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Speaker: The Hon. Levi Barnabas, M.L.A.

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

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(Amittuq)
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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Monday May 31, 1999

Members Present

Mr. Ovide Alakannuark, Mr. Olayuk Akesuk, Honourable Jack Anawak, Honourable James Arvaluk, Honourable Levi Barnabas, Honourable Donald Havioyak, Mr. David Iqaqrialu, Mr. Enoki Irqittuq, Mr. Peter Kattuk, Honourable Peter Kilabuk, Mr. Glenn McLean, Honourable Kelvin Ng, Mr. Jobie Nutarak, Mr. Kevin O'Brien, Honourable Paul Okalik, Honourable Edward Picco, Mr. Uriash Puqiqnak, Honourable Manitoq Thompson, Mr. Hunter Tootoo.

Item 1: Prayer

Speaker (Mr. Barnabas) (interpretation): Good morning. I would like to ask Mr. Alakannuark to begin the opening prayer.

>>Prayer

Speakers Ruling

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Alakannuark. At this time I would like to make some comments regarding the questions on the Gun Control Legislation posed last week.

(interpretation ends) During last Wednesday's oral question period, I ruled a question out of order on this matter.

Having now had the opportunity to review the written record, and after consultation with legal counsel, I am prepared to issue a full ruling.

The issue in question here is the *sub judice* convention. To remind Members, this convention exists in order to ensure that legislators refrain from engaging in discussions, posing questions or making statements that directly interfere with, or which could be seen as attempting to influence the working of the Courts.

However, the application of this convention must be balanced; so as to ensure that the workings of the courts are not interfered with, while at the same time allowing Members of the Legislative Assembly to exercise their right to freedom of speech.

In matters that directly affect specific individuals in criminal cases, the convention is strictly applied. In other types of cases, more leeway exists for Members to inquire into matters of public interest.

In short, Members may ask questions of a general nature about the Government's policy with respect to this case, so long as they are not formulated in such a fashion as to breach

the governing principle of the convention that the question or the answer must not constitute improper interference.

I would remind Members, however, that while Ministers may choose to answer questions on this issue, they are perfectly entitled to decline to answer, as indeed they are with any question.

Thank you. Back to our agenda. Item number 2, Ministers' Statements. Mr. Anawak.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Ministers' Statement 26 - 1 (2): Corrections Planning

Hon. Jack Anawak (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. As members are aware, Nunavut faces some serious challenges with respect to corrections. There are more than twice as many inmates as there are beds in the Baffin Correctional Centre here in Iqaluit.

We would like to have more of our inmates here in Nunavut, but the Baffin Correctional Centre has no more room. It is already very overcrowded. To help address this problem, we have begun some serious planning.

The Nunavut Department of Justice has established a Corrections Planning Committee to review corrections program and facility requirements, and to make recommendations.

The Committee has representation from communities, as well as from the Nunavut Social Development Council, the RCMP, and the federal and the Nunavut corrections systems.

The representatives from our communities are:

Becky Kudloo from Baker Lake,
Natsiq Kango from Iqaluit,
Simeonie Natsek from Repulse Bay,
Elik Tologanaq from Cambridge Bay,
Mosha Akavak from Iqaluit representing the Baffin Correctional Centre, and
Elijah Erkloo from Pond Inlet, representing the Nunavut Social Development Council.

The Corrections Planning Committee is chaired by Rebecca Williams, Assistant Deputy Minister of the Department of Justice.

I have asked the Committee to consider new approaches to the way in which inmates are handled, both in institutions and in the communities.

Committee members had productive meetings in Iqaluit for three days last week. They will meet again in mid-July and will have a draft report by the end of August.

The final report will contain specific recommendations for action. The Corrections Planning Committee will present their final report to me in early October.

I look forward to receiving the Committee's final report and to sharing the report with my colleagues. I look forward to working together so we can make improvements to Nunavut's corrections system.

We received a letter from the Baffin Correctional Centre and it was also in the Nunatsiaq News. It stated that there were a lot of improvements we can make in regards to the corrections system in Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, we will be working very hard and diligently on this issue. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Anawak. Before we proceed to question period, I would like to remind everyone to please keep in mind that we have interpreters when you are going to be making a response or a question.

This past week when there were some misunderstandings about the contents of some questions and responses, so, in order to get the message across, please remember to pause and go through the chairperson when you are asking questions or making responses.

Ministers' Statements. Members' Statements. Item number 3. Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Mr. Ng.

Item 4: Returns to Oral Questions

Return 7 - 1 (2) : Question 70 – 1 (2) GN Employees Eligible for Staff Housing

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I am responding to the question raised regarding Government of Nunavut employees eligibility for staff housing. Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform members that staff housing is an integral part of the staffing recruiting process in Nunavut, and provides many benefits in attracting and maintaining staff.

Mr. Speaker, to answer the members' specific question, the following employees are not eligible to apply for staff housing:

1. casual and hourly wage employees;
2. employees where the employees or the spouse of the employee owns developed residential property within the boundaries of the community in which the employee works;

3. employees who were evicted from staff housing at any time within the twelve month period immediately prior to applying for staff housing with the Government of Nunavut; or
4. employees who already live in private accommodation.

Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Returns to Oral Questions. Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5 Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Arvaluk.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Hon. James Arvaluk: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I would like to acknowledge a group of sixteen grade 9 students and two teachers visiting Iqaluit from Sisimiut. Thank you very much.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to the Gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome to the Gallery a person originally from Greenland but living in Iqaluit now for many years and a good family friend, Mrs. Dorothy Kunuk. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to the Gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. I would like to welcome all the people in the Gallery and welcome everyone to our meeting. Item 6, Oral Questions. Mr. Tootoo.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 153 - 1 (2): Eligibility for Staff Housing

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for Human Resources. First of all, I would like to thank the Minister for providing an answer to my question.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister if an employee who is living with other family members, whether it be in a private home or in public housing, if those individuals would be considered eligible for staff housing. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Finance, Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: That's Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Speaker. In respect to that issue, the circumstances about whether an employee would actually be eligible for Government of Nunavut staff housing, it depends on the individuals' circumstances.

As it stands now, our policy is that we provide staff housing where necessary to support the staffing process. So it depends on the individuals' circumstances. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. Ng. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister stated that they provide it in order to facilitate the hiring process. Does that mean then, Mr. Speaker, that if there is someone who may be living with other family members they are not eligible for staff housing? Is that what the Minister is saying? Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I didn't say that, I said that it would depend on the individual circumstances of that employee. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. Ng. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in looking at the written response given to me by the Minister, I don't believe it says in there anywhere about looking specifically on a case by case basis. I would like to ask the Minister if the policy is there for everyone, or is it only there for certain people. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Ng.

Mr. Ng: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our policy impacts all of our employees and as I indicated it depends on the individual need of each employee. So it would depend on their personal circumstances of whether or not they would be eligible for staff housing.

Unfortunately, we don't have enough staff housing units for every single employee within the government, so there are some criteria that determine where individuals would be eligible for staff housing. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Ng. Your last question Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am wondering if the Minister could provide us with cases where someone would not be eligible for staff housing. As I look at the policy, I believe that if someone doesn't own their own home, if someone isn't already in their own home, they're eligible for staff housing according to the policy.

If that isn't the case I would like to ask the Minister if he could provide, it doesn't have to be right now but at some future point in the near future, as to what situations an individual would not be eligible for staff housing outside of this policy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I guess to clarify again, the staff housing isn't a right of employment or a condition of employment. We try to provide it as much as possible, particularly in the circumstances where there are specific needs.

I had indicated to the Honourable Member and other members of this House, that we are reviewing all of the staff housing policies and procedures as they stand now and try to formulate and streamline the whole process to bring some consistency to it all.

On the broader issue, the staff housing, we need it primarily to try to implement our decentralization plans. As it stands now, once we get some clarity to that, it certainly has to be one of the key criteria as it stands now, for eligibility for staff housing. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Ng. Oral questions. Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Question 154 - 1 (2): Wildlife in Captivity

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Sustainable Development. There have been cases where wild animals have been taken as pets or sent to zoos. For Inuit, it's not a very pretty sight to see those wild animals in cages. What are we going to do about wildlife that are taken captives, as Nunavut Government. What approach are we going to be taking?

It is not very nice to see wild animals caged, because they suffer and it can be inhumane. I would like to see some kind of approach as Nunavut Government and would like to know what kind of plans you have. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Iqaqrialu. Minister of Sustainable Development, Mr. Kilabuk.

Hon. Peter Kilabuk (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. Possibly, first of all, since we are a new government, we have to work with the people of Nunavut and work co-operatively. I would like to work closely together with the other organizations before we come with a different approach.

The wildlife are very much in demand by the people out there, but I believe we have to work harder and keep in mind that wildlife in their own environment are at home, even though they are out in the wilderness.

We should also look at the ways the wildlife are studied by scientists and biologists and so on. So, we have to work closely together with the various organizations out there, consult with the people of Nunavut in regards to wildlife that are taken captive. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Kilabuk. Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. I think this issue is very important and I like the Ministers' response. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. Iqaqrialu. Just a comment. Oral question, Mr. Irqittuq.

Question 155 - 1 (2): Financial Support for Student Exchange Trip

Mr. Irqittuq (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this question is for the Minister of Education. The students of Igloolik have asked me in writing whether they can get support when they go down south .

They are asking for financial assistance such as per diems for meals. This question is to the Minister of Education, my question is; can the students get financial support. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Irqittuq. Minister of Education, Mr. Arvaluk.

Hon. James Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. We have reviewed this request. We can give support to the students of Arctic College by way of financial contributions. However we don't have anything for the students up to grade 12. If they are going to be going on trips outside of Nunavut, unfortunately we don't have any money set aside for financial support up to grade 12.

However, with that in mind, this issue is being reviewed by my department to find out where we can make changes to our practices. We don't have anything right now but these types of situations are under review. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Arvaluk. Oral questions. Mr. Irqittuq.

Mr. Irqittuq (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. With that response in mind, I can tell the students of Igloolik that there is no money available.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. Irqittuq. Minister of Education, Mr. Arvaluk.

Hon. James Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. Well, you can make that response to the students if you wish but, Mr. Speaker, I would want to find out from these students how they feel towards this issue as a government.

They are not going down south until this summer so in the meanwhile it could be very likely that we could accommodate their request before they go down south. I would make that response to the MLA for Igloolik. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. Arvaluk. Oral questions, Mr. McLean.

Question 156 - 1 (2): Correctional Facilities Plan Recommendations

Mr. McLean: Thank you Mr. Speaker. My question this morning is to the Minister of Justice. I was pleased to hear about the correction facility planning that is going on right now by the committee. Mr. Speaker, as we all know we are all effected by corrections and as Mayors, Hamlet Councillors and MLA's we are constantly being called and asked for help by incarcerated individuals in correctional facilities and their families.

I am pleased to see that the committee will meet again in mid-July to have a draft report by the end of August. I am wondering if the Minister would commit to giving all the Hamlet Councils and the MLA's some input into the final recommendations that are coming down in October. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. McLean. Minister of Justice, Mr. Anawak.

Hon. Jack Anawak: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Yes, we will do that as soon as I have something to send to the Hamlets in terms of soliciting their recommendations, keeping in mind that we want to wrap this up fairly shortly. We will ensure that the Hamlets are consulted. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Anawak. Oral questions. Mr. McLean.

Mr. McLean: Thank you Mr. Speaker. That is good to hear from the Honourable Minister. Will the MLA's have any direct input into the final report? Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. McLean. Minister of Justice, Mr. Anawak.

Hon. Jack Anawak: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Before any final report is done, we will ensure that all MLA's have a chance to provide input into it. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Anawak. Oral questions. Mr. Puqiqnak.

Question 157 - 1 (2): Certification for Inuit Experts

Mr. Puqiqnak (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Education. The unilingual Inuit in Nunavut, there is supposed to be a certification program for Inuit who have no formal certification but are experts in their own traditions.

They are able to teach their specialized skills to the younger generation and even though we have this expertise existing in the communities, sometimes others are brought in from outside Nunavut to teach these courses. I would like to know the status of this issue.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Puqiqnak. To the Minister of Education. Mr. Arvaluk.

Hon. James Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. We are looking at that. There are Inuinnaqtun and Inuktitut unilingual people who graduated in a program who were able to get certification. I think that there were four or five people.

We want to look at ways how we can be utilizing Inuit of Nunavut to teach the programs so we can have more unilingual Inuit taking our programs and get certification to teach in their communities in terms of language and survival skills and other programs.

They are experts in their own right and we are looking at how we can get them certified. Our department is currently reviewing how we can accommodate this, but we have to keep in mind that these may not be recognized as a credit program in other educational institutions in southern Canada.

The way it is right now the students are given credit for taking programs, for example grade 10, 11 and 12 and they have to earn so many credits in specific subjects. These may not be part of the recognized subjects but I have asked my staff in the department to look into this very area. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Arvaluk. Oral questions, Mr. Puqiqnak.

Mr. Puqiqnak (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. I would just like to clarify my question. Those people who are going to educational institutions outside the community, and I have taken part in that as an oil burner mechanic and heavy equipment operator trainee.

We still see some Nunavummiut who are going to southern institutions to take part in these programs. We will continue to see these programs being taught elsewhere outside of Nunavut.

I think that many people have done this work, we have welders and mechanics that have had to go outside Nunavut to learn those things. I think that we have people in Nunavut available to teach those courses. I think that many people can be certified to teach those courses in Nunavut. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Puqiqnak. Minister of Education, Mr. Arvaluk.

Hon. James Arvaluk (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. The Arctic College is currently looking at that very subject and we are asking them to review their policies for programs that can be taught to unilingual Inuit. We do have certified people in Nunavut

who would be able to teach such courses, whether it be housing construction, welding or mechanics, and I think that they have been working in Nunavut for a long time and these people have had to go down south to take their courses, whether it be in Chilliwack, B.C. or somewhere in Alberta.

There have been programs that were designed for unilingual people, there were also courses available in electrical field and currently Arctic College and our department are working together and consulting with each other to update those programs.

The building codes are changed from time to time and qualifications for electricians with new technology have to be upgraded. That is also true in the mechanics' field with the new models of cars, so some of these courses are ongoing and to remain qualified in the new technology professionals need to be available to keep them updated.

In Europe, for those people that don't speak English at all, they are certified and they know their areas and I don't see why that we cannot make some similar accommodation for that.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Arvaluk. Mr. Puqiqnak.

Mr. Puqiqnak (interpretation): Mr. Speaker, this is directed to the Minister of Education. I know that this is being considered by the department and Arctic College and I am happy that the department and the Minister are looking at this area. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral questions. Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Question 158 - 1 (2): Search and Rescue

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Transportation. In the north we see hunters lost out on the land who have to be rescued by airplanes. I think aircraft are used mostly for searching and sometimes they miss the people even though they might fly right over them.

I think this is a very expensive exercise when it has to be conducted. Now that we have a new government, I wonder how the government is going to improving methods for search and rescue.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Iqaqrialu. Minister responsible for Search and Rescue, Mr. Anawak.

Hon. Jack Anawak (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. Search and Rescue is very difficult at the best of times in Nunavut. I know that this touches a lot of people in Nunavut when someone is lost out on the land. Last winter we had to do many searches near Rankin Inlet and when we have to use an aircraft we need to have people who know the land in the aircraft and we have kept that practice.

But, search and rescue is not only done by aircraft. We need to look for new ways to complement the search and rescue efforts that are carried out in the communities and to use more people who are knowledgeable of the area and the land.

We are starting to review this area and what our policy is going to be. We will keep the members and the communities informed on how we are going to be dealing with this area. But we will be utilizing people who are knowledgeable of local conditions. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Anawak. Oral questions. Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. I think that we have conducted search and rescue at any given time of the year. Sometimes an aircraft will be in the area but will not spot the people that they are searching for. Sometimes the aircraft will be very close to the lost people and won't spot them. I wonder if this can be looked at as soon as possible.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Iqaqrialu. Mr. Anawak if you would like to respond I will allow you. Mr. Anawak Minister responsible for search and rescue.

Hon. Jack Anawak (interpretation): Yes, search and rescue is a serious subject at any time for the people in Nunavut. I think that we need to look at ways other than aircraft for search and rescue exercises.

So we would like to take a good look at all the ways that we have done search and rescue. I think that the member has been involved in this area and I think that we need this input because all of the areas and communities in Nunavut are all different terrain.

For example, in Keewatin we don't have too many mountainous areas but in the Baffin region the landscape is very different than that area and the Kitikmeot. We need to utilize the local people who know the land in their area. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Anawak. Oral questions. Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Minister can look at this in the very near future.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Iqaqrialu. Mr. Anawak, Minister responsible for Search and Rescue.

Hon. Jack Anawak (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. Yes, we will be looking at this in the very near future because we are aware that we need to do search and rescue at any given time.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Anawak. Mr. O'Brien.

Question 159 - 1 (2): Lack of Social Workers in Arviat

Mr. O'Brien: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a week or so ago I raised a question to the Minister of Health, Mr. Picco in reference to the concern with the lack of social workers in my community. I believe there is only one individual there at a level one, when normally we would have four.

It is my understanding, Mr. Speaker, that still there has been no relief provided in this area and also an individual was interviewed to be hired in my home community but now this individual is going to be moved to Rankin.

So I once again ask the Minister if he would look into this matter and try to resolve it so that the people from my community can have a level of service that they should have. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. O'Brien. Minister responsible for Health, Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, after the issue was brought forward by the member, indeed, through the department we contacted the Keewatin Regional Health & Social Services Board and we followed up on the concern.

There were two social workers in Arviat with another one coming in from Rankin to help alleviate some of the pressure there, but I will follow up with the members new issue surrounding the staffing of the social workers in Arviat. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Picco. Oral questions, Mr. McLean.

Question 160 - 1 (2): Housing Policy for Drug Dealers and Bootleggers

Mr. McLean: Thank you Mr. Speaker. My question today is to the Minister responsible for Housing. When I was making my questions to the Minister responsible for the Liquor Board, in regards to extra legislation to be tougher on bootlegging in our communities.

