



Noteworthy

Reaching Consensus

and Planning Ahead

An extensive consultation process aimed at improving the future of our health system was launched by Julie Bettney, Minister of Health and Community Services.

“The focus of our consultations this fall is to analyze major health issues and shape the principles that will guide health care decision making in the future,” said Minister Bettney. “Our health and community services system faces significant challenges, not the least of which is financial sustainability. Now is the time for open discussion about our health system so that we can make decisions which will benefit everyone in the future.”

Reaching Consensus and Planning Ahead is a discussion document that addresses major health issues, such as funding, health services structure, human resources and wellness. The document will be distributed throughout the province in brochure form, and can be accessed at www.gov.nf.ca/health/healthforums2001.

Minister Bettney and Strategic Social Plan chairs will host regional health forums for key invited stakeholders in seven locations across the province:

Grand Falls-Windsor	October 3
Clarenville	October 5
St. Anthony	October 10
Corner Brook	October 16
Happy Valley-Goose Bay	October 23
St. John's	October 29
Salmonier	October 31

A provincial health forum will be held in Gander on November 28, 2001. ☞

Recognizing community effort

The efforts of individuals in building communities will be celebrated through two recognition initiatives during the fall. The Department of Industry, Trade and Rural Development recently launched the first annual Community Economic Development Awards. The Newfoundland and Labrador Volunteer Medal will also be awarded, as announced by Premier Roger Grimes in June.

The Community Economic Development Awards will be presented in October during Rural EXPO 2001, an event showcasing economic development in rural areas. Five awards will be presented to individuals and organizations. Nominations close on September 28, and submissions will be reviewed by an eight-member panel. Information on the awards is available at www.gov.nf.ca/RuralEXPO.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Volunteer Medal will be awarded to one male and one female in each of the province's 48 electoral districts. Individuals with a minimum of 10 years of volunteer service are eligible. Nominations close on September 30 and will be reviewed by a seven-person committee. Information on the Volunteer Medal and the nomination process is available at Government Service Centres and at www.gov.nf.ca/publicat. ☞

Recommendations on fuel spills presented

Following a harsh winter in which 600 residential fuel oil spills were reported, a committee was asked to recommend ways to reduce spills. After significant research, the Domestic Fuel Oil Spill Prevention Committee presented its report and recommendations to Environment Minister Ralph Wiseman.

“I want to thank the committee members for their efforts,” said Minister Wiseman. “They are to be commended for conducting thorough consultations and for forging a consensus report on difficult issues.” The minister said government's next step will be to review the report to determine its role in reducing and preventing spills.

Government Services and Lands Minister Walter Noel announced the formation of the committee in March 2001. The minister said that cooperation between stakeholders is key to environmental benefits. “Domestic fuel spills have high financial and environmental costs for homeowners, insurance companies, fuel providers and government.”

In the province, about 66,000 households use fuel as the main source of heat. Claims processed by insurance companies from January 1 to May 10, 2001, cost about \$9 million. Copies of the fuel spill report are available from the Department of Government Services and Lands, at Government Services Centres, and at www.gov.nf.ca/gsl/consultation. ☞

