



NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

June 29, 2020

Update on Re-opening of Medical Services

Today our President, Dr. Charlene Fitzgerald, held a news conference to call on the government to release its plan for re-opening medical services in the Province.

Last week we collected information from the NLMA section heads on the current capacity of medical services. Most disciplines fell between 20-50% of normal capacity. Minister Haggie then told us he has asked the RHAs to open to 85% of normal capacity by July 6th. We were surprised that this information had not been made public, and we were skeptical that services could be expanded this quickly.

Today, Dr. Fitzgerald was joined by Dr. Tracey Bridger, Dr. Paul Johnston, Dr. Jerry McGrath and Dr. Karolyn Dobbin. The purpose was to give the media an insider's view of the challenges and barriers to a quick re-opening of health services, and to ask the Minister to release weekly data so that the public can monitor his progress. Many other provinces already have public plans plus data to monitor progress.

The health system cannot be switched on like a light bulb. There are many rules related to social distancing and PPE that must still be observed. Physicians will collaborate closely with RHAs as they re-open. A plan and regular monitoring data is clearly needed.

The news conference was recorded by our audio/video agency and will be posted online tomorrow. We will share the video in the next update. A copy of Dr. Fitzgerald's speaking notes is available [here](#).

***Representing and supporting a united medical profession and providing leadership
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