News Release

Coroner Recommendations Reviewed by Government of Nunavut

IQALUIT, Nunavut (June 6, 2011) – The Department of Health and Social Services responded today to the recommendations from the coroner's inquest into the death of Elisapee Michael.

"The Department of Health and Social Services fully agrees and accepts the jury recommendations and has taken immediate action to improve medical treatment and care," said Tagak Curley, Minister of Health and Social Services.

Prior to the inquest, the Department of Health and Social Services and the Qikiqtani General Hospital reviewed its policies and operations. As a result of that review, the department had already implemented many changes that were recommended by the jury. These include changes to the medevac contract to provide a Learjet based in Iqaluit, with a team of flight nurses and respiratory therapists available to transport critically ill patients. The department has also committed to purchase a CT scanner.

Following the inquest, the department and the Qikiqtani General Hospital gave serious consideration to the jury's recommendations. As a result, protocol for when the RCMP is called to assist with patients has been clarified and improvements to staff training have been made.

"It is vital that we keep open the lines of communication with other governments and non-government agencies. Communication with agencies such as the RCMP assists us in coordinating plans to monitor and consider all aspects of patient safety," said Minister Curley.

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