

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

.....

Time for commitment to long-term care facility for Trinity Conception

(COPY)

**Hon. Jerome Kennedy,
MHA Minister of
Finance**

Dear Minister:

As you travel throughout the province I am sure many issues will be presented to you for consideration and I fully understand that all wishes can't be dealt with in this year's budget.

However, I wish to put forward a submission that is a major concern for the Trinity South and Conception Bay North area.

The issue that I reference is a long-term care home.

In 2001, planning began for a new long term-care home for the Carbonear area. It was recommended that a new 211-bed long-term care home be built. The Regional Board and the department ranked this facility as a top priority along with Corner Brook.

Since that time, government continues to modernize long-term care infrastructure. New long-term care homes are being constructed in Corner Brook, Clarenville, and Happy Valley/Goose Bay. Renovations are being done at the Blue Crest Home in Grand Bank and redevelopment/new construction is planned at the long-term care home in Lewisporte, all of which I totally support. But a facility has to be built in the Conception Bay North area to replace the Interfaith (Citizens Home) and the Harbour Lodge.

Both facilities have served the area well, but the time is long overdue for replacement.

In 2007, a new service delivery and capital infrastructure plan for the Northwest Avalon, including St. John's and Carbonear, was developed by an external consultant. The consultant recom-

mended a three-story long-term care home located on the Carbonear Hospital site with capacity for 180 beds and three dementia bungalows with 10 beds each for a total of 210 beds. The department requested one million dollars for its 2008/09 budget submission to finalize a master program. However, Budget 2008 did not allocate any funding for this capital work, but instead allocated one million dollars for planning two new long term care homes for St. John's.

Government's blueprint commitment was to upgrade long-term care homes across this province where there is a demonstrated need on a priority basis. Carbonear was confirmed in 2001 and again in 2007 to be on a priority basis. However, we have seen seven other facilities either newly built, renovated or being planned since Carbonear was considered as a

top priority.

Many of our residents see loved ones having to be placed in facilities outside the area. I am asking that government listen to the wishes of all those who have signed petitions and all the various groups and organizations who support a new facility. The professionals who work in these facilities require better, as do the residents.

I trust government will make a commitment in this year's budget for a new long-term care home for the people of Trinity South and Conception Bay North.

Thank you for your consideration of this major concern.

I look forward to an announcement in this year's budget and hope the recommendations of external consultants become a reality.

**Roland Butler,
MHA, Port de Grave**