



BC Rural Health Network

February 14, 2022

Attn: Susan Brown

Re: Letter dated February 4th, 2022

Dear Ms. Brown,

Via: email

The BC Rural Health Network (BCRHN) appreciates the time taken to meet with our representatives on February 4th. The Board appreciated the letter provided that acknowledges our concerns of ensuring re-establishing service to all impacted communities, as soon as possible, and as a priority to the Interior Health Authority.

I have met with our Board and did so prior to responding to your letter to ensure that I speak with their full support and through that, the full support of our membership. I have that support and I look forward to building a relationship beyond the current staffing challenges, The full resumption of service to rural communities impacted will be welcome news and your assurance of this has been important to us.

The BCRHN also sees pre pandemic and pre-existing service shortfalls as priority areas of concern for rural residents Your commitment to working with us on these matters has also been welcome. We appreciate the outreach by Diane Shendruk for a follow-up meeting which will be scheduled this week.

Following our initial meeting, I met with Chris Shewchuk to continue to discuss opportunities for improving communications with rural residents and our approach of working at the grassroots level of rural BC. Information is critical to those in more isolated and rural settings and reaching them from the top down has been largely unsuccessful. The BCRHN recognizes that rural residents may be difficult to reach. Our objective is to assist information reaching its intended audience. Unfortunately, misinformation has impacted many residents in rural areas. We look forward to continuing our discussions with Chris and yourself in this regard.

As mentioned on the call we appreciate the opportunity to become more involved and look to reverse what has been a difficult past for rural residents working with their healthcare system. Many of the issues of today are a result of decades of rural residents feeling left out or left

behind, primarily through centralization of services. This is not exclusively a communication problem that exists at the IHA. It has become a problem with communication from the resident as well. The BCRHN recognizes that improving the communication between resident and authorities will require work and effort from all parties.

Including the resident voice in their health and their healthcare system, benefits everyone. Building community centric care and building resilience into the systems is a challenge that needs innovative approaches. The BCRHN is not wanting to make operational decisions, we need to ensure the rural voice is included in decisions made. When decisions are made, the BCRHN needs to ensure residents know what those decisions are, why they were made and how they will impact individuals. We welcome the opportunity to start rebuilding for the future with the IHA. We can help.

The BCRHN is also fully aware of the difficulties faced in these incredibly challenging times and genuinely appreciates all those dedicated to operating our healthcare system. Thank you and thank you to all your employees for the challenging work and sacrifices that have been made by so many healthcare professionals, in all aspects of the system in the Interior.

Yours in health and wellness,



Paul

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The BCRHN is the healthcare voice of the rural residents of British Columbia and seeks better health outcomes for all people, through solutions-based approaches with governments, and information provision to residents.