

*Table by Minister of Health and Community Services  
2008. 02. 28.  
W.M.K.*

**MINISTER'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
ACTIVITY REPORT  
2006-07**

**September 2007**

**Table of Contents:**

Government Entity Overview	page 3
Mandate	page 3
Terms of Reference	page 3
Committee membership	page 4
Financial Statement	page 5
Highlights/Activities/Accomplishments 2006/07	page 6
Challenges & Opportunities	page 7

## Government Entity Overview

On January 5, 2000, the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act* was proclaimed. It replaced the former *Child Welfare Act* that was over 50 years old and had not kept pace with best practice in the field of child welfare. Accountability for interventions under the new Act was provided through a number of statutory provisions. One of these accountability statutes is Section 75 of the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act* which provides for the establishment of a Minister's Advisory Committee (MAC).

### Mandate

In accordance with Section 75 (1) of the Child Youth and Family Services Act, the following mandate has been set out for the Minister's Advisory Committee.

"The Minister shall establish an advisory committee whose function is to review every two years, the operations of this Act and to report to the Minister concerning its operation and stating whether, in its opinion, the principles and purpose of the Act are being achieved."

### Terms of Reference

1. The Committee shall be responsible for reviewing the operations of the *Child, Youth & Family Services Act* (CYFS Act) which support the safety, health and well being of children, youth and families. This will include the strengths and challenges of the Act and will be reviewed in accordance with Section 7, 8, and 9 of the Act.
2. The committee is comprised of members in accordance with the provisions under Section 75(2) of the CYFS Act.
3. This committee was appointed in April 2006 for a 3 year period in accordance with Section 75(3) of the CYFS Act.
4. The Committee shall prepare a report, every two years, outlining the conclusions of the review of the operations of the Act and will also recommend legislative amendments where necessary.
5. The Committee shall make every effort to create opportunities for input and participation of individuals, groups, organizations and communities in the review process.
6. The work of this (MAC 2) committee will build on the work of the preceding committee (MAC 1) to help inform the strategic process.

7. This committee shall determine government's response to the recommendations of the 2005 MAC report to help inform strategic direction of the committee.

### **Committee Membership**

Representation on this advisory committee is appointed in accordance with Section 75 (2) of the Act. The MAC is comprised of individuals from across the province that have a particular interest and expertise in children's issues. Membership is as follows:

Des Dillon	Chair; appointed under Section 75 (2)(f) as a community representative
Jane Fitzpatrick	appointed under Section 75 (2)(d) as the legal aid lawyer representative
Michelle Sullivan	appointed under Section 75(2)(f) as a representative from Memorial University's School of Social Work
Karen Mitchell	appointed under Section 75(2)(a) as a consumer representative
Brian Lyall	appointed under Section 75(2)(e) as a representative from a cultural minority
Lewis Coles	appointed under Section 75(2)(b) as the representative from a health board
Ivy Burt	appointed under Section 75(2)(c) as a representative of the minister
Mary Bungay Gaultois	appointed under Section 75(2)(f) as a community representative

There are currently two (2) vacancies that will be filled under Section 75(2)(a) and (e).

The Minister's Advisory Committee was established in September 2002 with a two year legislated time frame in which to complete its review of the operations of the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act*. This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> committee of the Minister's Advisory Committee who were appointed in April 2006 with the final

report due in 2008. The chair for this committee is Des Dillon who was also chair for the 1<sup>st</sup> MAC.

For this reporting period of April 1, 2006 – March 31, 2007, the focus of the work has been on providing the new committee with an orientation to the work of the MAC (1) which included:

- presentations on the *Child, Youth, and Family Services Act* and,
- the 2005 report of the 1<sup>st</sup> MAC, *How Are We Doing? A Report of the Minister's Advisory Committee on the Child, Youth and Family Services Act*,
- development of Terms of Reference,
- budget overview,
- committee vacancies and,
- selection of chair.

A program consultant from the Department of Health and Community Services (Child, Youth & Family Services Division) continues provided support and strategic direction to the committee throughout the process. There were 4 regular meetings held during this reporting period.

#### **Financial Statement**

The budget for the work of this committee comes from the National Child Benefit funding. There was \$50,000 allotted for this fiscal year. The total spending for this fiscal year was significantly reduced from previous reporting years because the new committee was appointed in April 2006 and did not begin meeting until September 2006. Further, there have been several staffing changes and the departmental position that supports the committee has now been vacant since January 2007. This has impacted on planning and thus spending is down. The following outlines the expenditures for activities in 2006-07:

#### **NCB - Project Administration Fiscal Year 2006/07 Expenditures**

Travel	\$5852.12
Supplies	\$1193.56
Professional Services	n/a
Purchased Services	\$260.00
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$7305.68</b>

### Highlights/Accomplishments/Activities 2006- 07

- The new committee members met in September, November and December of 2006 and, in February of 2007.
- Orientation has been provided to the new committee members which included presentations on the 1<sup>st</sup> report of the MAC, the legislation, the provision of an information package which included key documents regarding Child, Youth and Family Services and, an overview of organizational and service delivery structures.
- A Terms of Reference has been adopted by the committee.
- Mr. Des Dillon was selected a chair of the 2<sup>nd</sup> MAC. He was also chair of the 1<sup>st</sup> MAC.
- Mr. Dillon was asked to be part of a stakeholder round table discussion in October 2006 on the Child, Youth and Family Services program. This stakeholder round table was called by then Minister of Health and Community Services, Tom Osbourne following the release of the Turner Review and Investigation into the death of Zachary Turner in 2003.
- The MAC also received a presentation on the Turner Review and Investigation. This report which was completed at the request of the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate by Dr. Peter Markestyn and released to the public on October 4, 2006.
- Mr. Dillon also met with representatives of Deloitte Inc. who were commissioned by the Department of Health and Community Services to complete an organizational and operation review of Child, Youth and Family Services following the release of the Turner Review and Investigation.
- The MAC also received presentations from the 5 regional directors for Child, Youth and Family Services regarding the current operational status of CYFS in their regions. The committee developed a template which was used by the directors in their reporting.
- The committee completed a thematic analysis on the information presented to them on the overall issues facing the CFYS programs across the province.

### **Opportunities and Challenges Ahead**

- Deciding on the strategic direction for this committee. The mandate of the committee is to review the operations of the CYFS Act and there are currently a number of key planning activities and reviews ongoing in this program which will address operational issues. The challenge will be to decide where to focus this second review.
- In the Minister's April 30, 2007 news release on "Strengthening the Province's Child, Youth and Family Services system, a number of key initiatives and funding were provided. The Minister announced that three reports all pointed to the need to strengthen the CYFS system; one of these reports was the 1<sup>st</sup> MAC report. The general and specific recommendations were taken into account in the planning for the future directions of this program. The challenge for the 2<sup>nd</sup> committee is that most of the recommendations of the 1<sup>st</sup> MAC will see substantial investments but the reporting period for the 2<sup>nd</sup> MAC may not be long enough to see changes.
- The second Minister's Advisory Committee has the opportunity to learn from the successes and challenges of the 1<sup>st</sup> committee. In addition to having returning members on the second committee, there is also an opportunity to review the planning and processes that went into the first review.