

**Elizabeth Smith-McCrossin
MLA Cumberland North**



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Députée Cumberland North**

Nova Scotia Legislature

January 9, 2023

Honourable Premier Tim Houston
Office of the Premier, Nova Scotia
7th Floor, One Government Place
1700 Granville Street
Halifax, NS
B3J 1X5

Dear Honourable Premier Houston:

I'm reaching out on behalf of residents of Cumberland North regarding the recent death of Allison "Ali" Leah Holthoff at the Cumberland Regional Health Care Centre (CRHCC) on December 31, 2022.

In addition to ensuring a timely investigation is completed, on behalf of Ali's family, her community, and people in the surrounding Cumberland County area, I am respectfully asking for your assistance to urgently implement the following 7-point emergency health services plan.

This 7-point plan includes short-term actions that will help ensure safe and timely care for people living in Cumberland North in the immediate. There are many other actions our community would like to see over the long-term. I will be following up with further medium to longer term actions in the coming days. However, I and our community feel strongly that the following actions must be taken now.

7-Point Plan to Address Emergency Health Services:

1. Place a dedicated healthcare professional in the temporary/makeshift waiting room in the emergency room (ER) at the CRHCC to monitor and provide ongoing medical assessment of persons waiting to see the ER physician. This health care professional would remain in the waiting room and communicate ongoing with triage nurses and the emergency room physician(s). We are requesting this to start immediately and keep this measure in place 24 hours a day, 7 days a week until the main emergency room reopens.
2. Appoint personnel to urgently complete renovations of the main emergency room at the CRHCC. This means work ongoing, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week until the ER is reopened.

3. The provincial government communicate with families who have had a loved one die in the ER department while awaiting care, and ensure an investigation is completed. Appoint a dedicated patient advisor from the Ministry of Health to assist the family of the deceased, to answer questions and be a resource and support.
4. Immediately reallocate nursing staff to ensure safe staffing levels in the ER at CRHCC. Follow with urgent recruitment of health professionals to CRHCC, offering bonuses and full-time position to attract nurses, in particular.
5. Establish a walk-in clinic 8 hours per day, 7 days week adjacent to the ER at CRHCC to meet all the non-urgent medical care needs in the community.
6. Publicly post the wait times for both ERs and ambulances. This should be real-time wait times so that people can make educated decisions on accessing health care services in emergency and non-emergency situations.
7. Require EHS to develop partnerships with local fire and other first responder agencies to support the safe transfer of patients to hospitals until such time they are able to respond, and until the issue of ambulance availability can be rectified.

I appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to your response.



Elizabeth Smith-McCrossin