

## **All Party Committee on Basic Income**

Meeting #4 Minutes – February 9, 2023

1:00pm – 3:00pm

West Block, Confederation Building

### **In attendance:**

Hon. John Abbott, Minister, Children, Seniors and Social Development (CSSD), Chair  
Jim Dinn, MHA, St. John's Centre  
Craig Pardy, MHA, Bonavista  
Sherry Gambin-Walsh, MHA, Placentia-St. Mary's  
Scott Reid, MHA, St. George's-Humber  
Aisling Gogan, Assistant Deputy Minister, Prevention and Early Intervention, CSSD  
Scott Fleming, Policy Analyst, Third Party Caucus  
Renee Ryan, Director, Social and Economic Well-Being, CSSD

### **Guests:**

Sister Elizabeth Davis, Co-Chair, Health Accord NL  
Dr. Pat Parfrey, Deputy Minister, Health Transformation  
Lynn Taylor, Special Advisor, Health Transformation

### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

- The Chair welcomed guests to the meeting.

### **2. Overview of Committee Work**

- ADM Gogan provided an overview of the committee's work to date:
  - Establishment of committee and identification of membership.
  - First meeting – overview of Basic Income, including research and work in other jurisdictions, information on the current social safety net and current related work by the provincial government and a discussion of terms of reference and approach of the committee.
  - Second meeting – Sheila Regehr, Chairperson of the Basic Income Canada Network, attended the meeting and shared her knowledge on Basic Income including current work happening in Canada and other countries, challenges and what the research shows.
  - Third Meeting – Sister Elizabeth Davis of Basic Income, NL attended the meeting and presented on work to date specifically related to Basic Income and their experiences working with and advocating for people in poverty.

### **3. Presentation by Health Accord NL**

- The presentation provided by Sister Elizabeth Davis included information on the social determinants of health, social spending, chronic disease issues in NL, connection between poverty and health, Health Accord Calls to Action, the importance of investment in children and youth and implementation considerations for actions related to the social determinants.

### **4. Discussion**

- Attendees discussed:
  - Basic income feedback during Health Accord consultations.
  - Potential priority areas for an incremental approach.
  - Opportunities to partner with the Federal Government.

## 5. Concluding Remarks

- Sister Elizabeth thanked the Committee for the opportunity to present and reiterated the need for a focus on the social determinants of health, including income and to guard against considering some “the deserving poor” and others not.
- The Chair thanked guests for attending and committed to re-engage once options are developed.

Only All-Party Committee members remained for the rest of the agenda.

## 6. Updates

- Approved minutes have been posted on the CSSD website. Future minutes will be posted, once approved by the committee.
- The Chair circulated a document “What we Heard from Consultation on Income and Benefits” during consultations for the Social and Economic Well-Being Plan.
- In response to a committee member’s request, CSSD staff are working with Department of Finance colleagues to finalize a document on current benefit levels. This will include provincial and federal benefits and will be circulated once ready.
- CSSD reached out to NLHC regarding the Committee’s request to meet with the Executive Directors of the NLHC Community Centres. NLHC is already planning an in-person meeting in St. John’s for late March and a meeting with the committee can be planned as part of the agenda.

## 7. Review and Approval of Minutes

- January 19, 2023 meeting – approved.

## 8. Next Steps

- Potential agenda items for future meetings:
  - MHA James Dinn recommended that Dr. Valerie Tarasuk and Tim Li of PROOF present to the committee on their research into income support and food security.
  - The Chair circulated an email from Accerta, an Ontario organization that was involved in the 2017 Ontario basic income pilot. Accerta has indicated a willingness to discuss how they could contribute to any basic income initiative in Newfoundland and Labrador.
  - The Chair circulated an email and proposal for a Basic Income for Artists program from the Executive Director of ArtsNL.
- All members were agreeable to meeting with all of these individuals / organizations. Officials will organize presentations.

Renee Ryan, Recorder