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Asked by: John Main, MLA (Arviat North-Whale Cove)

Asked of: Hon. George Hickes, Minister of Health

Number: 15-5(2)

Date: November 8, 2018

Subject: Community Health Centre Closures

1) With respect to the 2016-2017, 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 (to date) fiscal years:

a. On how many occasions during each fiscal year were Community Health Centres in Nunavut closed during regular business hours to non-emergency patients for a period of time exceeding 24 hours?

Response:

Total Number of Closures*	
2016-17	66
2017-18	54
2018-19 (until November 2018)	55
*Due to differences in reporting, this is a rough estimate based on availability of data.	

The Department of Health does not have a formal tracking system for closures and reduced services in health centres across the territory. As of December 2018, the reporting of closures and reduced services has been standardized.

b. In which community or communities did the closures occur?

Response:

Emergencies occur in each community and at times the Health Centres are closed for that reason. Most communities will experience some reduction in services during staffing shortages. Currently, the precise number of occurrences is unavailable.

Communities listed as not having closures represent those that had no data reported.

Table A: Reported Number of Times Health Centres have had Reduced Services or Closures

Community	2016/17			2017/18			2018/19 (until November 2018)		
	# of Closures	# of Reduced Services	# of Times Reduced & Closure	# of Closures	# of Reduced Services	# of Times Reduced & Closure	# of Closures	# of Reduced Services	# of Times Reduced & Closure
Baffin									
Arctic Bay	4	-	4	5	-	5	2	-	2
Cape Dorset	0	-	0	1	-	1	8	-	8
Clyde River	10	-	10	4	-	4	15	-	15
Grise Fiord	0	-	0	0	-	0	0	-	0
Hall Beach	6	-	6	5	-	5	9	-	9
Igloolik	6	-	6	3	-	3	4	-	4
Kimmirut	6	-	6	5	-	5	2	-	2
Pangnirtung	8	-	8	0	-	0	0	-	0
Pond Inlet	14	-	14	8	-	8	2	-	2
Qikiqtarjuaq	3	-	3	6	-	6	1	-	1
Resolute Bay	0	-	0	0	-	0	0	-	0
Total	57		57	37		37	43		43
Kitikmeot									
Cambridge Bay	2	3	5	2	8	10	2	5	7
Gjoa Haven	0	5	5	3	3	6	0	2	2
Kugaaruk	2	8	10	2	10	12	3	7	10
Kugluktuk	3	7	10	6	9	15	4	5	9
Taloyoak	2	8	10	2	11	13	1	7	8
Total	9	31	40	15	41	56	10	26	36
Kivalliq									
Arviat	0	2	2	1	0	1	1	0	1
Baker Lake	0	1	1	0	2	2	1	2	3
Chesterfield Inlet	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Coral Harbour	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	2	2
Rankin Inlet	0	2	2	0	2	2	0	0	0
Naujaat	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sanikiluaq	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	2	2
Whale Cove	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	5	5	2	7	9	2	6	8
Total	66	36	102	54	48	102	55	32	87

Notes:

These are rough estimates based on the availability of information. These numbers represent reported numbers. Actuals may be higher.

Baffin only reported closures. Not all Health Centres had data on this. Some HCs reporting "0" did have zero closures while others could not report.

b. What was the approximate length of each closure?

Response:

When there is an emergency that keeps numerous health centre staff on the job for extended periods of time, staff are required to have a rest period to ensure the safety and quality of care provided and ensure compliance with the union contract. Reduced services are based on these circumstances, and are not anticipated to last 24 hours or longer. These closures are often related to a combination of a reduction in the level of staffing and emergency incidents in a community.

There are some exceptions including the Government of Nunavut Holiday Closure.

When a health centre has a reduction in services, this means that the facility is open during its usual hours; however, there is a reduction in the number of appointments available and clinics run. Reduced services are often due to reduced staffing levels and typically range from a couple days to two weeks.

c. What was the primary reason for each closure?

Response:

The primary reason for closure is reduced staffing levels. This would most often represent those closures or reduces services for greater than 24 hours. Furthermore, when an emergency occurs that requires extended nursing services, this has a short term impact on the level of service available to the community while nurses obtain rest in order to resume safe provision of services. This type of closure would most likely be less than 24 hours. The health centres are also required to close to emergency services only when it is dictated by weather closures as outlined by GN policy.