



North End Community Health Centre

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To Whom It May Concern

We are writing to express concern regarding current practices within the ESIA program of the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services that impede our ability to adequately accommodate our patients health condition. Our patient population is primarily individuals and families on fixed incomes and many are dependent of Nova Scotia social assistance programs.

We complete medical reports and/or communicate with income assistance workers as part of our health care provision. It is not uncommon for us to have repeated request for medical documentation because forms have been misplaced or not received. There is discrepancy between workers and offices regarding detail requested and guidelines imposed relating to eligibility for special needs. Patients make supplementary visits to health care providers indicating medical diagnosis are not accepted.

Income Assistance workers are asking clients to request their doctor or nurse practitioner to make referrals to other care givers including dietitians occupational therapists, physiotherapists when the medical condition or chronic illness defines the need for financial support. Supplementary referral often slows the process, impeding access to required financial resources associated with a chronic health condition. It is our view that auxiliary referrals although helpful are not primary to addressing the health concern.

We are not given clear guidance on why a particular medical report is rejected. The medical assessment form issued by, the Department of Community Services are vague. When reports are rejected communication is primarily from the patient rather than a written report from the worker indicating how the report does not meet eligibility requirements.

We would be pleased to actively participate in any reform process of the ESIA program and thank you for the opportunity to express our views.

Sincerely,

Dr. Glenn Campbell
Keith Cockersell NP
Dr. John Fraser
Dr. Leisha Hawker
Dr. Anne Houston
Dr. Andrea Rideout
Marilyn Rutherford NP
DR. Rod Wilson