

LOCAL NEWS

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Liberals calling for better health care for Labrador

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The Liberal Opposition is accusing the province of ignoring health care problems in Labrador and is calling for immediate action.

Liberal Leader Yvonne Jones says there's a critical shortage of family doctors and the new hospital — promised in Labrador west — still hasn't been started.

"I have spoken to people in Labrador West who, because of a lack of family physicians in the area, are forced go to the emergency room at the hospital to get prescriptions filled or have their blood pressure monitored," Jones says. "This is placing extra stress on the doctors in the area, and is certainly doing nothing to attract and retain prospective physicians who are interested in practicing in this region."

While eight doctors should be working in the area according to the Physician Recruitment Advisory Committee, there are currently only five.

Another two doctors are planning to leave in the coming months, Jones says.

"This diminished level of service is threatening the safety of patients and placing excess burden on the resources available at the hospital. Government has to begin looking at solutions ... (that) will help alleviate the pressures being faced. There is also a need to examine whether salaried positions would be preferable for some doctors who may want to set up practice in the area."