

May 3, 2016

Honourable Kelvin Goertzen
Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living
Room 302 Legislative Building
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 0V8

Dear Colleague,

Thank you for agreeing to serve Manitoba as Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living. Together, our party has been given a mandate to restore trust in government and improve the lives of Manitobans and their families. This is a high honour and privilege we have been given. It will be our focus every day in government.

At the outset, I want to remind you of the need to comport yourself at all times with personal and professional integrity as a representative of our new government. I insist we adhere to the highest possible standards of accountability and respect in the conduct of the province's business. Accordingly, I expect you to be fully aware and compliant with all ethical rules and guidelines currently established as well as those which will be part of our Open Government Initiative.

Most Improved Province

We asked for and received a mandate from Manitobans to improve our province in several key areas. We will be judged on how well we deliver on this. This government will relentlessly focus on these results. I expect us to be a government of results. We must strive each day to deliver high quality public services to citizens at reasonable costs to taxpayers.

A fundamental part of our platform commitment to Manitobans is to ensure our province improves in key areas. All ministers are expected to support and deliver on all of these commitments with colleagues. As Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living, you have a key role to play in delivering on our commitment to be the most improved province in shortening ER and other wait times, and to deliver:

- Lower ambulance fees;
- Shorter ER and priority procedure wait times;
- Keeping doctors in Manitoba;
- Building more personal care home beds;
- A dedicated stroke unit; and
- A mental health strategy.

Your Mandate

As Minister of Health, Seniors and Active Living, you are the lead Minister responsible for delivering on the following platform commitments:

- Reduce ambulance fees by half beginning in our first year in office, to bring them more in line with the rest of Canada.
- Striking a Wait Times Reduction Task Force. This task force will be given an aggressive mandate to recommend specific actions to shorten wait times in emergency rooms and for other priority procedures and treatments where we have ranked below the Canadian average.
- The Task Force will include frontline workers, health care professionals, and impacted stakeholders and be charged with a specific and targeted mandate and reporting structure to start reporting back within 6 months.
- The Task Force will:
 - Conduct in-depth analysis of who is seeking treatment at ERs and for what conditions.
 - Identify roadblocks and solutions to improving access.
 - Identify opportunities to enhance the overall wellness of Manitobans including preventative measures.
- Establishing an improved doctor recruitment and retention program with a goal to have the most improved retention rates in our first term.
- Creating a more collaborative recruitment environment that focuses on a team-based approach.
- Hiring experts in effective recruitment processes including foreign recruitment of practice-ready doctors.
- Promoting hometown doctors through education in local communities.
- Conducting exit interviews with departing doctors to determine their reasons for leaving.
- Reviewing the levels of incentives offered within the province and in other provinces while reducing the impact of Manitoba's high tax environment.
- Fast-tracking the construction of 1,200 personal care home beds to alleviate the health care crisis facing seniors and families, and investing more than \$160 million over the next 8 years to make this happen.
- Developing a funding model to fast-track construction of personal care homes with nonprofit organizations, faith-based groups and community leaders similar to the successful Heritage Life Personal Care Home in Niverville.
- Establish a dedicated stroke unit.

- Develop a comprehensive mental health strategy combining mental health and addictions programs and services with an emphasis on better coordination and access.

Working With Manitobans and the Public Service

Our government will be a listening government. Our government will be a responsible and responsive government. As a minister and representative of this new government, I expect you to work constructively and cooperatively with citizens and stakeholders to hear their views and communicate the decisions and priorities of the government. Having secured the people's trust in this election, we must work hard every day to earn it anew.

Manitoba's civil service will be a key partner with us to deliver on our commitments and serve the public. Our commitment to protecting front line services for people and the jobs of those who deliver them is one I expect all ministers to work towards.

I made a decision at the outset to reduce the size of Cabinet and set a new tone at the top in ensuring value in government services. That tone at the top extends to how I expect you and your colleagues to work with your departmental officials and other civil servants you encounter in the course of your professional duties. I expect you to forge a collaborative working relationship with your deputy minister and senior officials. I also expect you to be accessible to officials within your department, to listen to their advice, to hear their concerns, and understand that while they are here to serve in a professional non-partisan manner, they are also our employees who deserve our respect.

Cabinet, Caucus and the Legislature

Being a minister brings significant responsibility with your new duties. That responsibility extends to ensuring you are fully briefed and knowledgeable about your portfolio issues and obligations when engaging with colleagues at Cabinet and in the Legislature. I expect all ministers to know their files and bring a collegial working style to making decisions at Cabinet and Cabinet Committees.

You have also been named House Leader, a member of our Planning & Priorities Committee, first acting Minister of Education & Training and second acting Deputy Premier.

Caucus is a vital part of our governance model. I remind you that all caucus members are full and equal colleagues in the work and direction of this government. I expect you to work closely at all times with your caucus colleagues providing them with information as they carry out their duties and being accessible to them in the conduct of their duties. From time to time, individual caucus members will be assigned to work with you on specific projects by me. You will treat them as full cabinet colleagues in this capacity.

The Legislative Assembly remains the foundation of our democracy and is essential for representative and accountable government. We shall treat it respectfully. I expect all ministers to be briefed, ready, and available to answer questions, explain decisions, and engage colleagues in the Legislature as well as citizens that appear before it.

As we work together, I will be evaluating individual and collective performance of ministers as they deliver their mandates and support and work collaboratively with ministerial and caucus colleagues.

Manitobans expect us to work for them as a team. I know I can count on your personal support and commitment to do so as you shall have my personal support and commitment to work with you in your new duties and responsibilities.

We have been given a rare privilege to serve our province. I know you are as grateful as I am for this opportunity. Let us make Manitobans proud once more of their government.

Sincerely,

Original signed by Brian Pallister, Premier

Premier Brian Pallister