

Ministry of Health  
and Long-Term Care

Office of the Associate Minister

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Ministère de la Santé  
et des Soins de longue durée

Bureau de la ministre associée

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Gary Scripnick  
President, Northern Ontario Service Delivers Association  
220 Algonquin Blvd. East  
Timmins ON P4N 1B3

Fern Dominelli  
CAO, Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board  
210 Mead Blvd.  
Espanola ON P5E 1R9

Alan Spacek  
Mayor, Kapuskasing  
President, Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities  
88 Riverside Drive  
Kapuskasing ON P5N 1B3

Dear Mr. Scripnick, Mr. Dominelli, and Mayor Spacek:

I would like to thank the representatives from NOSDA, FONOM, and the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board for meeting with me at the Association of Municipalities of Ontario Annual Conference in London, Ontario, in August 2014.

At the meeting, you discussed non-urgent patient transfers. The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (ministry) understands your concerns around this issue. The information that you provided has been shared with the relevant program area within my ministry. Where appropriate, ministry staff will follow up directly with you.

The Provincial Government remains committed to enhancing the quality and safety of non-ambulance transportation services. On December 11, 2013, the Minister of Government Services introduced the *Strengthening and Improving Government Act*, 2014, proposing to amend the Highway Traffic Act to establish a comprehensive, provincially-administered regime to regulate stretcher transportation services (STS). The legislation, which was set aside when the provincial election was called in May

2014, included the establishment of inspection, certification and registration standards for vehicles, drivers and STS providers. The government has committed to reintroducing the proposed legislative and regulatory amendments.

The MOHLTC has made funding available to the Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) through the \$20M Small and Rural Hospital Transformation Fund to improve service integration and transformation in rural and northern Ontario. With this funding, LHINs work with their health service providers and community members to determine local priorities for their regions. As health system managers for the region, the LHINs are evaluating the supply of and demand for health care in their communities. I urge you to continue working with your LHINs to ensure that your perspectives are fully understood and get included in their planning and service delivery deliberations.

Once again, thank you for taking the time to share your concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dipika Damerla', written in a cursive style.

Dipika Damerla  
Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care

c. Catharine Gapp, Chief of Staff, Associate Minister's Office