



GOVERNMENT OF
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

Department of
Health and Community Services
Office of the Deputy Minister

July 27, 2006

Mr. Rob Ritter, Executive Director
NF & LB Medical Association
164 MacDonald Drive
St. John's, NL A1A 4B3

Dear Mr. Ritter

Re: Provincial Pathologists

This letter is in follow-up to feedback my office has received from Treasury Board following their reconsideration of our proposal to address recruitment and retention concerns for the specialty of Pathology.


Treasury Board has re-affirmed their decision to have an external consultant undertake a review of the specialty group, with the scope of the review to include workload, workload effort, number of pathologists required for the province and compensation. Classification, Organization & Management Division of the PSS has been directed to work with this consultant during the review process. Any recommendations that arise regarding the timing and amount of salary adjustment would then be referred to Treasury Board for further consideration. The matter of recruitment and retention of pathologists is part of a larger issue facing Treasury Board with respect to 'hard-to-fill' public sector positions.

The next step in the process is to contract with the external consultant. I understand that departmental officials had some preliminary discussions with your organization as to who has the breadth of knowledge, experience and time to dedicate to this project so that it can be expedited as quickly as possible. Buy-in from the physician group will be critical to this process.

A further consideration is whether or not a small working group should be struck to oversee this work, including how it would link into the current physician resource planning exercise being undertaken by the Department and led by Dr. Ed Hunt.

Once you've had a chance to consider the points raised in this letter, I look forward to your suggestions on how this review should proceed and any role for the NLMA. Please note that completion of the review is a priority for the Minister.

Yours truly,



JOHN G. ABBOTT
Deputy Minister

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cc Dr. Ed Hunt