

SEP
17
2009

Jones Seeks Info on Cost Saving Recommendations



Opposition Leader Yvonne Jones is calling on government to release details of what has been recommended as cost saving measures by all four health boards. She says people deserve to know how their communities will be impacted. Health Minister Paul Oram confirmed this week that Central Health was not the only board asked to submit suggestions on cost savings for the budget. The communities of Lewisporte and Flower's Cove, served by Central Health, are losing lab and x-ray services based on board recommendations to the province. Jones is fearful that government is trying to "gut" rural health care.

She is questioning why x-ray equipment that was approved in last year's budget is still not in place at the Deer Lake Clinic. Jones wonders if the delay has anything to do with the ongoing lab and x-ray review. She says there is more money to be spent today with an 8-billion dollar budget, which is double what it was in 2003. Jones says she doesn't understand proposed cuts to lab and x-ray services in Flower's Cove and Lewisporte.

Health Minister Paul Oram is in Winnipeg to attend the annual meeting of the Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministers of Health. Following the meeting, Newfoundland and Labrador will become co-chair of the forum. Among the topics up for discussion, the supply of medical isotopes, pandemic planning and healthy living.