Spring 2007."

The new funds will address the issues identified in four separate reviews. The most recent review, by the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation, found that the Baffin Region health system did not qualify for accreditation.

"We need to put our resources where they make the most sense," Aglukkaq said. "With the increase in core funding, the Baffin region will continue to deliver good services -- trusted by clients and staff alike -- but with a greater degree of reliability that meets national standards."

Between August 2004 and December 2005, the hospital participated in four evaluation exercises: a review of the outpatient clinic services, an operational review, a risk-management review, and a regional accreditation exercise. The reviews found that:

- Staffing levels had not kept pace with the population served,
- Risk management processes needed to be updated and enhanced, and
- Information management had not kept pace with demands on the system.

Baffin health services intends to ask for a re-survey once it implements the recommendations arising from the CCHSA survey. This will likely happen within 18 months.

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