



**FREDERICTON  
CHAMBER  
OF COMMERCE**

— The Voice of Business —

364 York Street, Suite 200  
Fredericton, NB  
E3B 3P7



7 February 2018

Hon. Benoît Bourque  
Minister of Health, Province of New Brunswick  
P.O. Box 6000  
Fredericton, NB E3B 5H1

Dear Minister Bourque,

We are writing to you today to draw your attention to a recent news release issued by the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce (attached here) regarding both the recent agreement with Medavie Blue Cross to provide extramural nursing and tele-care services as well as innovation in the delivery of government services generally.

Given the controversy concerning this agreement, our board of directors felt it was important that individuals and organizations outside of government speak publicly to support this type of innovation in government, particularly in the Department of Health which consumes such a large portion of the provincial budget. Beyond the potential benefits to healthcare services in New Brunswick, we are hopeful that this agreement will produce innovations that can be exported to the globe and that the model can be replicable in other areas of government.

We would be pleased to speak with you further or provide feedback on this or other initiatives at your department in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keir Clark'.

Keir Clark  
Scotia Wealth Management  
President, Fredericton Chamber of Commerce

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Krista Ross'.

Krista Ross, CEO  
Fredericton Chamber of Commerce



## **Fredericton Chamber of Commerce Encourages Innovation in Delivering Government Services**

5 February 2018

**FREDERICTON, NB** (For Immediate Release)

The Fredericton Chamber of Commerce echoes the position of the New Brunswick Medical Society that the provincial government's decision to move extramural and Tele-Care services to Medavie is 'worth a try.' With the province's demographic challenges, the Fredericton chamber has previously advocated for the need to rethink and realign how healthcare is delivered in New Brunswick both now and into the future. The government should continue to find innovative ways to solve problems, save money and/or provide better service.

"Healthcare delivery already consumes about 40% of the provincial budget. With a population that is older than the national average, spread out through the province and in decline, we can conclude that this number will continue to rise without intervention," said Keir Clark President of the Fredericton chamber. "I don't think any of us know if this particular contract or model will end up being part of the solution, but it is obvious that what we are currently doing is not sustainable and we look forward to seeing the results. We commend the government for taking this step to try to address one of the biggest challenges facing New Brunswickers today and into the future."

Healthcare reform is one of the most difficult political challenges in any jurisdiction. Despite the near-universal acceptance that change is needed, governments are faced with outrage when they try to affect that change.

"Health care leaders, former ministers and economists like Richard Saillant have been ringing alarm bells as loudly as possible for many years. We are headed towards a health care reckoning and governments choosing to kick the can down the road is not an option," said Krista Ross, chamber CEO. "Certainly we encourage more transparency from government than has been delivered in this instance and we all demand no detrimental effects on patient care - reasonable expectations that we will use to hold government and Medavie to account if they do not deliver."

"We need all political parties in New Brunswick to take a practical, non-partisan approach when evaluating the Medavie contract or any other initiative taken by the government of the day. Reflexively throwing out the work of previous governments political purposes is one of the reasons our province is burdened with more than \$14 billion in debt today," added Ross. "In the best-case scenario, the model will prove to be an efficient and effective way to deliver services to New Brunswickers that can be applied to other departments, programs and policies."

The deal with Medavie represents a made-for-New Brunswick solution by a New Brunswick organization that has the potential to have positive spin-off effects that go beyond health care delivery such as increasing employment, growing a sector of strength in the province, creating new innovations and



building expertise in our workforce. Leveraging Medavie’s technological capabilities to integrate related services has the potential to produce solutions that can be exported to other jurisdictions.

“As David Campbell wrote earlier this month, Medavie is major employer and innovator in the province. As a non-profit organization, they can be more nimble than the government - ideally positioning them to deliver services that New Brunswickers deserve,” added Clark. “We are hopeful that the model will be very successful and can be replicated in the future both in health care and beyond - which we’ll never know if we don’t try.”

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The Fredericton Chamber of Commerce, a nationally accredited organization with nearly 1,000 members, is an active business organization engaged in policy development and advocacy that affects the competitiveness of our members and the Canadian business environment. The Chamber’s vision is “*Stronger Community Through Business Prosperity*”.

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