



## Citizens' Representative's Message

Concerns about the psychiatric care of citizens in our correctional facilities persist. Some commentators have found solace in the fact that the psychiatrist retained to provide those services has been peer reviewed. It may be helpful to dust off that review and see what it says.



The peer review was conducted by Dr. Philip Klassen and released in September 2012. Of note is the fact that Dr. Klassen had available to him the relevant Correctional Policy Manual, but the section on pharmaceuticals was withheld. A curious omission having regard for the work he was tasked to undertake.

Dr. Klassen found that the psychiatrist's "practice is very typical of correctional psychiatry in Canada", but submitted that correctional psychiatry, generally, could be improved. He then went on to make a number of recommendations to bring the psychiatry in our

correctional facilities more in line with those offered in the community. They included the use of guideline driven services which would direct the provision of care, irrespective of the provider.

He also recommended that the psychiatrist enhance his communication with inmates and community stakeholders. Most importantly, he recommended that the psychiatrist adopt the recovery model of care to correctional mental health. The principals of this model are hope, empowerment, and connection; they promote choice, responsibility, and self-determination.

It seems to me that if we are to take comfort in this peer review, then we should satisfy ourselves that Dr. Klassen's recommendations have been fully implemented. I am not so sure that they have been.

Anyone wishing a copy of the peer review can view it at: [https://www.justice.gov.nl.ca/just/publicationsNLCorrections\\_Review\\_Klassen.pdf](https://www.justice.gov.nl.ca/just/publicationsNLCorrections_Review_Klassen.pdf) or can call our office.

*Barry Fleming*

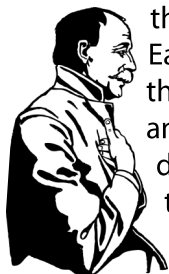
## Correctional Update

The OCR investigates our inquires on all aspects of provincial adult incarceration, with the exception of collective bargaining issues, direct medical decision making, and inmate placement decisions. We receive 20 to 40 complaints per month from our seven provincial correctional institutions and lockups. Complaints range from access to simple personal hygiene items and health care, institutional discipline, and alleged use of force violations. In the vast majority of

these cases the actions of the Adult Corrections Division are verified as correct. In cases where we make formal recommendations for change, the Department of Justice and Public Safety are consulted first. This ensures the recommendations are attainable and do not compromise correctional officer safety or the safety of inmates. Complaints about adult correctional facilities were 40% of total complaints received by the OCR from January through June 2018.

## Seeking Fairness...

An alternate family care provider called us to advise that after the unfortunate passing of one of their clients, and a move by another, Eastern Health had decided to move their third (remaining) client out to another site. This was deemed a final decision and a date for the move of the third client was set. This caused a great deal of stress and anxiety for



the client who was being forced to leave his community, his caregivers and the staff of the home. The providers came up with possible options, including having the client reside in their downstairs apartment. We initiated an investigation of the complaint and a short time later the client's move downstairs was approved with overnight monitoring and support, meals and access to the upstairs living area.

## Finding Solutions

We contacted the Vital Statistics Branch of Service NL after a woman contacted us unsure of what to do to prove her indigenous ancestry. She believed her grandparents were indigenous and when she sought birth certificates for them at her local Service NL location, she was told dates of birth were required. Her parents were deceased and there were no other known family or community members to help. Via Service NL, we obtained a link to the 1921 Newfoundland Census, which located her grandfather. The woman was directed

further to research her grandmother's baptismal certificate at her local church.

We have numerous presentations available for public servants and the general public on our full range of services, including the Provincial Whistleblower Program, and tips on how to navigate difficult complaints for frontline workers. Presentations are available by calling (709) 729-7647 or via email at [citrep@gov.nl.ca](mailto:citrep@gov.nl.ca)



## Questions? Comments?

Is your department, agency or community group interested in learning more about the OCR, its services and processes? Do you have a suggestion or question to be addressed in a future edition of *Insights*? Call us at 1-800-559-0079 or (709) 729-7647, or e-mail [citrep@gov.nl.ca](mailto:citrep@gov.nl.ca).

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