I wonder if the Ministers would commit to working together to draft up legislation regarding convicted drug peddlers and bootleggers living in public housing.

If they would draft up legislation that would have these convicted people evicted from public housing? Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. McLean. Minister responsible for Housing, Mr. Anawak.

Hon. Jack Anawak: Mr. Speaker, I can just make a commitment to the member that we will look at the issue and deal with it as well as ensure that members do have input into whatever recommendations might come out. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Anawak. Oral questions, oral questions. Mr. Akesuk.

Question 161 - 1 (2): Status of Housing Committee

Mr. Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Housing. The Minister of Housing has stated that he would be establishing a committee to deal with housing and how this committee would be set up.

I would like to ask the Minister of Housing what is the progress on this committee.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. Akesuk. Mr. Anawak, Minister of Housing.

Hon. Jack Anawak (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think it was on Thursday or on Friday I said that I would be dealing with this in the coming days. We are looking at it now, but I can't tell the House right now the progress we have made to date, but we will be keeping close consultation with the members regarding our progress.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. Anawak. Oral questions. Mr. Tootoo.

Question 162 - 1 (2): Staff Housing for Iqaluit Employees

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question again is to the Minister responsible for Human Resources. He had indicated that the main focus for staff housing is to deal with decentralization.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister if the staff housing that is available in Iqaluit is available for employees from Iqaluit, or are they just for employees that will be from outside of Iqaluit. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. Tootoo. Minister responsible for Human Resources, Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe that I have indicated when the committee was reviewing the department of Human Resources budget there is actually two processes in Iqaluit. There is the regional housing allocations and there are the headquarters allocations, which we assumed from the Office of the Interim Commissioner.

I had said at that time and I will reiterate, that we are trying to combine those two to streamline the whole process of dealing with staff housing as a whole, not just in Iqaluit but in the Baffin, throughout all of Nunavut and all the regions, because there are different mechanisms and different leases that have been assumed.

Some, as I have indicated, through the Office of the Interim Commissioner, some through the Government of the NWT, that were transferred over to us and upcoming Nunavut construction units as well, Mr. Speaker, Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. Ng. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would again like to ask the Minister responsible for staff housing is the staff housing in Iqaluit available for employees of the Government of Nunavut that live in Iqaluit. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. Tootoo. Minister responsible for Human Resources, Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will answer again that it is based on the individual needs of the employees that put forward their applications to the staff housing allocation committees. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. Ng. Just another reminder respecting interpreters please. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I guess what I am getting at is will the policy be used the way it is for local Government of Nunavut hires, or, for example, if a Government of Nunavut is living with a relative in public housing or in their own private accommodation, that is where you would have more than one poor family unit living in a unit, would that individual be eligible for staff housing. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. Tootoo. Minister responsible for Human Resources, Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's really hard to generalize on a specific circumstance that a member might be referring to, I don't know the full details of what the circumstances around the case that he might be speaking of. Again I would say it would have to be on a case by case basis.

If that employee is being impacted as a result of his or her living conditions, and it is impacting their work then that is obviously an issue that would have to be taken into consideration, but the circumstances have to be on a case by case basis. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. Ng. Final supplementary Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I guess that I am really concerned that employees of the government that live in Iqaluit are either forced to live in public housing or are currently in staff units that may not be the most desirable.

We have all seen the mass production of new units in the community and, Mr. Speaker, I am just wondering, I don't think that it is fair for employees, whether they are from

Iqaluit, or have recently moved here, that they have to sit back and live in unfavourable conditions while these new units are sitting there and only being offered to individuals that may be coming from outside the Territory. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. Tootoo. Minister responsible for Human Resources, Mr. Ng.

Hon. Kelvin Ng: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe that was more a statement than a question, but I would say that is why we are trying to review the existing policies and streamline it, co-ordinate it, so there is some consistency and some fairness for the treatment of all our employees in respect of the allocation of staff housing.

But again, I have to stress that it is not a right that all employees have housing, although if that were the case and they all wanted it and we had units available, that would be fine. Unfortunately we don't have enough units for every single employee.

So we have to take into consideration some of the governments needs and requirements as well as the employees' needs and requirements in how we allocate our staff housing units, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. Ng. Oral questions. Mr. Iqittuq.

Question 163 - 1 (2): Doctor for Igloolik

Mr. Iqittuq (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct this question to the Minister of Health & Social Services in respect to the issue of a doctor in Igloolik.

I spoke to the doctor in question and that doctor does want to go to Igloolik. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Health & Social Services, if he has found staff housing for the individual. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Iqittuq. Minister responsible for Health, Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, about three weeks ago when I was in Igloolik meeting with the Town, the Mayor and the Council members, they were very excited about the doctor going into Igloolik. I had spoken to the doctor previous to that after church one day, and she expressed to me her interest in going to Igloolik.

Then I understand from the Baffin Regional Health & Social Services Board that the discussions with said doctor and with operational requirements, indeed, they had chosen another community for the doctor to go to instead going to her choice of Igloolik.

After reviewing that letter and then again having the opportunity to speak to the doctor on Saturday, she indicated that she was interested in going to Igloolik instead of the community identified by the Health Board.

After saying that Mr. Speaker, I understand from talking to the doctor that she had arranged housing on the ground in Igloolik. I had spoken to my cabinet colleagues expressing that if there was a problem getting housing that maybe we could look at one of the units that we had available in Igloolik. This doesn't seem to be the problem, the problem seems to be the Health Board has decided that maybe Igloolik the community that they wanted the doctor to go to. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Picco. Oral question, Mr. Irqittuq.

Mr. Irqittuq (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. In respect to the Minister of Health & Social Services, his answer stated that there is housing available but it is the Baffin Regional Health Board that they're the ones that don't want the doctor to go to Igloolik?

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Irqittuq. Minister responsible for Health, Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Yes, as I indicated, that the Health Board, I should back up on this. After speaking to the doctor originally she had looked at another community to go to, and she had identified that community, she was interested in going, the Health Board said no, we would like you to go to Igloolik.

She was very pleased to go to Igloolik, and indeed, the Hamlet, the Mayor are welcoming her, when I toured the health facilities in Igloolik they were making arrangements for a room so that they could have a clinic there for the doctor to use when she moved to Igloolik.

Last week I received a letter from the Health Board indicating that they have decided that the doctor should not go to Igloolik because of operational requirements, that they were going to send the doctor to another community.

After speaking to the doctor on Saturday the doctor indicated to me that she was still interested in going to Igloolik, and indeed, housing does not seem to be the problem that it was going to be before. So now it is operational issue with the regional Health Board.

The problem here Mr. Speaker, is that the Health Board has given public perception to the people of Igloolik that there is an expectation on behalf of the people of Igloolik, and indeed Hall Beach, possibly Arctic Bay, Nanisivik, where the doctor would be able to service those communities, that she was going there and now the Health Board has decided that maybe because of the operational requirements that she should go to another community.

That is something that me, as the Minister of Health, that I will be looking into. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Picco. Oral questions. Mr. Irqittuq.

Mr. Irqittuq (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. In the following weeks, I was with the Minister in Igloolik, with the Honourable member in Igloolik, and he stated during a meeting at the community hall that the residents, there were quite a few of the public who came to the meeting, the Minister stated that the people of Igloolik would get a doctor in the spring.

He stated this and I am wondering why he made that statement before it was even implemented, and I am wondering why he's allowing the Baffin Regional Health Board to dictate where that doctor is going. That is my question, Mr. Speaker. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Irqittuq. Mr. Picco, Minister of Health.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I could answer that in one way and I could say that is probably why we are looking at getting rid of the Health Boards, but I won't.

Mr. Speaker, the Health Board has put me into a difficult position, because indeed, I was in Igloolik, I had talked to the doctor before I had gone to Igloolik, I knew that the intention was to move her there, indeed, the Health Centre staff were actually making a room available for the doctor to use as a clinic.

Somewhere out of the blue, I get a letter last week stating that the Health Board changed their mind that they do not believe, under operational requirements, that it would be conducive to have the doctor in Igloolik.

I am saying to you that I have spoken to the doctor again, I have spoken to her on Saturday, indeed the member has spoken to the doctor. She would like to go to Igloolik, the housing doesn't seem to be a problem, indeed I will address this with the Health Board. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Picco. Oral questions. Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Question 164 - 1 (2): Power Rate Increases in Clyde River

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. This is in relation to the Minister of NTPC. I wanted documentation and I did receive a letter, but unfortunately it wasn't translated. I might be mistaken, but the issue I wanted to understand in respect of the percentage of the payment or subsidy which was not listed in this letter, this issue was the one I have the most feeling about.

I would like this clarified, in respect to electrical power bills and what is the percentage rate? For example, I have seen a little bit of it, and I am not sure whether it is true or not, where the percentage is.

I would want to understand exactly how much percentage would be included for the community and what are they going to give the community. I really would like to understand the increase and the decrease of the costs. I would like to find that out before I ask even more questions. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Iqaqrialu. Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation, Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for his question. Indeed, as I explained in the House, the member had requested the information and I had to then again request the information from the power corporation head office in Hay River.

In the expediency to get that letter to the member, as I explained, the power corporation from Hay River never had an opportunity to translate it. So this gives me an opportunity to explain, I guess, some of the circumstances surrounding the Clyde River plant.

The existing power plant in Clyde River is too small to meet the community's power needs which have grown at about 4% per year since 1984. Now, Mr. Speaker, the engine replacements with larger units is no longer possible for the plant in Clyde River.

So the NWT Power Corporation reviewed several replacement and upgrade options and decided that the best, long term solution or choice is for a new power house and two new engines to the existing power corporation plant in Clyde River.

The Nunavut Director of Operations, Mr. Axle Have, based here in Iqaluit, met with the community of Clyde River and followed up on the meeting. Indeed, again in April of 1999 also discussed the project.

Now it is a three year project worth, Mr. Speaker, to the community of Clyde River, 3.9 million dollars. Now, the increased capacity will supply anticipated growth for the community of Clyde River for at least the next five years and it is a new fuel-efficient engine and it will reduce long term operating costs.

A contract was awarded on May 15th, to Kudlik Construction Ltd. of Rankin Inlet and Kudlik recently completed work for the corporation in Repulse Bay and have some experience in this area.

On the rate increase, Mr. Speaker, based on our new community rate, basis for power corporation, based on the community rate applications that have been brought forward, there will be an increase in the rate charge per kilowatt hour in Clyde River for the development and the construction of this new plant, as there is in every other community.

That figure is anywhere between 30 – 40% increase and again, we have to remember that we have the Public Utilities Board, which would bring the concern forward to look at

how you would phase in that type of increase. I have committed to the member that in July I would go to Clyde with him to maybe give a better overview of the situation but the fact of the matter is Mr. Speaker, the people of Clyde River need this plant based on operational issues. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Picco. Oral questions Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. In respect to the electrical increase of 30 – 40% , that to me is a very big concern and to the residents of Clyde River, particularly for the reasons that only 28% of all our community are employed full time, 71% of the residents do not have any employment and this is going to have a big effect on the residents of our community.

In respect to the community's population gross revenues, it is going to effect the community and it is going to cause even more hardship.

I know that we really require that electrical outlet but it is still causes a concern. I would like a thorough review and I know that we are going to work together on this, I would like to have a complete understanding both here and in the community, and with the power corporation and with the community of Clyde River specifically.

The residents of my community have not heard and are not aware of the details. They have had a couple of meetings but the general public of the community do not know the final details and I think they have to know all the details because we haven't planned the requirement for a new power generating unit.

Perhaps, I think that the NTPC has already made those plans and they want to upgrade it. We have to understand all of the details before we are planning it. I think there has not been enough involvement of the local community in the planning.

The fact that the community residents are not aware of all the details, this may delay it if there is no funding allocated for the increase. These are some of the options we have to look at. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Iqaqrialu. Minister responsible for NTPC, Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the member makes a good point. Indeed, the corporation recognizes that it is a very high increase and will be reviewing options to look at how we can decrease that.

Now Mr. Speaker, I should point out that the actual process for reviewing costs and setting rates belongs with the Nunavut Public Utilities Board. That institution, that organization, that group, that board, that corporation must ask for review and get approval before it can set any new rates, through the Nunavut Public Utilities Board.

The Hamlet of Clyde River will be notified when this review will take place, and indeed be invited to participate. This is not expected, Mr. Speaker, to happen before early or mid-2000, the year 2000. There will be no changes Mr. Speaker, to the rates in Clyde River until after this review is completed and indeed, except for a possible adjustment next spring for rate re-balancing purposes.

On the consultation with the community of Clyde River, I understand the power corporation went into Clyde in September and indeed, held a public meeting and again followed up with letters in April, and again, I as the Minister responsible for the power corporation will go to Clyde River in July and make sure that someone from the power corporation is with me to explain the situation in Clyde River. ...thank you for your vote of confidence Mr. Ng.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Picco. Oral question, Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. I didn't know the meetings happened in Clyde River, perhaps I missed them somehow. I know that it has to be reviewed because in my community there are many unemployed people and the consultation process is not too good.

I know that once we increase the rate it is going to put hardship on many people in my community because they are unemployed. I know that it is going to be very good to get a larger plant, but the only benefit we will get is getting the actual plant, but actually when we have to increase the rates it is going to effect the community with many unemployed people.

I want you to come to my community very much so that we can discuss this matter. If you are actually going to come to my community we will see you there and I hope we can explain this to the community. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. Iqaqrialu. Minister responsible for the power corporation, Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think, for the record Mr. Speaker, I should make it clear that the current subsidy programs that are in place with the power corporation such as social housing and the Territorial Power Support Program are not expected to change and will shield most households, indeed from many type of increases that would come from the rate increase.

If a person is not employed and living in social housing, their rate will not increased. Those customers who would see the most impact from any type of rate increase, indeed, would be the direct government because the government has commercial buildings and they would be increased, and indeed the private commercial customers would see the rates increase.

That's where I was explaining that the Nunavut Public Utilities Board would have to review those types of increases and make sure that the people of Clyde River are not negatively impacted by the increase, which has to be put in place to help pay for the new power equipment in Clyde, which we need.

Again, I reiterate to the member that I will go to Clyde River in July and meet with the Hamlet and make sure that there is someone from the power corporation to make sure that everything is clarified and explained. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. Picco. Final supplementary Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. My last question. I know that if it is going to effect the commercial buildings such as the government offices, according to what I have heard from the Hamlet Council, I know that the Hamlet Council is in a deficit stages and if we look at the new fiscal year, if we increase the rate it will increase by 50 thousand dollars. That is why I was a bit concerned and worried about the offices, commercial offices.

I know that private businesses and commercial offices will be impacted, so therefore we have to explain all these aspects to the community. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Iqaqrialu. Minister responsible for the Power Corporation, Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, under the approval of the Public Utilities Board, the process for community based rates and the costs of the plant will be charged over time to the customers in Clyde River.

Now there is no direct assistance for this type of construction project, but as I explained, the Nunavut Public Utilities Board will have to review any rate increase. I again want to assure the member that unemployed people, people in social housing will not be negatively impacted, and indeed like I said when I get to Clyde we'll have the opportunity to discuss it.

I think the member makes a good point, that it is a very high increase and as I said, the corporation also recognizes that. We are going to try and do what we can to help negate a huge one shot deal of a rate increase. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Picco. Oral questions. Mr. O'Brien.

Question 165 - 1 (2): BIP Application to Article 24

Mr. O'Brien: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker last week the Premier forwarded a document to me that indicated that we were going to using the BIP that was used over the last few years for this upcoming year.

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Public Works and I would like to ask the Minister how Article 24 will be incorporated into the BIP policy for this coming season. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you Mr. O'Brien. Minister responsible for Public Works, Ms. Thompson.

Hon. Manitok Thompson: Thank you Mr. Speaker. The "how" will come when we do consulting with the stakeholders and with NTI. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you Ms. Thompson. Oral question, Mr. O'Brien.

Mr. O'Brien: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in reference to the upcoming construction season which is upon us pretty much now, when can we expect this consultation to take place so perhaps it can have some meaningful impact on how Article 24 will be incorporated into the BIP? Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. O'Brien. Minister responsible for Public Works, Ms. Thompson.

Hon. Manitok Thompson: Thank you Mr. Speaker. The consultation will begin early this fall. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you Ms. Thompson. Oral question, Mr. O'Brien.

Mr. O'Brien: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if the consultation will start this fall, therefore Article 24 will not be incorporated into this season's construction period. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. O'Brien. Minister responsible for Public Works, Ms. Thompson.

Hon. Manitok Thompson: Thank you Mr. Speaker. We are aware of Article 24 and we are doing our best to implement it at this time with our Nunavut businesses because we are trying to promote our Nunavut businesses in this new government. But we do have to consult with our stakeholders because Article 24 and BIP are two different policies. Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you Ms. Thompson. Oral question, oral questions. Question period is over. We will go back to our agenda, item 7, written questions. Written Questions. Item 8, Returns to Written Questions. Returns to Written Questions. Item 9, Replies to opening address.

At this time, I would like to acknowledge Louis Tapardjuk and businessman Ken Harper. Louis Tapardjuk works for Nunavut Social Development Council.

>>Applause

Speaker: Item 10, Petitions. Mr. Clerk.

Item 10: Petitions

Petition 7 - 1 (2): Ublivik Centre

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker I wish to report that according to rule 42 (1), Petition 7 – 1 (2), containing 69 signatures of residents of the communities of Whale Cove, Rankin Inlet, Repulse Bay, Coral Harbour and Chesterfield Inlet to Health and Social Services Board and Gloria Penners' services at Ublivik in Winnipeg has been filed by a member in accordance with the rules.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. Clerk. Petitions. Item 11, Reports of Standing and Special Committees. Item 12, Reports of Committees on Review of Bills. Item 13, Tabling of Documents. Tabling of Documents. Item 14, Notices of Motion. Item 15, Notice of Motion for First Reading of Bills. Item 16, Motions. Item 17, First Reading of Bills, Item 18., Second Reading of Bills.

