

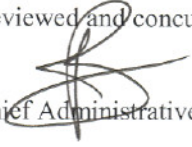


Respectfully submitted,

*A Johnston*

Corporate Officer

Reviewed and concur:



Chief Administrative Officer



Cariboo Regional District  
 File No. H097501  
 DEC 02 2009  
 Referred To URFOTCAO  
5742  
 CCRHD Board  
 808110

NOV 27 2009

Mr. Rick Mumford, Chair  
 Cariboo Regional District  
 Suite D - 180 N Third Ave  
 Williams Lake BC V2G 2A4

Dear Mr. Mumford and Cariboo Regional District Leadership:

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

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.

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.

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.

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A quality system of end-of-life care is an important priority of government. In May 2006, the Ministry developed and released the *Provincial Framework for End-of-Life Care* to guide the provision of hospice palliative end-of-life care in British Columbia (BC). The framework articulates a vision for compassionate high quality care for people nearing the end-of-life and sets out the principles, key services, responsibilities, and accountability to guide the development and delivery of end-of-life care services by all relevant organizations and individuals. Many activities are underway to expand high quality end-of-life care services as an integral part of the health care system. With reference to your concerns regarding the cost of palliative care, clients using publicly-funded hospice beds may be charged the minimum residential care daily client rate; however, fees may be waived in cases of hardship. You may be interested to know that the BC Palliative Care benefits program provides access for palliative patients who receive care at home, to the same drug benefits they would receive as if in hospital, and access to some medical supplies and equipment from their health authority.

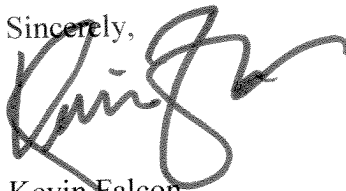
Capital investments ensure that the province's health infrastructure is maintained and expanded in order to support the health care needs of BC's growing population. The province's six health authorities and the Ministry collaborate on financial and infrastructure planning to ensure capital investments in the health system are strategic and cost effective. The Ministry and health authorities prepare three year capital plans annually and all requests for capital are carefully reviewed and prioritized based on available funding. Over the next three fiscal years, \$2.9 billion will be spent on capital projects. This planning horizon enables the Ministry to better anticipate future demand for health services, resulting from a growing and aging population and medical and technological innovations, and to plan and prioritize long term capital investments.

The Ministry recognizes the importance of BC Ambulance Service (BCAS) in communities throughout the province. Your concerns regarding ambulance service have been noted and will be explored over the coming months as BCAS becomes better positioned to refocus on local service delivery issues.

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 Interior Health Authority regarding your concerns. Additionally, if you have concerns that you would like to bring to the attention of the Ministry, you may contact Ms. Ann Marr, Executive Director, Performance Accountability, Interior Health Authority. Ms. Marr is available by telephone at: 250 952-1608, or by mail or email at:

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

Sincerely,



Kevin Falcon  
Minister

pc: Mr. Murray Ramsden, Chief Executive Officer, Interior Health Authority  
Ms. Ann Marr