

Ministry of Health
and Long-Term Care

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Ministère de la Santé
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HLTC2972IT-2015-146

Mr. Iain Angus
Chair, Northern Ontario Service Delivers Association
672 Churchill Place
Thunder Bay ON P7C 5Y8

Dear Mr. Angus:

I would like to thank you and the representatives from the Northern Ontario Service Deliverers Association (NOSDA) for meeting with my Parliamentary Assistant, Indira Naidoo-Harris, at the 2015 Association of Municipalities of Ontario Conference in Niagara Falls, Ontario.

At the meeting, you discussed a "Made-in-the North" non-urgent patient transportation solution, the North East Local Health Integration Network's (LHIN) successful non-urgent transportation projects, and funding. The issues you raised have been shared with the relevant program areas within my ministry, and where appropriate, ministry staff will follow up with NOSDA staff directly.

I am familiar with the challenges that exist with regard to the availability and cost of non-urgent passenger transportation in northern and rural Ontario. I also appreciate the issues of safety and quality for inter-facility transfers and transfers between communities. Implementation discussions continue between the North East LHIN and their partners concerning their "Made-in-the-North" proposal. The Small and Rural Hospital Transformation Fund has entered its fourth year and the ministry is exploring options about how to best continue to support quality, sustainable health care across Ontario.

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care is also supporting the Ministry of Transportation as it develops legislative options to establish enforceable quality and safety standards for Stretcher Transportation Services. Bill 85 had its second reading on May 14, 2015. If passed, this Bill will amend the *Highway Traffic Act* to give the Ministry of Transportation a range of regulation-making powers to regulate Stretcher Transportation Services and prescribe standards for owners, operators, drivers and vehicles.

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Mr. Iain Angus

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

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Hoskins", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dr. Eric Hoskins
Minister

c: Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris, MPP, Halton
Mr. Mark Tishman, Minister's Office