Item 20, Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters:

Bill 1 – Appropriations Act

Bill 2 – Board of Management Dissolution Act

Bill 3 – Divisional Education Councils Dissolution Act

Committee Reports 1 – 1 (2), 2 – 1 (2), 3 – 1 (2) and 4 – 1 (2),

with Mr. Iqaqrialu in the Chair. Sergeant At Arms.

Item 20: Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

Chairperson (Mr. Iqaqrialu) (interpretation): Thank you. I will be your chairman for the Committee of the Whole. At this time we only have five minutes before lunch hour. If you would like to break for lunch here and we can resume the session at 1.30? If that is okay with the members.

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson (interpretation): Yes, we will adjourn for lunch and we will be back at 1.30 pm.

>>Committee Recessed at 11.50 am.

>>Committee resumed sitting at 1:30 pm

Chairperson : (interpretation): It is now 1:30 p.m. and we were going to start at 1:30, please take your seat. We can start now and I think our watches differ from each other, by few seconds or minutes.

We are starting to rush through main estimates or perhaps if we start to coming in on time and get back to our seats as soon as possible, so that we could complete the Department on time and also I would like to say according to the rules and procedures , we have 10 minutes for general questions or comments for each member, so we'll try and live up to the 10 minute rule.

We will now go on to the Department of Health and Social Services, perhaps Ed Picco has some opening comments, you may stay in your seat or may go to the witness table. Your officials or the other members of Cabinets usually do their opening comments in their own seats and so after you do your opening comments you may go to the witness table.

Mr. Nutarak: (interpretation): Mr. Chairperson, we could have started sooner if you wouldn't talk so much.

Chairperson (interpretation): Okay then, Mr. Picco Minister of Health and Social Services can do his opening comments now.

Opening Comments - Department of Health & Social Services Main Estimates

Hon. Ed Picco: Qujannamiik Mr. Chairperson. Good afternoon Colleagues, although I find this chair comfortable, I would more be comfortable in that other chair rather than sit this close to Mr. Ng, but after saying that I'm prepared to do my opening comments.

Mr. Chairperson, and Honourable Members of the Legislative Assembly, I'm pleased to present to you that 1999/2000 main estimates for the Department of Health and Social Services.

Later when we go to the witness table, I will be joined by Mr. Ken MacRury who's the Deputy Minister of department and Mrs. Rosemary Cooper who's the Assistant Deputy Minister.

Health and Social Services is important to all of us and to each of our families. This department faces a range of issues that affect every person, everyday across the Nunavut.

The 1999/2000 main estimates reflected departmental move towards the promotion and prevention oriented delivery system in Nunavut. The department, in partnership with communities, families and individuals is striving to create a system that is more reflective of Nunavut realities and responsive to the people of Nunavut.

The business plan we submitted outlines critical issues facing the department of Health and Social Services, we face serious challenges Mr. Chairperson, in addressing these issues.

The change is required will not come easily and quickly, although we have taken early steps and making the required changes to the department. I would like to mention at this time that the amalgamation in 3 regional health and social services board in to the department is a step, Mr. Chairperson, in the right direction which the Members of this house has supported.

Our business plan contains a vision which calls to the department to delivery program and to services that or people oriented. Culturally sensitive provide for continue of care, provide a seamless service is sustainable over the long term, instils health responsibilities and individuals, families and communities and is prevention oriented.

Mr. Chairperson the health status indicators for Nunavut are best described as being dramatic. Nunavut faces a great challenge in improving the health status indicators and I know with time we will make changes that will improve the status of health in Nunavut.

I believe the creation of Nunavut is an opportunity, an opportunity that must be used to initiate the health and social services reform. Our approach to health and social services reform uses a community development approach to achieve successful community development, we will initiate healthy public policy.

To achieve Inuit employment targets mandated in Nunavut Land Claim Agreement, we will initiate a long term strategy for the training of Inuit health and social services providers. This will result in service delivery that reflects the culture, values and beliefs of the majority of our population.

In order Mr. Chairperson, to achieve this we require partnerships, partnerships with other departments, non governmental aid organizations, volunteer organizations, communities and others committed to the well being of Nunavut residents.

Is important to realize that Nunavut is experiencing a rapid population growth with approximately 50% of the population under 25 years of age, a situation Mr. Chairperson, that is unique in Canada. Individuals in this age group place a highest demands in health and social services, we must be in a position to meet these requirements.

We need new ways of doing things in Nunavut, health and well being require approaches and ways to delivering care that go beyond illness hospital and professional services. We must see a shift from a cute care services to health promotion and prevention of all illnesses, we need to enhance community base initiatives that utilize or integrate Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit with contemporary knowledge, modern science, community wisdom and local solutions.

Integrated and comprehensive prevention and promotion efforts are required. In Nunavut Mr. Chairperson we require a modern information technology system. Nunavut comprises 24% of Canada's land mass as you all know we are required to deliver services in 26 widely dispersed communities. Through technology we have an opportunity for creative responses service delivery, education of health professionals and learning from each other. We must also provide the opportunity for quality care, cost effectiveness and very timely service delivered over vast distances.

The technologies of tele-health applications will realize the substantial financial savings over time. Mr. Chairperson heavy demands will be placed on available financial resources of the department and of this government by an increasing population a focus on integrated prevention and promotion efforts acquisition of new diagnostic tool and acute care services.

The challenges we face in department of health and social services are extensive, we are building a confident, professional integrated team that will deliver the very best service for the residents of Nunavut within the available resources. I trust this assembly will look favourably on the budget that I'm about to present, the health and social services budget is divided into 2 main categories operation and maintenance or O&M and Capital.

On our operation and maintenance Mr. Chairperson the budget for the department is detailed on pages 10-3 which indicates on our total operation and maintenance budget is 117 million and 427 thousand dollars. Our original budget request was based on a detailed analysis of the requirement to provide enhanced service to the residents of Nunavut.

The reduction from the original request was based on the realities on the amount of funds available to all departments and to the government of Nunavut as a whole. We will try to minimize the impacts on service delivery to best of our ability, while living within the allocated amount, however this may result in a budget that requires significant increase over time.

The operation and maintenance budget is divided as for the pie graph in page 10-3, you will note that the primary acute programs account for 50% or 59.8 million of the budget.

These programs are currently delivered by the 3 regional health and social services boards and additional 27.7% or 33.2 million is allocated to the health care insurance which in reality, Mr. Chairperson, are also primary in acute care expenses generated outside of Nunavut by the Iqaluit hospital and by pay for service doctors, these are paid by our government under the health care insurance program.

The directorate of the department is currently composed of 15 positions out of a plan total staff complement of 72 and 40% current staff are Inuit. All of the expenses are associated with these positions including such as a travel, office supplies, computers, telephones, are within 10.6% or 2.6 million allocations.

We also included in the directorates from program delivery expenses which are delivered directly from Headquarters. Community health programs at 8.2% or 9.7 million and children's programs, Mr. Chairperson, at 3.5% or 4.2 million round out the total operations and maintenance budget. Mr. Chairperson, the department of health and social services has a small capital budget totalling 2.188 million, there are number of capital projects in fall within this budget and he will provide more detail about those as we progress.

The Department of Health and Social Services is working with the department of finance in the construction of the health centre in Arviat this year. This project is being finance as a P3 project and it will not be reflected in our capital budget.

Mr. Chairperson and Honourable members this concludes the formal part of my presentation today, we'll be please to answer any question you may have about the budget for the department of health and social services.

I will also welcome your comments on how we can work together to build a stronger health and social services in Nunavut. Thank you Mr. Chairperson

>>applause

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Minister of Health and Social Services. I will now ask a representative of the standing committee to give us their report of their review of the budget. Jobie, who will read the report?

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): Peter Kattuk will read the report.

Chairperson (interpretation): Sorry, please repeat that.

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): Mr. Kattuk will read.

Chairperson (interpretation): Okay, Mr. Kattuk, go ahead.

Report of the Standing Committee on Culture, Education and Health on the 1999/2000 Main Estimates for The Department of Health and Social Services

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairperson, I will read a part of it in English and Mr. O'Brien will conclude. The Honourable Ed Picco, Minister of Health and Social Services and departmental officials met with the Standing Committee on April 29, 1999.

The Minister spoke very openly about the challenges facing his Department and the opportunities that some of the new technology and training may provide in meeting the needs of communities. The Standing Committee also appreciated the preparation by the Minister and his Department, which was evident at our meeting.

The Standing Committee had a very dynamic dialogue with the Minister and looks forward to talking about these issues in the future.

Business Plan/ Operations/ Programs

The Department of Health and Social Services has an O&M Budget of \$117,400,000 of which \$75,000,000 in contributions to the Health Boards to deliver programs, which includes \$15 million for medical travel.

The Need for an Inuit Nurse Training Program

A most compelling issue for the Members of the Standing Committee, is the need for Inuit nurses in Nunavut. The Minister outlined the departmental concerns regarding the high turnover of community nurses and the difficulties in recruiting nurses from the south.

This will be compounded now that a number of southern jurisdictions have recently announced nurse hiring increases. To the Members, the heavy workload on a few community nurses, particularly where the full complement of nurses are not available [vacancy rates range from 22 to 42%] is more than a concern. It is a crisis in the communities.

The lack of Inuit nurses also means that Inuit cannot receive health care in their own language, opportunities for health promotion and prevention are missed, Inuit traditional knowledge cannot be fully incorporated into our health delivery system and a lack of stability in many communities. Members were advised that at this time, there is only one Inuit nurse in Nunavut, who recently began nursing in Arviat. At the Health Board level, only 3% of the professional staff are filled by Inuit.

The Minister laid out a plan to fix part of this situation, which the Members fully support. He noted that in recent years, a partnership model had been set up with Dalhousie University School of Nursing which would see students in an Arctic College Program able to obtain a two and a half year diploma or a full four year nursing degree.

A number of students have already completed a pre-nursing year with Arctic College and could begin a nursing program in September, if it were to be offered. However, there is no budget at this time for this critically important program. As noted above in our meetings with Education, Standing Committee Members believe that Nunavut students must be encouraged to move into the areas in which there are jobs – there are several hundred nursing and health related positions, all of which are well-paid professional positions in all of our communities.

There is no point talking about Article 23 and Inuit employment in government positions in the Health area unless proper training programs are being provided. It took thirty years of NTEP type programs to get 34% Inuit Teachers and 4 out of 42 Inuit Principals. Thirty years ago, Dr. Percy declared the need for an Inuit Nursing Program – think where

Nunavut would be now if it had been properly initiated. The Government has to start somewhere if we hope to see Inuit health professionals in Nunavut, and it should start now. This Department has a detailed plan, they are ready to go and they need our support. A long term commitment is required, if we are to see it through.

The Standing Committee also encouraged the Minister to travel to Ottawa to try to obtain more funding for our health care system and to invite federal officials to the North to see for themselves, the impact on our communities, of too few health dollars and too few nurses and doctors. Members offered to come too, if this would help.

The Minister noted that he had recently met with Hon. Allan Rock, the federal Minister of Health and had raised these issues, including the need for funding for an Inuit nursing program. Members commended the Minister's efforts in this regard.

Mr. Kattuk: I will give Mr. O'Brien the recommendations to read.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Kattuk for reading the report. Mr. O'Brien.

Mr. O'Brien: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, the recommendations are as follows;

Recommendation

- That as a first priority, if additional resources can be found, the programs identified by the Department of Health and Social Services for Inuit nurse training be implemented in this fiscal year.

Cabinet Decision to Abolish the Regional Health Boards

The Standing Committee appreciated very much the briefing that the Department provided to us on the matter of the dissolution ...

Chairperson (interpretation): Excuse me I might be wrong but I think we are supposed to vote on each recommendation as we move along? ...no? Sorry , please continue.

Mr. O'Brien: The Standing Committee appreciated very much the briefing that the Department provided to us on the matter of the dissolution of the Regional Health Boards and District Education Councils.

This provided a lot of important background information to the Members, which we understand had been delivered to the Cabinet and to the Chairs and to Executive Directors of the Regional Health Boards and District Education Councils. Nevertheless, Members still have questions and they felt that the people in the communities will have questions too.

As noted above with respect to Education, while the opportunity to save money and have more accountability to elected officials is clearly one that Members support, the Standing Committee was concerned at the lack of an operational or implementation plan.

There were small charts projecting savings, but no details on how those numbers were generated. There were assurances that no current employees of the Regional Health Boards would lose their jobs and that everyone would be provided other opportunities within the Department, but no plan was presented showing how this would happen and whether these positions would remain in their current communities.

There will be more accountability to the elected Minister, but no complaints procedure was presented. Members wondered if the department will create an ombudsman type of person to co-ordinate and streamline complaints to the Minister. Members noted that smaller communities would need someone local to whom they can send information regarding their concerns.

While it was noted that the Community Health Councils would have more of a role to play, no information was presented on what that role would be or what additional support would be provided to enable them to carry out this expanded role. Who will take the initiative to create these councils if they don't currently exist?

How do Interagency committees fit in? What will be the checks and balances in this new system, for individuals and communities with respect to their Community Health Councils and the Department? How does this affect the Departments commitment to decentralization? What positions will now go to Pangnirtung?

The Minister stated that an outside person would begin working with the Department and the Boards to develop the transition plan and that the Minister would bring it back to the Standing Committee in September. The Standing Committee looks forward to receiving the draft legislation and reviewing more complete plans at that time.

Recommendation

- That the Government of Nunavut provide a detailed implementation plan to the Standing Committee, which includes information on: how the Regional Health Boards will be phased out, specifics on the cost savings of abolishing the Boards, staffing plans for the current employees, complaints procedure to the Minister, support for the Community health councils and projected impact on communities where the Board offices are currently located.
- That the Government of Nunavut develop a communication package for communities and Nunavummiut, including radio, TV, written materials and visits by the Minister to communities and meetings, such as the Kitikmeot Leaders' Forum; and

- That any savings realized from abolishing Regional Health Boards be retained by the Department of Health and Social Services.

Tele-medicine

The Minister presented some interesting information on tele-health facilities. These are currently in the communities of Iqaluit, Pond Inlet and Cape Dorset. They allow patients to come into the facility in Pond Inlet and be “seen” via technology and satellites, by a doctor in Iqaluit or even Ottawa. It was noted that in a one-week period, of 15 people who might have been referred to Iqaluit by the community nurse, only 3 still had to come to Iqaluit after being “seen” by the Doctor through tele-medicine.

Therefore, the Government saved the travel and accommodation costs of sending these people to Iqaluit, and the people were saved the trouble of leaving their community and family. Departmental officials noted that tele-health facilities are quite expensive, (over \$300,000 each), but they can pay for themselves over a short period of years by saving money as outlined above.

They may also be a vehicle to provide other services, such as psychiatric counselling or supervision of probation and parole. The Standing Committee members were interested to see how this technology works and intend to follow-up to the invitation to visit the Iqaluit hospital to see it in operation. In light of the difficulties in getting Doctors to move to smaller communities in Nunavut, this may be an alternative.

Members noted that there are sometimes difficulties with the technology, and it may be wise to wait until the satellite technology and linking is improved. However, Members look forward to receiving more information on the benefits and disadvantages of these facilities, and how these facilities might be paid for in the future

Capital Plan - Financing Capital for New Health Facilities – P3

Standing Committee members welcomed the Department’s plan to conduct an audit of what health facilities and equipment were currently in each community, along with an assessment of what shape they are in. All Departments should do this type of capital audit. However, Members noted that the Department really had no capital plan for this fiscal year - only one capital project of \$12,000 for the Gjoa Haven Health Centre.

Over the past year, Members have heard various discussions about planned health facilities in the regional centres and the possibilities of P3 financing. Members raised questions to the Minister about P3 financing, but did not receive much information. While innovative ways are needed to finance new health facilities, Members are concerned about moving forward with P3 financing before knowing more about the pros and cons. Where will the operating dollars come for the O&M of these facilities?

Recommendation

- That the Government of Nunavut provide a full briefing to the Standing Committee on P3 financing, as it may be applied to health facilities, including a frank discussion about the pros and cons of P3 financing as compared to alternative or conventional methods.

Mr. O'Brien: Thank you Mr. Chairperson, that concludes the report. I do have 5 committee motions.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. O'Brien. Continue with your motions.

Committee Motion 24 – 1 (2): Inuit Nurses Training

Mr. O'Brien: Motion 1; I move that as a first priority, if additional resources can be found, the programs identified by the Department of Health and Social Services for Inuit nurse training be implemented in this fiscal year.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Secunder to the motion?... sorry, I am told there is no need for a seconder. Those in favour ? Carried. Mr. O'Brien.

Committee Motion 25 – 1 (2): Implementation Plan for Abolishing Boards

Mr. O'Brien: I move that this committee recommends that the Government of Nunavut provide a detailed implementation plan to the Standing Committee, which includes information on: how the Regional Health Boards will be phased out, specifics on the cost savings of abolishing the Boards, staffing plans for the current employees, complaints procedure to the Minister, support for the Community health councils and projected impact on communities where the Board offices are currently located.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. All those in favour? None opposed. Carried . Mr. O'Brien.

Committee Motions 26 – 1 (2): Communication Package for Communities

Mr. O'Brien : I move that this committee recommends that the Government of Nunavut develop a communication package for communities and Nunavummiut, including radio, TV, written materials and visits by the Minister to communities and meetings, such as the Kitikmeot Leaders' Forum.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. All in favour? I don't see anyone opposed. motion carried. Mr. O'Brien.

Committee Motion 27 – 1 (2): Savings Retained by Department

Mr. O'Brien: I move that this committee recommends that any savings realised from abolishing Regional Health Boards be retained by the Department of Health and Social Services.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. To the fourth motion. Comments? Mr. Puqiqnak

Mr. Puqiqnak : Can I hear the motion again?

Chairperson (interpretation): Please read your motion again, slowly.

