

Comment



BRITISH COLUMBIA

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NOV 26 2009

Ms. Karen Goodings, Chair
Peace River Regional District
PO Box 810
1981 Alaska Ave
Dawson Creek BC V1G 4H8



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Dear Ms. Goodings and Council:

It was informative to meet with you at the annual Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) meeting in Vancouver and discuss your concerns regarding health care services available in your community.

Opportunities such as UBCM, that allow levels of government to come together to discuss the health needs of our communities, are essential in creating a culture of continuous improvement and ensuring that the health care system can meet the needs of each individual and community in the most appropriate fashion possible.

I would like to acknowledge Peace River Regional District's important contribution to ensuring British Columbia Ambulance Service (BCAS) has access to current addressing and mapping data. BCAS has accepted the offer to make this data available. This information will improve dispatchers' ability to access and provide directions to the responding crews, especially for difficult to find addresses.

As you are aware, the role of the Ministry of Health Services (the Ministry) is to provide stewardship for the health care system through policies, guidelines and ongoing monitoring and evaluation of health authority performance against defined expectations. Within this framework, regional health authorities are responsible for planning, managing and delivering quality health care services, and for the operation of facilities in their jurisdictions.

A key challenge facing the health system is to continue improving the quality of services provided to citizens while paying attention to the cost of the system. Even in these challenging economic times, the provincial government is increasing its contribution to health authorities by approximately 20 percent over the next three years. Health authorities are committed to ensuring that taxpayers' dollars are focused on the core clinical health services British Columbians require.

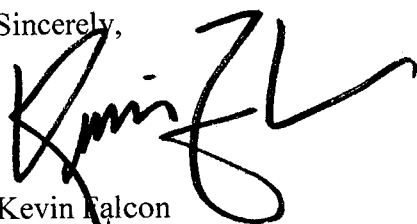
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Despite this substantial increase in funding, the health system will continue to be challenged by an increasing demand for health services. This pressure is compounded by worldwide competition for health professions and health care workers, and the need to maintain and improve the system's physical infrastructure. The Ministry and health authorities are committed to exploring opportunities to improve the system by seeking innovative ways to maximize health care resources.

Through cooperation and strategic partnership the Ministry, health authorities and municipalities play a central role in fostering sustainable and healthy communities. I encourage you to continue to work with the Northern Health Authority regarding your concerns. Additionally, if you have concerns that you would like to bring to the attention of the Ministry, I encourage you to bring those concerns to the attention of Ms. Leigh Ann Seller, Executive Director, Performance Accountability, Northern Health Authority. Ms. Seller is available by telephone at: 250 952-3594, or by mail or email at:

6-2 1515 Blanshard St
Victoria BC V8W 3C8
Email: LeighAnn.Seller@gov.bc.ca

Sincerely,



Kevin Falcon
Minister

pc: Ms. Cathy Ulrich, President and Chief Executive Officer, Northern Health Authority
Ms. Leigh Ann Seller