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Move Of Territorial Treatment Centre From Yellowknife To Hay River

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I wanted to speak again today about the transfer of the Territorial Treatment Centre out of Yellowknife, an issue that I feel is being seriously downplayed by the Minister of Health and Social Services and by this government.

I believe that the cavalier attitude and actions of this government in dealing with the transfer of this vital program is shameful. I have heard from employees, families and, most recently, organizations that, unlike our government, actually have an interest in what is best for the clients.

In my time here as a Member of this House, I have become aware of how woefully inadequate the services for children and families that face behavioural, emotional and mental health issues really are. The proposed transfer of the Territorial Treatment Centre is a microcosm of the real problems that residents face with this government. Why should it take three years for a family to get their child and themselves some help? Why does a family have to put their child on a wait list for respite care? How does a parent tell their child that they are number 11 on a list for a buddy to help them attend summer camp?

Madam Speaker, we have such a long way to go in terms of addressing the needs of our children and families that find themselves faced with these challenges. The transfer of the Territorial Treatment Centre looks like it's happening for all the wrong reasons. The government is taking a huge step backwards by dismantling and moving one of the only good, quality programs it has in dealing with children with behavioural, emotional and other mental health issues.

The Minister has yet to identify how the transfer of this program is going to impact clients, the children and families that are referred to it. The Minister has said in this House that the transfer will not impact the delivery of the program. Madam Speaker, I believe the Minister is absolutely wrong in his assessment. All I can see in this is backward thinking and opportunism at its finest at the expense of the children and the families that we're trying to help.

It is obvious to me that the government has not done its own due diligence in this decision and is that too much to ask? I implore the Minister and the government to do the right thing. Find another use for Dene K'onia. Leave the Territorial Treatment Centre alone. I'll have questions for the Minister at the appropriate time. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

---Applause