Mr. O'Brien: I move that this committee recommends that any savings realised from abolishing Regional Health Boards be retained by the Department of Health and Social Services.

Chairperson (interpretation): Understand now? Yes he does. Comments ? All in favour. Opposed. Motion carried. Thank you . 5th motion. Mr. O'Brien.

Committee Motion 28 – 1 (2): P3 Financing

Mr. O'Brien: I move that that the Government of Nunavut provide a full briefing to the Standing Committee on P3 financing, as it may be applied to health facilities, including a frank discussion about the pros and cons of P3 financing as compared to alternative or conventional methods.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. O'Brien, to the fifth motion. Comments. All in favour ? opposed? Motion carried. That was the last motion. The Minister of Health and Social Services can now take the witness chair. He can also bring in his officials.

Hon. Ed Picco: Nakurmiik Itsivautaaq. Thank you Mr. Chairperson with me today is on my left Rosemary Cooper the assistant deputy minister of the department and on my right is Mr. Ken MacRury who is the deputy minister of the department, thank you Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you Mr. Picco. Mr. Iqaqrialu

Mr. Iqaqrialu: Thank you Mr. Minister. I think that I was supposed to ask you to introduce your officials, but you were ahead of me so I thank you. Are there any general questions the minister and his officials are now in the witness table.

You can now ask your questions or if you have general comments, regarding the departments. Main estimates, Mr. McLean I don't want to make mistake on your name this time, go ahead Mr. McLean.

Mr. McLean: Qujannamiik Uqaqtii. Just in general comments that I want to make in health and social services. We all know that in health care professionals and what I'd like to call the care givers in our communities, are over worked, underpaid and under appreciated.

I'm sure the current minister has a plan to help out with our care givers in our communities. And other things I would like to bring up is, over the years, we all complain about health care and the lack of it and social workers things like that, but the biggest more biggest issues that come up in my community and it's probably a tragedy is the early detection of cancer.

There's no way that the any of the cancer affect especially my community can be detected early enough that we can save these individuals and there's quite a few tragedies in the last 5 or 6 years in my community where it was detected too late.

I'm not blaming this on health care professional, when it gets to a certain situation where it's terminal and can't be prevented than it's just agonizing, so I'm sure the minister will be trying to work around that situation, where you know ,cancers various of forms of lung cancer and other cancers can be detected earlier and treated.

And still to this day most of us living in remote communities away from hospitals have no way of finding out if we do carry a cancer ourselves, so I think this have to addressed and seriously looked at.

Chronic care facilities for elders' I don't know other than one community in my region that I live in that has a chronic care facility we hear the statistic about our population is 50% under 20 but we do have an ageing population like other regions in Canada with the elders and it's to the point now where we have no facilities in certain communities.

In the smaller communities that we can care for our elders when they get into the chronic care stage and I'm sure the ministers' had to deal with that in his personal life with dealing with the chronic care elder's.

So, I'm sure the minister will be dealing with that over the next few year's. In my election campaign when I went door to door and talking with the various people in my community, there was a genuine concern there that there's not enough traditional knowledge and older Inuit people being used for family counselling, suicide prevention, and just all around counselling, because in most communities there's a government building or a nursing station people that are in just stress and have to go to a public building and make appointments to see people.

So I'm sure the minister and I know his mandate was to use more IQ in dealing with the family problems and situation. I'm hoping that this will be fast track and in the long run it'll probably be more helpful in cost effective to use traditional knowledge in regards to suicide prevention and the family counselling.

Capital projects we talk about, we hear about hospitals and regional centres and 3 of them are planned. I'm kind of hoping that the department has a full plan in place along with the minister of finance on how were going to staff these facilities, cause I heard 1 figure is being addressed in Rankin Inlet was 50 jobs with a hospital comes 50 jobs.

Well to me I'm hoping that if they build these facilities in the regions that they're going to repatriate the dollars. Is that the plan? And if the plan isn't repatriate these dollars for health care facilities, where's the money going to come from I certainly hope it's not going to come from the decentralization budgets that were negotiated couple of years ago.

Another concern, comment is the cost of prescription drugs in Nunavut I think it's three times national average, I could be incorrect there, but that's a price I got and availability of them, I know in my community I was called by a health care professional saying that there's a shortage of pharmaceutical drugs for the community.

So, I'm sure the minister will deal with that. Thank you Mr. Chairperson, I know you will address these issues and concerns and it's just a general comments I don't really require answers at this time, but if you're going to write me answers like last time with quick response I'd appreciate it very much. Thank you Mr. Chairperson

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Minister of Health & Social Services.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairperson. Mr. McLean has made some very good observation and the general commencing. To start off by telling the Members how pleased I am today I will be able to sit here as a Minister of health and at the first...I think we have some translation problems, so I'll just stop now.

Chairperson: (interpretation): ...as usual the technical equipment isn't working now.

Mr. Picco: ...1,2,12,1,2,1,2...

Chairperson (interpretation): There we go. Go ahead.

Hon. Ed Picco: Tusaava? Tusaava? ...I am pleased to present the departments budget today and indeed because being first opportunity as the Minister of Health that actually address the members in the committee in the whole actually have an opportunity to discuss some of the areas and the ways and the means and indeed my philosophical view on how we should take this department of health over the next several years.

Mr. McLean has indeed brought some of good points, I had an opportunity to discuss with the members and indeed with Mr. McLean and some of the issues that he had brought forward. First of all I'll just touch base on some of them, Mr. Chairperson the member have talked about cancer and indeed we all know the concerns with cancer scenes, the cancer on the rise or increase in Nunavut.

Indeed as a jurisdiction in Canada, we still have to lowest rates of cancer incidents in the population in Canada as a whole. I know for example that the concern has been brought forward, before and in the past the breast screen for cancer and in need mammography unit in Nunavut.

And indeed here in Nunavut, the increase in cervical cancer has indeed on the rise, so that's something we want to look at. Under chronic care side of things and indeed again Mr. McLean is correct that something we have to incorporate, not only at the regional level but in the smaller communities.

On IQ, were using IQ right now for example in to the adoption services and indeed I am a proponent of looking at ways of using a traditional Inuit knowledge, in suicide prevention and indeed mental health counselling. The prescription drug situation worth 3 times national average I'm not aware of those figures, that's something the department will have to look into.

For example here in Iqaluit were a bit or have the opportunity or the advantage of having a drug store or pharmacy available over the counter sales, which is not the case in some of other communities in Nunavut, so we'll have to look at that.

With that Mr. Chairperson again I'm available with my departmental staff of questions or comments on the Department of Health. Thank you Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you Minister of Health and Social Services. Mr. McLean any questions or comments. Mr. O'Brien

Mr. O'Brien: Thank you Mr. Chairperson. Regarding the comments that the Minister maybe have some information to the Members. I wonder if the Minister briefly update or I guess just speak to the issue of, we've talk of this issue for number of weeks now but in reference to recruiting nurses , your retention of nurses and of course making sure that we get the most qualified people that we can get.

And with the retention tying in - what the status is on housing accommodations for these individuals as relates to benefits in regional housing cost. But we know that an issue that's been around for some time. I realize the minister hasn't had a lot of time to deal with this but I know that we spent time with the last 4 years with the Minister that his well aware it's been an issue and has cost great concern in mostly small communities. I wonder if the minister can speak to this in general.

Chairperson: (interpretation): Thank you Mr. O'Brien. Minister of Health and Social services or any of your officials can respond to the question.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairperson. Mr. Chairperson, Mr. O'Brien brings up a couple of very important and indeed controversial areas over that last several years, and

indeed in this house over the last couple of weeks and how to touch base on them and hopefully provide an update.

I've only been in the department of health as minister as everyone knows as April 1st officially and the first things that I requested to the department was to get a current and applicable recruitment and retention program in place with the department of health for Nunavut.

As we've discussed in this House before the shortage of medical professionals is not a unique to Nunavut. Indeed it's pandemic in Canada, indeed in North America, we see cases of other jurisdiction in Canada hiring nurses in Ontario and hiring out nurses in British Columbia indeed the States, United States come into Canada to hire nurses.

As I've mention before 2 weeks ago, 3 weeks ago Mike Harris and the Premier of Ontario announced the additional 250 million re-basing of the health budget in Ontario to hiring of 10 thousand nurses, so were competing against other jurisdictions for a small highly qualified and trained medical professionals. As a department we are working on our recruitment and retention program for our nursing staff and I want to make it clear in this formal today that we are acutely aware of the dedication and the long hours of worked being put in by our nurses especially in the smaller centres where there they only have staff on the ground.

I want take this opportunity to thank them for their time and effort. I, as a minister, will do what I can with in the department, with in the existing budgets, in co-operation with Mr. Ng , Minister of Finance to help the in some ways of recruiting and retaining those staff members.

So I don't have the plan in from of me right now, something that were working on and hopefully we'll be able to bring it forward in the fall to Standing Committee on Health of this house and discuss it with at that time and make some announcement.

On the housing policy over the last couple of days in this house Mr. Ng has spoken to the housing policy that is in the place and indeed we want to look at a policy that their for all staff and look at the rates and so on.

We realize that after the government of Northwest Territory sold off all staff house units in the communities, a lot of private entrepreneurs have taken control of those houses indeed some the rents being charged right now reflect that.

I think everyone is confident of that reality and one of the things we want to try to do is to look at how we can, make the housing situation for medical professionals in my department and also for the government employees at large, better and more conducive for those working with the government of Nunavut .

I guess I should also add that when I was in Igloolik we do have some NCC units on the ground maybe we can access for some of these medical professionals in the short term

but we do need to come up with the comprehensive program which would be included in the recruitment and retention program for the medical professionals at the local level. Thank you Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you Minister for Health and Social Services. Do you want to add something here Mr. O'Brien.

Mr. O'Brien: Thank you Chairperson. Mr. Chairperson from the Ministers' comments I assume that'll be the following session until we receive some kind of concrete plan and directions to how the government is going to deal with these issues.

I'll continue on with some other comments in reference to services that in the past for example in Keewatin some services that attempt to privatize some services. Unfortunately or fortunately it didn't fly out that it's fair problems. I guess I'm concerned at this point whether the minister and his department giving any consideration to looking at this again given the past history.

Chairperson: (interpretation): Thank you Mr. O'Brien. Minister of health and social services response.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairperson. Mr. Chairperson as the Minister of Health, I want to make it perfectly clear that I have no ambition, or drive or any other mandate, move to look at the privatization of our health care system in Nunavut. I am completely and personally, philosophically against privatisation health care. Thank you Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson: Thank you Mr. Picco. Mr. O'Brien I believe you have another comment.

Mr. O'Brien: Mr. Chairperson. I'm please to hear the Minister say that, I'm sure all the people at least hear that I, live more than please to hear the comments.

My last comments is in reference to, if the minister can tell the members at this point if he has some information available about the services now being provided by the Churchill hospital or the arrangement between the Health Science Centre and the Keewatin Health Board and I'm curious as to where this stands to date. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. O'Brien. Response Mr. Minister of Health. You want to respond?

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman I think the members from the Keewatin Region will be pleased to know that indeed that we have just recently signed off with the NMU, The Northern Medical Unit, of the Province of Manitoba, another five year arrangement to continue to support the logistical and administrative support for health care in the Keewatin Region. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): O'Brien.

Mr. O'Brien: Thank you Mr. Chairman and Thank you Mr. Picco. That's good news for the people in Keewatin and I'm sure they'll sleep a lot easier knowing that services are in place for the next five years. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. O'Brien. I believe that this is just a comment. Other comments. I believe we ran out of names. Mr. Irqittuq proceed.

Mr. Irqittuq (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman the issue here that we have been dealing with and in working with the Minister the last two weeks to date in speaking with the health officials and also with the Minister having spoken with him to date and just earlier today. The question to the Minister respect to the health boards. How much mandate or powers have been given to the boards from the ministers. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Minister of Health. If you wish to respond or any of your officials.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I know what the member is getting at. Over the several days as Minister of Health and when you're trying to answer questions on operational issues, the operational issues like control of the staffing of local at the regional, at the community level, general operating programs and services are carried out by the three regional Health and Social Services Boards.

So for example, when an operational issue comes up are you know do we need a social worker in X community or so on. As the Minister of Health I have to go then to the Health Board, and say was the status or what is the situation in this community and then let the Health Board staff up in positions there.

Those types of operational issues are what the Health Boards are doing. So sometimes it looks like the power does not rest with the Minister. I know the member is probably referring to the situation that we discussed this morning with the doctor for Igloodik.

The Minister of Health has delegated the operational issues of the day for health to our three regional health boards and the department oversees the policy and direction and something that was done by the board for example that circumvented policy then we would not allow it and step in. I hope that helps explain the question or the comment of the member. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Minister of Health. I believe you have a supplementary question.

Mr. Irqittuq (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman the Department of Health or the Boards probably have procedures or powers in place because I've heard earlier that this the move initially made was not approved by way of motion. Now, I'd

just like to ask are their own officials allowed to make actions without consulting their boards?

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Irqittuq. Any response from the Minister or whatever officials.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman I not aware if the Board of Health has voted on this particular incident or not indeed boards have their own mandate there is boards governs as in place for each individual board. That's the board's decision. The board has circumvented it's own policies.

So I wouldn't feel comfortable commenting on if the board circumvented their own policy have they voted on a policy . Indeed if the staff of the Health Board made any independent decisions arbitrarily without going to the board. I'm not aware of that and wouldn't be proper for me to comment on it. What I can say is its similar to the Education Board. If you have a question in staffing in school and everything then we have to look at the different education boards and say okay what's the status in the schools are. But again the board operate and the boards govern they have their own policies and procedures in place and I'm not aware of the board health board is voted on this particular one. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Minister of Health. Mr. Irqittuq, any additional questions?

Mr. Irqittuq (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairman. If this has not been approved by the board, does the Minister of power to intervene and if the board had not agreed to the issue and if the action was only taken by their own officials in that situation would you have the authority to accept or reject the decision made? Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Irqittuq. Minister of Health, do you wish to respond.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairperson. Mr. Chairman, it's difficult for me to answer hypothetically. You know if this has been done. The power lies within the minister. If the board has circumvented a piece of legislation an act, if they had done something that compromises the health of individuals then indeed the minister has to power to overturn that decision.

In this case have they made a decision at the board level . I don't know, because I don't know again if the decision of the board is has made. I haven't seen the motions I haven't seen copies of their minutes.

That's something I've asked the department to we're looking into right now to find out how exactly how the decision was made, who made it, and so on. But I can say to you Mr. Chairman, as I said yesterday in this house and as I said again this morning that there

is a public expectation there are right now in the community of Igloolik indeed they're making a room ready for doctor to go there. So that's something that I take seriously as a minister and I am looking into it. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Minister of Health. I believe we are quite clear with the question made by Mr. Irqittuq but you don't really seem to respond fully. Maybe we'll be provided with a response at a later time but I believe his question was to do with what authority you may have in convening with the health boards. Mr. Tootoo you have a question?

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I almost stood up. Mr. Chairman I'd like to ask the Minister, if I know in my reply to the budget address, I touched on numerous social issues in concerns facing the people of Nunavut among them things like homelessness, drug and alcohol programs and stuff like that. I'm wondering Mr. Chairman if the minister and staff have any preliminary plans at this stage on how to readdress those issues? Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Tootoo. Mr. Minister of Health or officials. Do you have a response.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman as a department like most departments we've only actually in place with the budget since April 1st, six weeks ago. As a minister, I officially took over six weeks ago.

It's been I can say very strong and steep learning curve. On the area of homelessness we do have one homeless shelter here in Iqaluit that has had budget problems in the past several weeks and indeed some concern that the shelter would close. As a department we are aware of that.

I believe my Assistant Deputy Minister is working very closely with the homeless shelter committee to make sure that indeed the problem is alleviated and the homeless shelter has submitted a budget. So in general we are trying to address the needs like to take care of the homeless people but as crowding and so on, that we've talked about before and the shortage of houses is a crisis, that were in the housing has caused some major problems.

Not just in Iqaluit and other communities we're in fact seeing more homelessness. As a department as a interdepartmental responsibility not just Department of Health and Social Services, but the Housing Corporation, Economic Development, the government as a whole has to address this issue.

As a department we are trying to be proactive. We're working with the homeless shelter staff for example here to indeed ensure that on Friday they don't have to close their doors and I did speak this morning to one of the senior people at the homeless shelter, he tells me that they are still experiencing financial difficulties. So hopefully we can rectify that in a week. That's an answer to the member's question. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Minister of Health. Mr. Tootoo, I believe you have a supplementary. Proceed.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Thank you Mr. Minister for going ahead and answering my next question. I guess that is an issue and I guess what I'm hearing I just want to confirm what I'm hearing from you Minister, Mr. Chairman is that he will make a commitment to ensure that the homeless shelter here in Iqaluit is not forced to close due to a lack of funding next week and that will work towards having some long term commitment to ensure that the centre will be able to continue to stay open. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Health. I believe you want to respond.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the negotiations are underway right now with the homeless shelter society and indeed as Mr. Tootoo knows my Assistant Deputy Minister Mrs. Cooper has been working very closely with that group. It's very difficult for me to give a commitment that the centre will receive all that funding that they've requested. I understand there is a shortfall of about twenty four thousand dollars right now from what they've requested.

That is, as a department we'll be in contact if we're not already so, with the other departments in this government to look at other sources and again bring in non government organizations, NGO's like NTI and other partners to look at how we can aid and hopefully facilitate to keeping this shelter open indeed Mr. Chairman I was involved for the last year and half with that shelter and the last three and a half years for the MLA for Iqaluit.

I'm acutely aware of the need and I will do whatever I can as the Minister of Health to make sure that those people are not put in any jeopardy for the closure of the facility. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Minister of Health and Social Services. Mr. Tootoo your last question.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I'm relieved to hear those comments from the minister as I'm sure all the staff and members of the homeless shelter committee are glad to hear those comments.

My next question Mr. Chairman, is relating to the functional review of the programs through the hospital that's been mentioned by the Minister of Finance and also by the Minister of Health. I'm wondering Mr. Chairman, if the minister could provide us with update on this review and also what it actually is that's being reviewed. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Tootoo. For your information, we're going to keep you to our ten minute limit. Response from the Minister of Health and Social Services.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, on the role and the functional program review of the program underway by the Department of Health, what happens is in thirty days of the notification from the FMB, Financial Management Board, we look at the role of functional program designed that's in place and what's happened here is that previously, this government coming into power in being on April 1st the health boards and all three health boards for that matter have basically accomplished program functional design for their facilities.

Now we are reviewing it as a government to see if they're applicable to see if they should be added or taken away or whatever. So I would say to the member of that hopefully over the thirty days that will be completed and they get the money for the architectural drawings should come forward and take it from there to get to the point where we culminate into a new facility. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Minister of Health and Social Services. I will go back to you after we have given someone else an opportunity to make a few comments. Mr. Tootoo. I'll give Mr. Kattuk and opportunity. We'll try and keep up to our ten minute limit.

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Mr. Chairman, I have a question in regards to my constituency. The medical patients from Sanikiluaq have to get on government charters in order to go to Churchill and to Winnipeg for medical treatment. I would like to know if your department is concerned about our community residents going to Manitoba for medical services.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Kattuk. Minister of Health and Social Services. If you would like to respond please.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I don't think we're concerned that you're going to Winnipeg or Manitoba because I mean the facilities there are very good. Second to none.

Our concern would be is indeed the people of Sanikiluaq sometimes they had been going into the Baffin Region facility, other times they had been going to the facility in Manitoba and right now in the community of Sanikiluaq is a part of the Keewatin Region for health care services.

So we are concerned, I guess what we're trying to do as a department is review the operational issues with Sanikiluaq to make sure that we put in place the best type of program and service for the people of Sanikiluaq. Make sure that their health care needs are second to none.

They should not be treated any different because they're Sanikiluaq and other residents of Nunavut. So we're looking as a department to find out what types of solutions we could put in place to alleviate some of these concerns that we've heard from Sanikiluaq as a department. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Minister of Health and Social Services. Mr. Kattuk go ahead.

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): I don't know if I understood you clearly. My question is the governments charter Keewatin airlines and my question is are you concerned about the cost of chartering Keewatin air services just from Sanikiluaq to the Keewatin or to Manitoba.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Kattuk. Minister of Health and Social Services.

Hon. Ed Picco (interpretation): ...I'm really the boss. Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Say it again.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman, I understood the question. I guess the problem as to what we're trying to do is look at the cost. I am concerned at the cost of the charters. For example, if we facilitated the usage of Montreal instead of being chartered to Manitoba would it be easier logistically would it be easier and cost us less money to go to Montreal or Ottawa.

That's something we have to review. Right now as we know air travel is very expensive and we are looking at ways in our budget to make sure that we deliver proper health care to all residents but also within the dollar values that we can afford as a department.

So maybe if the member has some recommendations like for delivery of services there which sites should we use should it be the Manitoba area, should it be Montreal or Ottawa, I think as a department we look at this types of issues. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Minister of Health and Social Services. Mr. Kattuk.

Mr. Kattuk (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairman. In regards to the medical travel of Sanikiluaq and if were going to do a review or if we're going to be making any changes to the medical patients of destination then I would suggest that we keep the people of Sanikiluaq up-to-date .

Find out from the people of Sanikiluaq which location they would prefer because there has to be a close consultation of the people of Sanikiluaq if we're going to be making any changes.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Kattuk. Mr. Minister.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I can commit to the member that before any changes will be put in place that indeed the department would consult with the people of Sanikiluaq.

I guess what I'm trying to say is that as a new department and as a new minister I want to have the opportunity over the next several months to review all aspects of the Department of Health and that includes the delivery services.

For example, if the patients of Sanikiluaq are best served by going through Manitoba, that's logistically, administratively, and I guess financially better for the Nunavut Government or not. Those types of issues we want to be able to review those before any decisions taken. There would be consultation with Sanikiluaq find out exactly what the needs of Sanikiluaq and the residents are. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Minister. Mr. Puqiqnak.

Mr. Puqiqnak (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairman. First of all the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Baker Lake I was going to be asking this question to the department and I'm very glad that our member from Baker Lake was able to bring it up and I would like to make a supplementary comment.

In the region of Kitikmeot and Keewatin, and Baffin we have a need for it takes a long time for the patients to get diagnosed early. Any chronic disease. In Gjoa Haven there was one person who was sent out because of respiratory problems, they did an x-ray and he was diagnosed with advanced cancer and that's not the only case.

I strongly urge the Health and Social Services to do a better job in taking care of the patients possibly by x-raying more of the patients and doing more examinations on their patients .

Mr. Chairman I would like to bring up one issue particularly about children in the Gjoa Haven. Little children are put to sleep when they're going to be getting their teeth extracted in Yellowknife or Hay River.

When we set up the Nunavut Government will still send dental patients outside of the Nunavut area or are we going to be getting proper dentists services set up in the region. I don't know what it's like in the Keewatin or Baffin but our dental patients , children especially , are going outside of our region if they need to be anaesthetised and have their teeth extracted.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Puqiqnak. Minister of Health and Social Services. If you would like to respond please.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. The member brings up a couple of very interesting concerns on cancer again. I guess cancer is assiduous. There are pre-screening that happens right now for cancer that we're aware of.

For example, on a regular basis women receive pap-smears and that's a way in indicating for cervical cancers which are being on the rise. There is self-examination for breast cancers but to actually have the test in place, the test for different kinds of cancers on a regular basis. No, I'm not aware of any jurisdiction that does that.

I guess the best solution to stopping cancers that are most prevalent in the North would be to stop smoking. Lung cancer is a big problem and some of the other cancers that we have. We realize and I realize this is a major concern. Your chances of survival were very small. Indeed those days are gone and most cancers today if detected early enough, there is a very good percentage of patients that have survived.

On the area of the dentists, my understanding is that based on the operational requirements, that when the dentist is doing an operation, the dental therapist, and you're pulling teeth and so on, there has to be an anaesthesiologists where they have the patient go under, as it were.

But I would like to take this opportunity to ask Mr. MacRury if he could elaborate on that area because I am not completely aware of the facts surrounding anaesthesiology. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Minister. Deputy Minister MacRury.

Mr. MacRury: On the issue of childhood, very young children can have major extractions if necessary. Our major initiative in the department will be to launch preventive programs to try and prevent these early teeth being destroyed by the consumption of sugary liquids, usually.

It is mostly caused by children going to bed with a bottle in their mouth which has milk or tang or some sweetened liquid in it.

The liquid acts as an acid in the mouth and eats the teeth away so that by the time some children are three or four years old, they have to be put to sleep in a full operating procedure to have the teeth extracted. Then usually what happens is the second teeth come in and they have a lot of problems with them. They come in crooked and one under the other and there is a lot of problems with those.

So our main approach to dealing with this issue is from a preventive approach and we want to launch major prevention activities through health education at the nursing centres to try and promote health teeth in young children.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Puqiqnak supplementary question.

Mr. Puqiqnak (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the response. Yes, I can recall in the Kitikmeot area people used to come in, dentists used to come into our communities to extract children's teeth and the child would be put under anaesthesia in order to get their teeth extracted.

A lot of children had their teeth extracted just in the Kitikmeot alone. When a child's teeth had been extracted, you feel for the little children because they don't have any teeth left, then when their teeth are newly extracted there is no follow up. Their teeth are taken out and then they are left, there is no after care treatment, no follow up care given to these children. Their teeth are extracted and then they are left.

Do you do follow up care on children who have had to have a lot of their teeth extracted or is there any follow up treatment.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Minister.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the member makes a good point. Indeed, as Mr. MacRury has said, one of the things that we are trying to do in this department, is a new philosophical view of health in Nunavut, is to look at the preventive side of medicine.

If we could get the mothers to stop putting tang in bottles and so on, using kool aid, and to look at chocolates and sweets and so on that is causing this major problem that we have with tooth decay, we wouldn't get to the point where we are having to do major extractions. But that won't be for a while yet.

On the follow up, indeed there is follow up done. For example, if a child at a very early age, and we know that when teeth are coming in that there is a sequence that teeth come in, and if they are taken out, if the child loses their first teeth then there is a major problem, because the teeth following the teeth that have been abnormally extracted because of decay, usually come in crooked, in the wrong place and so on.

So there is follow up done, I understand by the department. I think the key here, Mr. Chairperson, is to look at the preventative side to make sure that teeth aren't decaying, that children have a chance to go forward with a full set of teeth, not to have to worry about decay because at that early age of course they have no control over what we are giving them. I guess, that's not fair.

An interesting side note to this, is just recently I had written an article for a magazine, on how traditionally in Newfoundland people dealt with problems with teeth and toothaches, using tooth charmers. A person would go forward to the tooth charmer and the tooth charmer would say a special little prayer and away went the toothache.

I just did an article on this so I am quite interested in teeth and teeth problems. Just a little story for you Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Minister of Health and Social Services. We'll take a break at this time, because I think that some of us have fallen asleep. We will take a fifteen minute health break. It takes us a little while to get back to our seats, even though we are anticipating the completion of the budgets.

>>Committee Recessed at 3.07 and resumed at 3.35 p.m.

Chairperson (interpretation): Please return to your seats. We have pages here, can the pages go get the members from upstairs. I think we can resume. We'll just start off, because we are running late. Mr. Puqiqnak if you still have comments you still have time to proceed.

Mr. Puqiqnak (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairman. I know that our Minister is well aware of the fact of the population growth in the communities of Nunavut. Most of the time in the communities the people would like to go out camping over the spring until the ice is gone and during their camping time there is sometimes children that get sick and have to be medivaced in emergency cases. Especially when there is still some ice around and when you can't access the communities from the outpost camps.

Not only in Gjoa Haven experiences that problem because campers can't get back to their communities. When one get ill in the camps they have to be medivaced by helicopter at times. Sometimes there is no other means of getting a patient from the outpost camp other than by helicopter and they cannot use airplanes. I have seen this myself.

In our area, it usually happens when there are families camping out for a few weeks. The issue of picking up patients by helicopter and by airplanes, I would like to see airlines and helicopters to be available to pick up patients from the camps, and I was wondering if your department was making them available to the camps.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Puqiqnak. Either one of you, the Minister or his official can respond.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman the member brings up a very interesting point. Indeed, as a department one of the things that we are trying to do right now is look at a comprehensive medical travel study. This would include medivacs and indeed looking at what the requirements are when people are in camps.

I want to assure the member that if someone is sick and needs immediate medical attention all means possible will be put in place to make sure that person gets the medical care that they need no matter where they are.

Now again, that depends on operational requirements, if there is no helicopter available that could get into position we would have to look at other avenues to get that person the attention that they need. We might have to look at getting someone in by some other means.

That is part of the comprehensive medical travel study that we are doing and that we are looking at. Hopefully over the next several months as we look at this issue, there are so many issues in the department of Health that we are trying to look at for the residents of Nunavut and it takes time.

A lot of the departments Mr. Chairman aren't up to staff yet and I realize that in the department of Health we are one of those departments. Our staff, my staff have been putting in a lot of hours trying to do, trying to meet the operational requirements and this is one of the things that we are trying to review. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Minister of Health & Social Services. I just want to further point out that during breaks we should try and get back on time so that we can complete the budgets for the departments.

I think we should all try and come back after our break on time. Mr. Puqignak, are you finished? Thank you. Mr. Akasuk.

Mr. Akasuk (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I will ask a question in regards to the Baffin region patients sent down to Ottawa, especially from the Baffin region. Mostly the patients stay at the hostel and they are concerned about elders.

Some elders have been sent down to Ottawa without any escorts and I have seen one elder myself personally who had no escort and usually the interpreters cannot get to the elders on time and they are short of interpreters. So my question is what's the status with the Ottawa patients.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Akasuk. Mr. Minister.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman the member makes a good point. Indeed, I have had that situation with a member of my family who went down without an escort and it was a bit of a problem. So we are aware of it as a problem.

The Baffin Regional Health Board is also aware of it and we're trying to put in place a procedure whereas the elder who is travelling if they need an escort because of medical reasons, then they get that escort. Based on operational requirements.

You are correct that they are using the hotel, and indeed later this month I will be visiting the Larga Home in Ottawa, there is a proposal by Larga Group through Nunasi Corporation to use that facility for unilingual people where they would have interpreters around the clock and have Inuit foods available and so on.

So I will be looking at that later this month. I will also be visiting the Rotel in July to see the situation there with the Rotel as the Minister of Health. So on your question with the escorts, it has been reviewed, the Baffin Regional Health and Social Services Board, and indeed the department of Health are aware of it, and escorts are used when there is a medical reason for the escorts.

I think we are pretty confident in the way that is being applied. When the Health Services first transferred from Montreal to Ottawa, we had more concerns there were some problems at that time with the development of the services provided by Osgoode. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Minister. Mr. Akasuk, do you have any further questions. Thank you. Mr. Nutarak.

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairman. I said I had my hand up when we were talking about tooth extraction, but I didn't get to hear his last comment.

Chairperson (interpretation): What is your question. I think that was just a comment. I still didn't understand what you said. Could you rephrase your question .

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): When we were talking about teeth, I just wanted to say as a joke, but I just let it go ahead, that since my last name is Nutarak (*child*) am I going to get Nutarak teeth.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Alakannuark.

Mr. Alakannuark (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask a question in regards to the Boarding Home in Yellowknife. I am sure you are responsible for the Yellowknife patient home, sometimes the patient home is filled to capacity and the patients who have no room in the boarding home have to find other means of accommodation.

My question is, how do you take care of the patients, that have to stay elsewhere? What are your plans, Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Alakannuark. Mr. Minister or your officials can respond.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, my understanding is that when the Lena Pederson Boarding Home in Yellowknife is full and there is no more space for other patients coming in that indeed the Health Board has arranged for the patients to stay at hotels in Yellowknife.

Indeed there is also home boarding available to the folks in the Kitikmeot region going to Yellowknife, patients that come over can actually board with families similar to the way it is here in Iqaluit. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Minister. Mr. Alakannuark.

Mr. Alakannuark (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairman. I am going to ask a question in regards to the boarding homes that don't have co-ordinators or directors who understand Inuktitut, especially the elders.

This is a problem in the boarding homes, especially when the elders have to go there and the directors or the staff in the boarding homes cannot read and write in Inuktitut. I would like to see some co-ordinators or directors of the boarding homes to be bilingual. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Alakannuark. Mr. Minister.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the member makes a very good point. If we have unilingual people going to Yellowknife or Ottawa, or indeed Winnipeg, that as a department we ensure that the services are available in Inuktitut and that we have qualified translators and interpreters available.

I am not aware of the operational issues surrounding Lena Peterson's boarding home, whether indeed they have translators or interpreters on standby or actually working directly out of the facility but I will direct the department to find out what the status of that is and get back to the member. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Minister. Mr. Alakannuark.

Mr. Alakannuark (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairman. In regards to elders not being able to access interpreters, I believe that fact because from Gjoa Haven there was an elder who was sent to Yellowknife who did not have an escort or interpreter.

I felt that at the Yellowknife airport that person was waiting for a very, very long time and he was stuck and didn't know what to do and nobody knew that he was at the airport as a patient.

I urge you to ensure that the elders be escorted or have interpreters when they have to be treated outside of their home community. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Alakannuark. Mr. Minister. I think that was more of a comment, or would you like to respond? Thank you.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. That is not acceptable and we agree as a department and as residents of Nunavut, as the Minister of the Department of Health that if that is the case that an elderly person is left behind at the airport or there are no translators and no one to show them where to go then it is not acceptable.

Again, I reiterate to the member that we will contact the Kitikmeot Health & Social Service Board to find out what is in place at the Lena Pederson Home and indeed, what type of set up do they have for when unilingual people arrive from one of the outlying

communities, and for someone to meet them at the airport and so on. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Minister for your appropriate answer. Mr. O'Brien.

Mr. O'Brien: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman as the Minister is aware we are unlike the other regions of Canada and there are various types of illnesses and diseases that we are effected by here in the north and particularly Nunavut.

I am just wondering what type of wide spread studies is the Minister conducting now or looking at conducting as they relate to epidemiology?

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. O'Brien. Mr. Minister, or your officials can respond to him.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the member raises a very good area of concern of ours at the department of Health for Nunavut. Epidemiology and indeed the epidemiologist is a very rare field, it is very hard to hire epidemiologists.

We are fortunate that we will be having an epidemiologist working on staff. Indeed the person just finished a university degree right now, and indeed tomorrow our Chief Medical Officer for Nunavut will be in place and our Assistant Chief Medical Officer some time after that.

We want to be able to look at all the health characteristics of Nunavut specifically. In the past, just a short six weeks ago before April 1st, we were part of the Northwest Territories and there was an epidemiologist on staff with that department. Indeed, the government of the Northwest Territories had problems finding epidemiologists, to look at the field of epidemiology.

So that matter is being looked into and indeed epidemiology is a very complex area of medical science and we will have an epidemiologist in place very shortly. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Minister. It takes a while for you to respond to some members. We have to proceed with business here, your officials can respond if you don't know the answer. Mr. O'Brien do you have any further questions or comments. Proceed.

Mr. O'Brien: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Just one other question and I think it is a question that concerns all the members here. I am curious as to how the Minister is going to incorporate the Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit factor with the reduction of trimethane in the home?

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. O'Brien. Mr. Minister of Health & Social Services.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, when you discuss different areas, Mr. Chairman, like previously epidemiology, although it is a long answer, as I tried to explain, it is a very difficult area to understand. Indeed many people would probably need an explanation on what epidemiology is.

So I am trying to, with your support, Mr. Chairman, give the members of this House, the explanations. I know the answers, I gave the proper answer on epidemiology, indeed epidemiologists.

On this situation regarding trimethane as introduced by the member from Arviat, Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, on looking at toxic substances and so on has incorporated like we are doing right how with other departments for example under RWED, Sustainable Development is looking at how to incorporate Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit in those types of areas, like PCB's. So that has been taken into context and indeed we are looking at ways of distributing it through the department.

For example, with custom adoptions we are using Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit. As I said earlier Mr. Chairman, with mental health we are looking at ways of using Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Minister. Mr. O'Brien do you have any further questions?

Mr. O'Brien: Thank you Mr. Chairman and thank you Mr. Minister for that answer. Just going back to my earlier question about epidemiology, my question was what wide spread studies is the Minister looking at, what type of issues and concerns is he going to apply this to? Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. O'Brien. Mr. Minister.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, as the member probably knows and is aware, every month most members previously used to receive a copy of the Epi-North newsletter which is put out by the GNWT. I see that the member has a copy of the newsletter with him.

On the areas that we are looking at I will give the opportunity to the Deputy Minister to respond to that because there is some exciting work being done with epidemiology in the NWT and to be continued in Nunavut.

Mr. MacRury: Mr. Chairman, one of the interesting aspects of the study of diseases or epidemiology in Nunavut has come about when we attempted to separate out the health statistics from the general NWT information that was available. We have identified that

there are studies required in several of the things that have been talked about here already today.

Cancer, is one of the things. We have a different characteristics of cancer infections in Nunavut from the NWT and perhaps from other jurisdictions in Canada. So we are going to be looking at that. We have different characteristics in the pre-natal and post-natal disease pattern in children. So we are going to be looking at some of those issues.

We are going to be looking at various other characteristics around stomach complaints that have to be looked at. So there are a broad range of issues that are different than they are in other jurisdictions, and those are some of the things that we will be looking at.

Right now we are in the process of identifying just what area we have to do those studies. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. MacRury. Mr. O'Brien do you have another question.

Mr. O'Brien: Yes, just one follow up point to this issue. Would you also be looking at the increase of TB in Nunavut. Thank you.

Mr. MacRury: Yes Mr. Chairman, we have identified TB as a major concern. We are in fact working on this right now, there has been a significant level of activity with TB in most of the communities in Baffin and some of the communities in the other two regions.

It is a very serious concern and we are working closely with the Baffin Regional Health Board in particular and the Chief Medical Officer will be one of their first assignments when starting will be to work on the question of TB. As a department we have reserved some money that we can allocate to special needs of the Boards and we will look at that later in the context of the budget. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. MacRury. Please recognize the Chairperson before speaking. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I have been sitting so long it seems like it is time to get up. Mr. Chairman, earlier it had asked about the plans for the department in the future to deal with some of the problems that we are facing. Mr. Chairman, I wonder two things, if we could ask the Minister for some kind of a timeline as to these plans and also who is being consulted in regards to the types of changes that we need to look at. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Health or your official.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. As the members know there are several different changes that we would like to do in the department of Health. One of them we

have announced is the elimination of the Health Boards. Mr. Dave Ramsden is working on that process right now and how we will deliver Health & Social Services after March 2000.

On the other areas most of that work is being done right now in house, we have a couple of policy analysts working on different areas and different aspects and the direction I guess that we would like to take in the department.

One of the things I am trying to do as the Minister is to have a workshop type of retreat with the senior managers of the department of Health in August in one of the communities to review our business plan and for me as a Minister to see where we are and the directions from the Standing Committee on Health we would like to go with the department of Health in Nunavut over the next several months.

I don't know if Mr. MacRury would like to add anything to that.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Minister. Mr. MacRury would you like to make a supplementary response?

Mr. MacRury: The major change that we want to see in the department that we will be exploring over the short term is in ways that we can move the department into more prevention and promotion of health mode. At the same time dealing with the acute care cases, have to be addressed, but in reality trying to move more in that direction of prevention and promotion. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. MacRury. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman I know that the Health Board currently is also looking at a more holistic approach to dealing with Health & Social Services program delivery within the region, and I am wondering if that is going to continue as an avenue that the department will be looking at pursuing after it takes over these services. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Tootoo. Mr. Minister.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, indeed with the take over for example of child and social services by the Health Board is actually following the direction of the department of Health where we have talked about the holistic approach. They are actually in lockstep with us on the delivery of those services.

So yes, the short answer Mr. Chairman is yes, the Department of Health for Nunavut is looking at a holistic and complete approach for the delivery side of Health and Social Services. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Minister. Mr. Tootoo, do you have a supplementary question.

Mr. Tootoo: Yes, thank you Mr. Chairman. Just a suggestion, I would urge that throughout the last few months I know in my constituency and also in the Ministers', there are numerous health care providers residing here.

After hearing their concerns I would urge the department, not only to consult with the senior managers within the department of Health but also to consult with the people that are working in the field, the nurses, the social workers, the people that are working in the field. I would urge strongly that the department approach those people as well and not leave them out of this process. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Tootoo. Mr. Minister.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I think all members know and realize that as we started off this government on April 1, the expectations of our staff are very high. As we are trying to get up to capacity as a government there has been so much demand put on our staff, hours and hours of time worked.

Indeed, we do have, I think it is safe to say, some problems with morale. One of the things Mr. Ramsden is doing on behalf of the department of Health is reassuring our staff and indeed, I believe last week Mr. Ramsden was in the Keewatin region, so I want to take this opportunity to reassure our staff that we understand the work that they are putting in.

As the department of Health, as a government, we all realize that and hopefully over the next several months as we move toward greater self-sufficiency of the government and more increased capacity to alleviate some of the workload, indeed, pressure, being put on our dedicated, front line staff people. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Picco. Mr. Tootoo, I believe that you have another comment or question.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I wasn't referring so much to the work load that the staff is currently under, I know that it is tremendous, what I am referring to is seeking staff input into how they see the department going and asking for their input into trying to develop, and seek their ideas, on how to achieve those goals.

I know that in any field, it is usually the people that are working in the field that have the best ideas on how the system runs and they have to work in it. So they are the ones that know how best to maybe, accommodate some of these changes that need to be faced. That's more what I was referring to. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Tootoo. Mr. Minister.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman, we couldn't agree more, and again that's what Mr. Ramsden is doing when he is going into the communities and into the regions

talking to the staff, to see what they would like to see in the department of Health, some of the problems that they encounter as employees, so that we can fix those types of things.

Take a proactive stance on the way Health & Social Services is delivered. Not only at the regional level but at the local and community level, and indeed Nunavut wide. Thank you , Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Minister. At this moment I ran out of names on my list, if there are no more questions. Mr. Puqiqnak.

Mr. Puqiqnak (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairman. I received a letter from my constituency just recently in respect to the health people in our community. People have talked about the Human Resources and about the female/male staff. When we want to look at equality, whether they are male or female, I know this has been dealt with for a while now and since we have Nunavut, I think more accommodations can be made towards this.

Could we ask if an individual is women or not, to me it effects me deeply. I agree with women , I grew up with women. I know they are very skilled, they are very independent. As Nunavut residents, it doesn't really make sense that we don't have equality, we have to pursue equality and this concept, now just in our communities, this has probably been an issue dealt with by the department of Justice. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Puqiqnak. Mr. Minister, or your officials if you want to add anything to that.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I understand the member and I agree that we need equality. Not just among the sexes, but among the races, the people of Nunavut. I think that as a government that is what we are striving towards. As a department that is what we are trying to strive towards.

I appreciate the members' comments. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Puqiqnak. Supplementary.

Mr. Puqiqnak (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairman. In Kitikmeot in the former government in respect to the boarding home. I want to ask maybe more on this later, but I believe I have asked you this question, in respect to Lena Pederson and the contract on the boarding home.

With respect to Lena Pederson, back in the 70's or 80's the boarding home was opened. Back then the contract was awarded to an Inuit firm and to date this contract is outside of Nunavut. This is an interest now being taken on by my constituents, in respect to Article

24 and 23 in the Land Claims Agreement. In view of that and this being within Nunavut, I believe that this contract should be taken by a firm within Nunavut.

How have you been effected by this within your department. That is my question.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Puqiqnak. Minister of Health, do you wish to respond.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman I just want to say that on the Lena Pederson boarding home contract in Yellowknife, it was prior to April 1 and it was signed off by the then Health Minister for the previous NWT Government.

After April 1, and becoming the Minister of Health I was requested to review the award of that contract and indeed to look at specific arrangements under Article 24. That information was provided to me and indeed we provided it to the people that asked. We are also right now in the middle, I believe, of responding to a similar query from NTI on the applicability of Article 24.

All of that information has been forthcoming to the people who questioned the contract and has been made available by the NWT Government, as signed off by that former Health Minister person, in that previous government, prior to 1999. Thank you Mr. Chairman, I hope that answer the question. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Minister. Any further comments Mr. Puqiqnak. Thank you. At this time I don't have any more names on my list for comments or questions. I think we can move on to the finances. Mr. Akasuk, do you have a comment.

Mr. Akasuk (interpretation): Thank you. I didn't finish with my question, just a supplementary. Maybe just ten more questions. The first question I have is when we had Baffin House in Montreal it seems to accommodate everyone, but in Ottawa I just wish to know when an office will be provided that is much closer to the boarding home that Inuit now occupy. At the moment people aren't able to have easy access to the office.

What is being done or what plans are there for this area. That is my question, Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Akasuk. Mr. Minister of Health, sometimes it will be confusing who will be asking you questions but do you have a response.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Iqaqrialu, you are doing a very good job today. Thank you Mr. Chairman, I just caught the last piece of what Mr. Akasuk was asking because I was being advised on the epidemiology situation with Mr. O'Brien in my ear. I am wondering if Mr. Akasuk, could just succinctly repeat his question for expediency. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Akesuk, could you rephrase your question.

Mr. Akesuk: I don't know if you have the epidemiology problem or not in your ear so, thank you Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) My question first is with respect to back in Montreal the office was just below the boarding home.

In Ottawa there is no easy access to the office. The patients don't have easy access, so I was just wondering whether the health office would be relocated and be more accessible to the boarding home and the patients. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Akesuk. Mr. Minister.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. We are very fortunate today to have with us Mr. Ken MacRury who is a former CEO of the hospital and indeed, of the Baffin Regional Health & Social Services Board for many years. He is very acutely aware of the situation here and the logistics of the Baffin House and our new set up at the Rotel, so I am going to ask Mr. MacRury at this time to answer the question posed by the Honourable Mr. Akesuk member for Kingait. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Go ahead.

Mr. MacRury: Thank you Mr. Chairman. If I might remind the member from the Baffin, in the Montreal situation where we had Baffin House, the actual Baffin Regional Health Board ran the boarding house.

It was staffed and operated by staff of the Baffin Board and the only thing that we were purchasing in Montreal was the health care. We purchased the health care from the McGill program operating in several hospitals in Montreal.

When we made a decision to transfer the services from Montreal to Ottawa, one of the fundamental differences was we wanted the Ottawa providers to provide a comprehensive service. So as soon as the patient gets off the plane in Montreal they are then the responsibility of the service provider. So they provide the boarding, they provide the translation services, they provide the transportation and they provide the health care.

I think that there is a fundamental difference there that the people on the Baffin Regional Health Board wanted to see. One of the concepts that they discussed in making this decision was that they wanted people to be, the patients that go down to Ottawa, to be more responsible for some of their own care when they are in Ottawa, as opposed to in Montreal, where everything was provided for them and many of them felt that they were being babied in that approach.

So one of the differences was is that it is not supposed to replicate the Montreal service. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. MacRury. Mr. Akesuk, do you have a further question.

Mr. Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairman. Maybe in view of the Inuit in Nunavut, whether it's better for them or not, I think more people respond negatively to the current situation and having read many of the views people had, for example when you read them in Nunatsiaq News, some people would comment on how things could be improved.

I think my question would be are we going to be asking what the general consensus is on this issue in Nunavut.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Akesuk. Mr. Minister, do you wish to add anything.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. The member brings up a good point and that is one of the reasons why we are actually going to Ottawa, to look at the operation and the Rotel. I will be doing that in July, and indeed I think I mentioned this one, to look at the Nunasi corporations' building, Larga Homes.

What Nunasi is recommending to us is that their Larga Home for unilingual people, to have it staffed with Inuit employees, and provide interpreting/translating, have Inuit food there and so on.

That appeals to me, I think it is a good way of looking at things, but I haven't seen the facility or anything like that. So that is one of my reasons to go down to Ottawa, and I will be going there with the chairman of the Qikiqtaaluk Corporation, Mr. Jerry Ell, to review Larga Homes in Ottawa and then looking at the Rotel operation.

The contract we have right now is in place, it is with Osney, and we have been accessing the Rotel. Where it hasn't met all of our needs, I think it is fair to say, it has come a long way since last year when we first started using them. There are some things that could be maybe made a little bit better and maybe a bit more conducive to unilingual people, elderly people and so on.

As I reiterated to you earlier Mr. Chairman, it is for us to take the responsibility that we take within the Department of Health to make sure people are treated fairly no matter what part of Nunavut they come from, as a department. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Minister. Mr. Akesuk, any more.

Mr. Akesuk (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairman. My last question in respect to patients who have no escorts or who were not provided escorts. When they go in the hospital although they are just unilingual you don't have any interpreters provided or interpreters are not provided right away, what are you going to do about it.

Chairperson (interpretation): But you want to add anything further Mr. Minister?

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you. No, you're correct Mr. Chairman. That is what I'm looking at and making more conducive for Nunavut people needs. We understand the difficulty and I should maybe just point out very quickly; there has been some controversy as an example, were Quebec was trying to send some of their people to the United States for cancer treatment and the Quebec Government kept talking about what about unilingual French speakers will they have translators in the States.

So on and so forth. Same thing with us Mr. Chairman. When we have unilingual people we have to send them to Ottawa. We want to make sure that that in no way is problematic to them because they are residents of Nunavut and we have rights as individuals and indeed as a government to make sure that people are treated fairly. That my friend, that is what we're trying to do as a department so I can ensure the member that we are reviewing that to make sure that our citizens are treated properly especially elderly people. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Minister. Mr. Akesuk. Any more? Mr. Nutarak.

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman thank you. I just have one question in respect to health centres in communities. Do they also have procedures in place or based on population are the infrastructure so much work is done on the buildings, is it based on population or based on how the buildings are done or is there any such policy in place for such matters. That is my question.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Nutarak. Mr. Minister. Any response.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I was speaking to the Deputy Minister concerning the review of capital projects. It may be when we get to capital in the budget that we could review this with more detail or I could speak to a little bit about capital needs of the department in the review of the facilities that we have on hand. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Minister. Mr. Nutarak.

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): There is a hospital in Iqaluit, I don't know what year it was built and we were told that if there is any money available that you would do an extension on that hospital or make a new one. It has been a hospital for twenty years now. Do you have any kind of regulations on hospitals and health centres where they have to get renovated or you have to build a new one within a certain time frame?

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Nutarak. Mr. Minister.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman the member makes a couple of good points. As we know in 1988 Northwest Territories took over health from the

Federal Government. Up to that time the Canadian Government built and maintained all facilities in Nunavut.

And they built some new facilities. Since that time, over the last ten years, it became the responsibility of the Government of the Northwest Territories. And as we know as a government we don't really have the money now within our capital budget to build new facilities. And indeed in my capital budget today we only have two point one million dollars.

Which is basically for minor renovations and code violations and so on. They're bringing those buildings up to snuff but the need is there for example in Pond Inlet, for example in Igloolik, when I was there a couple of weeks ago they got five nurses sharing one kitchen. That's not acceptable. Where do we find the money to do those types of things. The Baffin hospital Mr. Chairman was built in 1962, was built for a population when Iqaluit was probably fifteen hundred to two thousand people. Today that population has tripled and they're serving a region of Nunavut that has tripled. The need is for a new hospital that's recognized again we don't have the money for it so we have to do a P3 process.

So right now one of the things the department's doing in conjunction with the Department of Public Works and Services is looking at the facilities we have in Nunavut to find out where we can use our small limited capital dollars to make the renovations and code violations and so on, that we need to do in our facilities. I can assure the member that one of my priorities as a minister is to make sure that we look at the facility in Pond Inlet. Because I am aware of that facility and indeed we need to do some work there. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Minister. Jobie Nutarak.

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you. I would like to thank you also for answering part of the question I was going to ask, so there. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Nutarak. Since I don't have any more names on my list I'd just like to add that patient care and patient travel is very important to us from Nunavut and hope that the Department of Health will take good care of their patients and follow through with their policies that they have .

I think that we can be better co-ordinated if the health givers and the employees do their part.

I believe that we can start with 10-4 now. Agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chairperson (Interpretation): First of all the directorate Operations and Maintenance. Total Operations and Maintenance ten million, four hundred ninety-four. Agreed? Agreed. I'm sorry if I didn't pronounce that properly but everybody agreed. Mr. Akesuk.

Mr. Akesuk: Thank you. My question is supplementary to a question that I asked earlier. On salaries and wages. My community doesn't have a Social Service worker and I'm sure that PY's salary and wages is in here somewhere. My question is, is the PY included in here for Kimmirut? Mr. Minister.

Mr. Picco: I remember the question. I remember it very well indeed. The part about the social worker situation was dealt with the health board and that's why I say this indeed. When I'm looking at the salary dollars here that's within the Department of Health and Social Services.

The directorate area. The health boards is another page with maybe on 10-7 and so the member would like to hold that question on wages and benefits. Health board monies that we give them is where we would find that line. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Minister. Mr. Akesuk did you get your response? Thank you.

Total Operations and Maintenance, ten million, nine hundred, ninety-four thousand. Agreed.

And going on to 10-5. Directorate Gjoa Haven. Total is twelve thousand. Agreed? Agreed.

And for the Nunavut portion, total, various total, two million, one hundred, seventy-six thousand. Agreed? Agreed.

And Nunavut total, total capital, two million, one eight-eight thousand and going back to 10-4 total capital two million, one hundred eight-eight thousand. Agreed? Agreed.

Total expenditures, twelve million, eight hundred thirty-two thousand. Agreed? Agreed.

Health insurance programs page number 10-6. Operations and Maintenance. Total Operations and Maintenance, thirty-three million, one hundred eighty-three thousand. Agreed? Agreed.

And capital. Total capital, total expenditures, thirty-three million, one hundred eight-three thousand. Agree? Agreed.

Primary Care Programs. Operations and Maintenance. Total Operations and Maintenance fifty-nine million, eight hundred eight thousand. Agreed? Agreed.

On capital zero. Total expenditures, fifty-nine million, eight hundred eight thousand. And page 10-8. Children's programs. I apologize, Operations and Maintenance. Total Operations and Maintenance four million, one hundred eighty-five thousand. Total capital, total expenditures, four million, one hundred and eighty- four million, one hundred eighty-five thousand. Agreed? Agreed.

Community Health Programs. Operations and Maintenance. Total Operations and Maintenance, nine million, seven hundred fifty-seven thousand. Agreed? Agreed.

Capital zero. Total expenditures nine million, seven hundred fifty seven thousand. Agreed? Agreed.

Detail of Grants and Contributions. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman looking at all these grants and contributions its looks like it's funding toward the regional boards. I'm wondering Mr. Chairman if we could ask the boards for a little bit of a more detail. If the minister could ask the board to provide us with a bit of a detail of in each of those areas. What the dollars are being used for. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Tootoo. Mr. Minister.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you. Just for clarification purposes there is no capital in the Detail of Grants and Contributions to the boards. I'm wondering if the members requesting for example if we use primary and acute care.

Would he want a break down by region of what we're using that money for at the board for example public health or health centre or whatever is that what the member, is that the level of detail that the members requesting. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Minister. I suggest that you finish all your sentence before you turn off your microphone. Mr. Tootoo do you have another question? Go ahead.

Mr. Tootoo: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Chairman just to clarify it is I guess regional break down of programs in the regions just so that you know one all three regions you can take a look and compare the regional figures but also break down of the services being provided because just a very broad general overview of what's being provided and I would just like a little bit more detail on what the boards are actually doing and what services are actually being offered by the department and the board.

Thank you Mr. Chairman. It doesn't have to be right now, it can be provided at a future point and time. That would be fine. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Health. Did you want to make a response.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for clarifying the original question. I will request the department, we're taking a note of it right now to find out indeed under the program as he has identified under the details on Grants and Contributions what monies are available there between the different regional Health Board program areas. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Minister. Mr. Tootoo, do you have any further questions or comments. I have a question, Mr. Puqiqnak if you would take the Chair please.

>>Mr. Puqiqnak takes the Chair.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. O'Brien.

Mr. O'Brien: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman the Minister was speaking earlier about epidemiology and I believe his Deputy Minister mentioned the publication Epic-North. I am just wondering if the Minister is going to give some consideration to having an Epic-Nunavut, or are we still going to be part of the Epic North documentation that surfaces once every three months.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. O'Brien. Mr. Minister.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman over the past three years, I have been an avid reader of the monthly Epi- North. Epi-North is a brochure or a magazine that is done monthly by the department that shows the tracking of all contagious diseases and all instance of disease, for example, syphilis, gonorrhoea, the rates by community based on region, very interesting stuff.

So I would commit right now that over the next several months that we would have our own Epi Nunavut magazine that, I say magazine, it is not a magazine, it is a four page newsletter. Kevin has one in his hand right now.

So yes, Mr. Chairman I commit to putting out that and maybe I would have an opportunity to have an editorial page in there for the members to read. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Minister. Mr. O'Brien.

Mr. O'Brien: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the Minister for his enlightening comments and I hope that the editorial that he writes will also have a photograph of the Minister. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. O'Brien. Mr. Minister.

Hon. Ed Picco: Why yes, Mr. Chairman, I would make sure that indeed I would be there and probably with the guy who will replace me or the guy I replaced, I think it would be fitting. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Minister. Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairman. If we look at the Child, Family and Special Services section. What does it mean, there is 2.1 million here, what kind of services are we talking about under this particular heading. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Iqaqrialu. Mr. Minister, Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman I would like to ask the Assistant Deputy Minister maybe to elaborate a little more on the specifics of the Children's Programs and Services. On the members' question on the 2.1 million I don't see that figure here, could the member clarify if he is on 10 – 8. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Assistant Deputy Minister, Ms. Cooper.

Ms. Cooper (interpretation): If we look at number 12 and if we go back to number 11, it gives you further details on monies that are geared towards children; wellness, and adoption. That's what these monies are used for.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Ms. Cooper. Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairman. I have yet to see specialized services that are geared towards child and family special needs. I am not quite sure what these services include. When we say adoption, are their transportation expenses paid for by the Department of Health & Social Services, if they are going to be adopting.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Minister, are you going to respond to that question. Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, Ms. Cooper the Assistant Deputy Minister will try to clarify the members question. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Assistant Deputy Minister, Ms. Cooper.

Ms. Cooper (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairman. In regards to children, for example, if you have a concern regarding a child's need for a healthy lifestyle, we have identified here that services can be provided. Can we ask questions while we're sitting here?

Chairperson (interpretation): Maybe I can ask the member if he's concerned about money that's allocated for the children. That's under this is going to be utilized for Children's Services. It's not to be allotted to the communities. Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Mr. Iqaqrialu: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Yes, I understand a bit what it is for but I still don't understand this time what it is exactly why the doctors who get the funds rather than the children? For children's services.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Iqaqrialu. Mr. Minister. You can either respond to it yourself.

Hon. Ed Picco: Mr. Chairman, I believe under Details Grants and Contribution 2-1. When we mention children that's only one small part of it. When we are trying to explain what the money was used for.

For example, if I had an adopted child with mental problems or psychiatric problems I would use the services at the health board for counselling that would be covered under there for example.

Of course the cost of bringing my adoptive child if they were from Pangnirtung, or Clyde River back and forth to Iqaluit to see the psychologist that would be covered under there. So it were be geared towards Social Services as an example. I don't know if that helps but maybe explain why the amount is there but it's a multi-faceted component. Mr. Chairman thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Iqaqrialu do you have any further comments or questions?

Mr. Iqaqrialu: Yes, at least now I understand what its used for and also in regards to children's services, children's programs for boards of management that provide services to eligible Nunavut residents in the areas of children care and the intervention service, three million, two hundred, ten thousand. Is it still for children's programs? I still don't understand. Like children's programs. Are we talking about family allowances?

Chairperson (interpretation): What kinds of children's programs are you talking about in there?

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you. Maybe the words are a bit misleading when we say children's programs. It just a type of it just a word that we're using to explain the process here for that line item.

But if I could explain it maybe by saying that for example, if under adoption services you have a child that's taken from a family and put into an adoptive home and there was an intervention that's where this money would come from.

Three point two million dollars in actuality is divided among the three regions of Nunavut the Kitikmeot, the Baffin, and the Keewatin so you take the three divided by three and a million dollars on average for each of the regions.

And then that money is used for the health boards when they have to intervene within a family for the child that's being misused or abused or whatever for intervention services and to look at other types of things that are under care.

For example, we have children who are foster children where their parents died and they are taken care by the government for example so the money would be in there for them maybe for their mental health and so on. Maybe the program verbiage is the wrong verbiage to use in this case.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Iqaqrialu .

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): The first one is 2 million 100 thousand for the one you just answered me with children's programs, I thought was that was in the upper one.

I think we have to explain what this is for, according to your response it's not for actual children themselves, the upper one is for the children but under children's programs, I think that the headings should change. I think it should not be children's programs that way it'll be a lot clearer to understand. I don't understand it.

Chairperson: Thank you Mr. Iqaqrialu. Mr. Picco

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Again maybe it's the verb that it's been used, I'll try to explain it this way. When we talk about 2.1 million under Child, Family and Special Need Services, that's basically mental health for children across Nunavut.

Everyone in the three regions, that's what that's for. When we talked about Children's Programs which is 3.2, that David has just been talking about, that was for children in care. This is for children who might be foster children, or they were in abusive relationships, or they are being taken care of by this government or maybe in the South and paid for by this government.

Again three regions divide it, I think the problem here is in the verb. We said it's being used, this money goes directly to the health boards and they use it. I mean I had to stay, personally I had a foster child who's under one of these programs, so I know a little bit about how it worked. So I don't know if that explains it, there's no mystery here as David is correct, the use of verbiage the words that are used to explain, maybe they are not clear as it could be or as concise. Thank you Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Picco. Mr. Iqaqrialu

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairperson. Now I understand what it contains. Thank you Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. I have only one name on the list now. Mr. O'Brien.

Mr. O'Brien: Thank you Mr. Chairperson. I'll be brief in my comments. Mr. Minister after discussing that epidemiology, I'd like to focus now on epidemiology and I'm just wondering if there's any work being done to review some of the problems that some young children have in the communities with rashes and facial growths and so on. If there's any studies as to what can be done to prevent it.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. O'Brien. Mr. Picco

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairperson. Mr. Chairperson epidemiology is the study of skin and I know that I'm not a skin expert, Mr. Chairperson. There are different reasons of course for rashes and so on, again in the budget for this department, there's no detail on if we're studying skin rashes in the communities in particular.

What I can assure to the member, what I can commit to the member, is that if he's experiencing any abnormal rashes, I would be more than happy Mr. Chairperson, take him with my van parked outside to the Regional Health Board to the hospital here and introduce him to some of the fine medical professionals and we have on hand to help with that embarrassing but yet not unique rash problem. Thank you Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Picco. Mr. O'Brien

Mr. O'Brien: Thank you Mr. Chairperson. That's hard to match, Mr. Picco. On a more serious note, I'm still curious is there any research being done on the some of the problems that some young children do have.

We've noticed this in some of the communities for years. This seems to be ongoing, I think it's a fairly serious issue and it comes to a point, I think it's becoming an accepted situation over the years and it's a very unfortunate for the young children to have to go through this and there doesn't seem to be any kind of treatment for this point. We should be looking at some preventative measures about what causes this instead of just accepting it. Thank you Mr. Picco any rashes that I may have, or come upon, I'll leave it at that. Thank you

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. O'Brien. Mr. Picco.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairperson. Mr. Chairman, I thank the Member for his earlier question indeed, sometimes after this process we sometimes have to have a little levity and I appreciate that.

I will commit right now Mr. Chairperson as I had mentioned earlier today, our Chief Medical Officer starts tomorrow and if there is a concern with skin disease of any type or whatever, this is one of the things we can bring up to the Chief Medical Officer so I've made a note of it and when the Chief Medical Officer starts tomorrow I will mention it to him about the problems with the skin diseases and indeed have a look at it and if there's any forthcoming information, I will commit right now Mr. Chairperson to inform the

Honourable member of the situation regarding rashes and his own. Thank you Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Picco. Mr. Iqaqrialu

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairperson. Under 9 million 575 thousand the heading starts with the community health programs. The translation literally states that the community in order to have healthy communities. Is that a fact, are we going to provide this service so that there could be healthier communities, is that what the fund is for? Maybe perhaps you could explain what the community health program is.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Iqaqrialu. Mr. Picco

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairperson. Mr. Chairperson the member is very observant, we just caught a typo in the documents, indeed that's not what community health programs is, community wellness is there so the member has very sharp eyes, he is correct. Again we're looking at programs done at the community health level, for example alcohol education programs, programs to inform the residents of Nunavut about the dangers of the consumption of alcohol for example, FAS or FAE, awareness programs. Community awareness programs on specific issues, the member's correct it is not lying here that 9.575 million is not for community wellness. Thank you Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Picco. Mr. Iqaqrialu

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairperson. Yes, this program 9 million the Inuktitut version is different from the way you responded to me. So it's quite similar to the program we had earlier, the community wellness program. If this program is going to be allotted, is this fund going to be made available through applications or is it going to be just allotted to the communities or the boards. Thank you Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Iqaqrialu. Mr. Minister

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairperson. According to translation I think to 10 or 11 to community wellness so maybe that's what we should have been referring to. Under this one this 9.575 for example they'd run the spousal assault homes for family violence programs. That's what is covered on this when we say community health programs. For example that's how we fund them and again it's Nunavut wide that's not specific to one region, I don't know if that makes it more clear. Thank you Mr. Chairperson.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Picco. Mr. Iqaqrialu

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairperson. I don't know what date it was during our session. We discussed the women's shelter. I think we have to have good general direction for this. I hope this money will be used for shelters and things like that. I'll just conclude with that Mr. Chairperson. Thank you

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Iqaqrialu. I think that was more of a comment than a question. I would like to get back to the main estimates. On page 10-10 detail of grants and contributions. That's just an information item. Going to 10-11 detail of work performed on behalf of third parties.

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson (interpretation): I will go on to 10-3 detail of expenditures, operations and maintenance, total operations and maintenance 117 million and 427 thousand.

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson (interpretation): Total capital 2 million 188 thousand, total expenditures 119 million 615 thousand.

Some Members: Agreed.

>>Applause

Chairperson (interpretation): Do you agree that this departments main estimates are completed.

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson (interpretation): With Ed Picco's department and his two officials I would like to thank all of them and their department for responding very well to the members questions. Thank you, Mr. Picco and your officials.

Hon. Ed Picco: Thank you Mr. Chairperson. I'd like to thank the members for their support and consideration of the budget. Sometimes when we talk about the department of health, there's a lot of sickness, there's death and dying. It can be very depressing, but I want to say to you is that a lot of exciting things are happening in health.

When I met with Mr. Allan Rock, the Minister of Health in Ottawa, he pointed out that he had gone to Ottawa General Hospital and he was watching a patient from Pond Inlet on the video conferencing screen being looked at by the doctor in Ottawa and it saved us a trip.

So I think were doing some exciting things here in Nunavut with medicine and tele-medicine and I think we should be thankful for that and I am thankful as a Member of this House to have this opportunity to serve you as your health Minister and work toward a comprehensive system, on epidemiology with the Deputy and Mr. O'Brien over the next several years. Thank you Mr. Chairperson.

>>Applause

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you. We have completed the department. Mr. Picco's department is completed. According to the departmental appearances we should be starting the Department of Education. Before we start with that department we'll take a five minute break.

>>Committee Recessed at 5.01 and resumed at 5.12 pm.

Chairperson (interpretation): We are still trying to get education officials over here, we should be returning to our seats. Mr. Akasuk

Mr. Akasuk: Thank you Mr. Chairperson. What I would like to say right now is I would like to hear the opening comments by the Minister of the department and also get the committee report read in. Then we can ask our questions and make general comments tomorrow Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Akasuk. So let's clarify that because we have only 1 hour. Mr. Akasuk, are you making a motion to go ahead?

Mr. Akasuk (interpretation): Yes, I move that we deal with the opening remarks by the Minister of Education.

Chairperson (interpretation): Is there a seconder for the motion. He doesn't need a seconder. Those in favour of the motion. The motion is carried. Let's move on to the Department of Education then and the Minister of Education can make his opening remarks.

Opening Comments for the Department of Education 1999-2000 Main Estimates

Hon. James Arvaluk (interpretation): I have to take my glasses off because I use them as hearing aids. Mr. Chairman, our staff was not readily available, but I think it won't be too difficult to deal with this department.

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to present the main estimates for the Department of Education for the fiscal year 1999/2000. The department provides services in three areas; Early Childhood and School Services; Adult Education and Post Secondary Services; and income support.

Mr. Chairman, because of my personal and historic perspective of the need for quality educational opportunities for all the people of Nunavut, I am grateful to the Premier for assigning me to this portfolio. I have a great interest in Education and a genuine desire to serve Nunavummiut. I am committed to make this department representative, accountable and productive in its mandate.

Our mission is to provide excellence in education and training opportunities that will give all Nunavummiut the opportunity to learn so that they may benefit from their past and

create their own futures. This will help Nunavummiut in achieving personal fulfilment and becoming a productive and prosperous society.

To achieve this, the department uses a network of publicly funded and supported day-care centres in many communities. Support to schools through funding to Divisional Education Councils. A network of Community Learning Centres and regional campuses funded through Nunavut Arctic College. The department also funds regional education offices that provide educational and training opportunities as well as income support services to the public.

The budget before you is a status quo budget; it maintains existing programs and services. Through reorganization of existing resources we will be able to streamline our operations in time.

Mr. Chairman, the Department of Education budget for the 1999-2000 fiscal year totals 138.6 million. This includes 21.4 million for Adult Education and Post Secondary, 87.6 million for Early Childhood and School Services and regional operations, 26.1 million for Income Support programs and 6.4 million for Capital expenditures.

Mr. Chairman, the following are highlights from this year's budget.

- 17 new teaching positions will be created across Nunavut to help relieve over crowding in community schools.
- Nunavut Arctic College will have a small increase to cover a newly negotiated salary increase that has come into effect.
- A small increase in capital spending to the Middle School in Iqaluit will allow the department to have this school ready for occupancy sooner than originally planned.

Mr. Chairman, the Income Support program makes up 19% of the department's budget. We need to find solutions to reduce the numbers of individuals and families who rely on this funding. My department and my colleague from Sustainable Development will be looking at this program this year to find ways to reducing the dependency up on Income Support.

Capital spending this year is not at the level that was originally prepared under the GNWT 5-year Capital Plan. To meet budget objectives the department used the following criteria:

- projects that were already under construction
- projects that had a legal commitment
- projects with a health or safety issue

Not all projects were able to go forward this year. The department is planning to do a capital plan study that will address the long-term needs of our communities.

Decentralization initiatives will produce the following results. I have a small Headquarters' team to manage all program areas. It is small because we have a

commitment to decentralization and when fully functional will be located in three communities; Iqaluit with 26 persons, Arviat with 29 persons and Baker Lake with 4. We have staff in Arviat now. However, the office space is not ready for them and some are currently working out of their homes.

The education regional office in Iqaluit will move to Pangnirtung when the new office building is completed in the spring/summer of 2000. This will move 22 positions to Pangnirtung. The Income Support positions are not included in this number. Nunavut Arctic College Head Office will be moving to Rankin Inlet in the fall of this year pending budget. This will transfer 11.5 positions to that community.

With the restructuring of the three Divisional Education Councils. Education will still maintain a regional presence. This restructuring will be detailed over the next months in the forthcoming implementation plan.

At a recent meeting of the Nunavut Arctic College Board of Governors, a decision was made to review the structure of the College. Any restructuring will be done within the college's existing resources. This activity will bring the College closer to the people it serves. The College is an important component in the delivery of services to residents. The department is supportive of this restructuring and looks forward to working with the College as it shapes itself to fulfil its mandate and the mandate of the Nunavut government mandate in the delivery of education and training opportunities.

Mr. chairman, there are still challenges ahead. Increasing the number of Inuit throughout the department is our number one focus. We are in fair shape at this time, as of December 1998: there were 131 Inuit teachers and 115 Aboriginal Language Specialists on the teaching staff of schools out of a total of 665 or 37% Inuit employment. At our headquarters, Inuit currently hold 7 of the 12 positions filled, or 58% Inuit employment.

Mr. Chairman, the department is committed to the concept of Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit. As we increase the number of Inuit teachers in our schools, and as new curricula are developed based on Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit, this will ensure that our children grow up knowing who they are.

I was pleased to note Mr. Chairman that any of the recent graduates of the Aboriginal Language Specialist program are elders from Arviat. This is indeed good news. Elders are receiving recognition, and will make a valuable contribution to our schools and to our children.

Mr. Chairman, I have challenged my staff to take a leadership role in this Government. I have challenged them to deliver programs and services to citizens can benefit from their pasts and create their own futures. I have challenged them to find ways to allow the citizens of Nunavut to achieve personal fulfilment and to promote a productive and prosperous society.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

>>Applause

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Minister of Education for Nunavut. We will now go ahead with the committee report regarding Education. Mr. Nutarak this is your committees' department. Mr. Nutarak.

Mr. Nutarak (interpretation): I think Mr. Puqiqnak was going to do the opening remarks.

Chairperson (interpretation): Mr. Puqiqnak.

Mr. Puqiqnak (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Chairman. I don't have the Inuktitut copy of the report from the committee. Okay, Mr. O'Brien I think is going to be reading the opening remarks from the committee, or motions. You can go ahead if you are going to be reading the motions.

Report of the Standing Committee on Culture, Education and Health

Mr. O'Brien: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I will ask the members and the staff to bear with me, I will try to summarize where I can.

The Honourable James Arvaluk, Minister of Education and departmental officials met with the Standing Committee on May 1, 1999. The Minister spoke eloquently about his hopes for the new Government of Nunavut and for his department. The Standing Committee appreciated the preparation by the Minister and his Department, which was evident at our meeting. The Members thanked him for being so open and look forward to a good working relationship with him and his staff.

Business Plan/ Operations/ Programs

The Department of Education has an O&M Budget of \$132,132,487 of which \$122,799,000 is grants and contributions to other levels for delivery of education programs, early childhood programs, adult education and Income support.

Inuit Leadership in Education

The Standing Committee reviewed the draft Business Plan and commends the Department of Education for having the most ambitious and concrete Inuit Employment Plan. This Department has, through its NTEP and other programs, been able to achieve 34% Inuit teachers, and 4 out of 42 school principals are Inuit.

They want to be at 84% Inuit Elementary Schools and Adult educator positions in 3 years. The Standing Committee was deeply impressed with this Department's focus on Inuit leadership in their Business Plan and their track record in this regard. Members

agree that teachers play a pivotal role in every community and have a huge influence on our children.

Inuit teachers, especially those who were born here in Nunavut and who know the people and the land, are important role models, ensuring that Inuit culture and language is imparted to our students. They are the foundation of our land and of passing on traditional knowledge to our students.

They are also community leaders and provide stability in our communities. The more Inuit community teachers, the less recruitment needed from the south and the less we will face difficulties in this regard. The more Inuit teachers who move into management, training and curriculum development, the more culturally appropriate the whole education system. The Standing Committee supports the Minister and the Department of Education for their Inuit Leadership Plans.

The Standing Committee also wants to ensure that Nunavummiut are being directed into the future jobs in Nunavut. There are 655 jobs in Nunavut for teachers, at December 1998, plus the positions for principals, College instructors, school administrators and other senior managers, all of which are well-paying, professional positions.

While the last thirty years have seen tremendous increases in the numbers of Inuit in these positions, in order to achieve a representative workforce of 84%, 273 new teachers need to be trained and retained for jobs which exist right now. The Minister noted that at present, Inuit teachers are almost entirely in the primary schools.

Therefore, in addition to the current NTEP programs that will continue to be run through Nunavut Arctic College, the Minister presented several "enhancement" programs, which his department would run if more resources were available. These would include providing existing teachers with the one year specialization to enable them to teach in upper years from Grade 7 to Grade 12, principle certification training, support to new teachers to reduce attrition and expanded community based teacher training. This Department has concrete plans, a proven track record of delivery, critically important jobs at the community level, Inuit employment possibilities and a direct link to ensuring *Inuit Qaujimaqatuqangit* is incorporated into their curriculum and programs.

Cabinet Decision to Abolish the Regional Education Boards

The Standing Committee briefly reviewed information on the Cabinet decision to abolish the Regional Education Boards. While the opportunity to save money and give more accountability to elected officials is clearly one that Members support, the Standing Committee was concerned at the lack of an operational or implementation plan at this time and had many questions afterwards.

There were small charts projecting savings, but no details on how those numbers were generated. There were assurances that no current employees of the Boards would lose their jobs and that everyone would be provided other opportunities within the

Department, but no plan was presented showing how this would happen and whether these positions would remain in their current communities.

There will be more accountability to the elected Minister, but no complaints procedure was presented. Members wondered if the department will create an ombudsman type of person to co-ordinate and streamline complaints to the Minister.

Members are very concerned that this change in structure, not lay the foundation for the Department in Iqaluit to take control away from the communities and the regions regarding Education. Members do not want Iqaluit to in effect become another Yellowknife, with decisions made by officials far away from the community.

There were assurances that the community District Education Authorities would have more of a role to play, but no information was presented on what that role would be or what additional support would be provided to enable them to carry out this expanded role. Will Hamlets be given a position on the DEAs or will the membership of the DEAs be altered in any way?

What will be the checks and balances in this new system, for individuals and communities with respect to their DEAs and the Department? How does this affect the Department's commitment to decentralization? Members also wondered whether adult education programs would also be brought into the department. The Standing Committee therefore looks forward to receiving the draft legislation and reviewing more complete implementation plans at that time.

Formula for Funding

Standing Committee members were advised that a formula inherited from the GNWT will influence the allocation of funding to each District Education Council for this fiscal year. However, only a bulk number was given for each region and no further detail was provided. The Department did provide more detailed hard-copy information, with complete break-downs of programs to our Committee members, but before the Committee could study it, Finance Officials instructed that they be removed from our binders. This was a source of frustration to Members, as noted above. Members requested detailed information on the formula for funding, by community for schools, pre-school programs and Arctic College, and Department committed to provide an analysis of the formula.

Stay in school programs/ Support for people who did not complete high school

Standing Committee members noted that there are many people who have not completed their high school and sometimes these people are on social assistance. They wondered what short and longer term plans the Department had to stop people from dropping out of school. At the same time, Members also observed that sometimes people who may not have a lot of formal education, have excellent skills as a welder or mechanic or have traditional skills.

They wondered why more of these people in their communities are not hired by Arctic College to instruct courses in their home communities to unilingual Inuit. Members also want to encourage trades training to students who have not completed their high school diploma. The Minister responded that the Department will be trying many new methods to encourage people to stay in school.

He also stated that there will be Arctic College programs designed to encourage “productive choices” for people on income assistance, and that an inventory would be created of people in Nunavut who are knowledgeable in different fields.

The Minister noted that his department was very open to reviewing the school calendar year so that it would conform more to the Inuit lifestyle and agreed that it might have a positive effect on keeping students in school. He also asked the Members for their advice as to what sort of directive should be given to parents about their role in keeping children in school. The Standing Committee members look forward to reviewing these issues and programs in the future.

Adult Education Programs

As noted earlier, Standing Committee Members want to encourage training for students in the areas in which there are jobs in the communities, such as teachers and nurses, trades people, or opportunities for self-employment, such as in jewellery and carving. In follow-up discussions, the Standing Committee expressed concerns about the success rates of Arctic College students and programs.

They would like to receive information on how many students are completing the Arctic College Programs and how many are getting jobs in their areas of training, following graduation. Members are aware of the difficulties facing families that relocate to the regional centres to take programs, such as obtaining adequate housing, and know that many students return to their communities before they complete their programs. They would like to see more information on the benefits in running programs in communities, including more on the job training programs. At the same time, Members want to ensure that those students who wish to pursue post-secondary programs in southern universities and colleges are encouraged and supported. Nunavut may not be able to run some of these specialized programs at this time.

Curriculum

Standing Committee members welcomed the announcement by the Department that they will have a 10-year curriculum development plan, which will be revised on an annual basis. The Department also noted that they would be working with language specialists with CLEY in developing materials and that materials would be provided to the community Teacher Learning Centres.

Members know that the Department of Education has developed curriculum in the past that has had a strong cultural component such as *Inuuqatigiit* and look forward to these new developments. Some concern was expressed about the need to incorporate different dialects into the curriculum development or to support local communities to adapt materials to their dialect.

Members are also very supportive of Inuktitut language training at all levels [K-12, Arctic College, workplace], both to Inuit and non-Inuit. They want these language programs widely available. As noted above, members want to encourage all dialects to be promoted, preserved and taught. The Standing Committee Members look forward to hearing more about these initiatives in the future and note that the Minister stated that the curriculum changes would have to be approved by the Legislative Assembly.

As noted above, Members want to encourage Elders to play more of a role in the schools and they observed that the Department of CLEY does not seem to have funds for this function. The Minister stated that the Department of Education is looking at how Elders can play more of a role in the schools and in particular, he noted they are also looking at how to properly store tapes and interviews with Elders regarding legends and traditional knowledge. He noted that CBC and IBC also have important footage of our Elders and even jurisdictions outside of Nunavut have this information. He noted that next February, the Department would be looking at this and Members look forward to hearing more about these ideas.

Children with special needs/ pre-school children

Members of the Standing Committee had specific questions regarding the Government of Nunavut's plans for providing pre-school programs and for supporting children with special needs. The Minister noted that his Department will be looking at these programs more in the future and Members look forward to hearing more about these when information becomes available.

Capital Plan

There are 13 projects planned for a total value of \$6,451,000. The Standing Committee reviewed the Departments commitments for capital expenditures during this fiscal year very briefly, as Members did not receive the details or Inuktitut versions in time for our pre-meeting preparation. However, Members thank the Department for providing Inuktitut information at the time of the presentation. It

is the Committee's understanding that for the most part, the selection of these "Priority A" capital projects was primarily based on the fact that under the GNWT, contracts were entered into or other steps had been taken in furtherance of these projects, or they were required because of safety or other legal requirements. The Standing Committee was frustrated at not being able to play more of a role in reviewing these capital proposals and had questions about priorities. For example, how a \$250,000 link between two buildings

in one community could have priority over additional space needs for classrooms in another community.

The Standing Committee welcomed the Department's commitment to Five Year and even longer term [20 year] capital planning. Members wondered how each of their communities fit into the plan. It was unclear as to the status of the GNWT Five-year plan in which some communities could have expected capital projects in the near future.

Members observed that there are no capital projects planned for Kivalliq this year, and concerns were expressed about outstanding safety and health issues affecting schools in Clyde River and Gjoa Haven. Members welcomed a commitment from the Minister to involve them in the development of the capital plan in future and his statement that information would be shared with MLA's in order to have an open dialogue.

The Committee would also like to encourage the Department to conduct an audit of what facilities are in each community. This idea was presented by the Department of Health and Social Services and the Standing Committee supports it for all capital facilities. Members would like to know when schools were built or had additions, their overall condition, and how much was spent.

Members would also like details as to what specific facilities there are in each school – for example, number of classrooms, size of gymnasium, library, specialized rooms or equipment, etc. A question that needs to be answered is: What is the minimum threshold that each community should have in facilities for their students? While some of these requirements may depend on the number of children in a community, Members want to ensure that all smaller communities have basic facilities, before any additional facilities are put into the larger regional centres.

Equitable principles need to be developed to make these decisions. The Department also noted that forced growth and demographic projections in some communities will influence the needs of some communities, and the Standing Committee would like to receive more information about this, as it is available.

Mr. Chairman that concludes the general comments and I would ask that I be permitted to read the motions that were put forth by the committee.

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. O'Brien. The motions, I think you can just proceed with the motions.

Committee Motion 29 – 1 (2): Support for Enhanced Inuit Leadership Programs

Mr. O'Brien: Thank you Mr. Chairman. The Standing Committee on Education put forward seven motions. The first one Mr. Chairman.

I move that as a first priority, if additional resources can be found, the programs identified by the Department of Education for enhanced Inuit leadership in the schools programs be supported by the Government of Nunavut this fiscal year, particularly the one-year specialization for existing teachers to be able to teach in the higher grades, principle certification, additional community teacher education programs, and support to new teachers.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. O'Brien. First motion, any comments to the motion. All those in favour. Motion is carried. Thank you. Next motion.

Committee Motion 30 – 1 (2): GN Provide Detailed Implementation Plan to the Standing Committee

Mr. O'Brien: Thank you Mr. Chairman.

I move that the Committee recommends that the Government of Nunavut provide a detailed implementation plan to the Standing Committee, which includes information on: how the Regional Education Boards will be phased out, specifics on the cost savings of abolishing the Boards, staffing plans for the current employees, complaints procedure to the Minister, support for the DEA's and projected impact on the communities where the Board offices are currently located.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. O'Brien. Mr. O'Brien moves, any comments to the motion. All those in favour. Motion is carried. Mr. O'Brien, I believe you have five more motions.

Our interpreter is having difficulty keeping up, I don't mind the speed that you are going, but we have to be mindful of the interpreter. So please slow down a bit.

Committee Motion 31 – 1 (2): GN Strength Community Empowerment

Mr. O'Brien: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, motion number three.

I move that the Committee recommends that the Government of Nunavut strengthen community empowerment, provide more authority at the community level on education issues, and present very clear plans as to how this will happen under the Departmental control.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. O'Brien. Third motion by Mr. O'Brien. All those in favour. Motion is carried. Thank you. Fourth motion Mr. O'Brien.

Committee Motion 32 – 1 (2): GN Develop Communication Package

Mr. O'Brien: Mr. Chairman I move that the committee recommends that the Government of Nunavut develop a communication package for communities and

Nunavummiut, including radio, TV, written materials and visits by the Minister to communities and key meetings, such as the Kitikmeot Leaders' Forum.

Chairperson (interpretation): Fourth motion. Questions or comments. All those in favour. Carried. Thank you. Mr. O'Brien, fifth motion.

Committee Motion 33 – 1 (2): Savings be Retained by Department

Mr. O'Brien: Mr. Chairman I move that the Committee recommends that any savings realized from abolishing Regional Education Boards be retained by the Department of Education.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. O'Brien. Fifth motion by Mr. O'Brien. Comments to the motion. All those in favour. Motion is carried. Sixth motion Mr. O'Brien, again.

Committee Motion 34 – 1 (2): Cost-Benefit Analysis

Mr. O'Brien: Mr. Chairman, I move that this committee recommends that cost-benefit analysis be prepared on various programs run by Arctic College, both in comparison to community-based training and training in southern institutions, and in terms of success rates for students in graduation and obtaining jobs.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. O'Brien. Sixth motion. Comments or questions. All those in favour. Motion is carried. Mr. O'Brien, seventh motion, last motion, go ahead.

Committee Motion 35 – 1 (2): Dept. of Education Audit Existing Facilities

Mr. O'Brien: Thank you Mr. Chairman. It is the last motion, bear with me it is eight pages long, just kidding.

Mr. Chairman, I move that this committee recommends that the Department of Education conduct an audit of existing educational facilities in each community, including when they were built and what capital was expended;

and further that the Department of Education develop a list of minimum facilities requirements for each community;

and further that the Department of Education use information on demographics and forced growth to project where communities will require additional facilities;

and further that the Department of Education develop a long-term capital plan which considers every community in Nunavut and that the Standing Committee be consulted in the development of this plan.

Thank you.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. O'Brien, to the motion. Comments to the last motion. Those in favour. Motion is carried. At this moment we are finished with the motions on Education. Any comments, we are still in our hour. Mr. Tootoo, I believe you were first, go ahead.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I would like to move that we report progress. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairperson (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Tootoo. Mr. Tootoo moves to adjourn and report progress. All those in favour. Opposed. Motion is carried. So we will go back to the Speaker, if the Speaker is available.

Speaker (interpretation): Please be seated. Item 20 on our agenda, Report of Committee of the Whole. Mr. Iqaqrialu.

Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Iqaqrialu (interpretation): Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Bills 1 and 2 were being considered, and also committee reports 1, 2, 3 and 4 were considered and I move that the report of the committee of the whole be concurred with.

Speaker (interpretation): There is a motion on the floor, seconder. Mr. Picco. Those in favour of the motion. Opposed. Motion carried. Item 21, Third Reading of Bills, Item 22, Orders of the Day. Mr. Clerk.

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Clerk: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Orders of the Day for June 1, Tuesday, meeting of Full Caucus 9 o'clock in the morning in the Cadet Hall.

Orders of the Day, Tuesday June 1, 1999

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motions
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters:
 - Bill 1 - Appropriation Act 1999/2000.
 - Bill 2 - Boards of Management Dissolution Act
 - Bill 3 - Divisional Education Council Dissolution Act
 - Standing Committee Reports 1-1(2), 2-1(2), 3-1(2) 4-1(2)
20. Report of Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

Speaker: Thank you Mr. Clerk. This house stands adjourned until June 1, at 10.30 in the morning.

Sergeant At Arms.

>>House Adjourned at 6.00 pm.

