



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ALBERTA

SELECT SPECIAL HEALTH INFORMATION ACT REVIEW COMMITTEE

October 18, 2004

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Committee recommends changes to the Health Information Act (HIA)

Edmonton- Striking a balance between protections of privacy versus a need to know was one of the more challenging tasks before the Select Special Health Information Act Review Committee as they reviewed current legislation over the summer.

"Our focus was to review the Health Information Act to determine whether an appropriate balance has been achieved between protection of the individual's privacy and access to health information where appropriate to provide health services and to manage the health system," said committee chair Bryce Jacobs. "I think we achieved that."

With 72 written submissions and 15 oral presentations to consider during the review, months of consideration and deliberation have resulted in 59 recommendations being made by the committee.

The committee's first recommendation is that a future committee be struck in 2005 to address issues that require additional research and further consultation with stakeholders.

"There are a number of issues that require more time," explained Jacobs. "As well, there is intent to consider harmonization with a pan-Canadian health information privacy and confidentiality framework, which is not yet finalized and therefore could not be addressed by this committee."

The focus of this committee's recommendations deal with: the purpose of the Act, definitions, the scope of the Act, health service provider information, individual right to access health records, collection of health information, elements of consent, discretionary disclosure without consent, disclosure to police services, triplicate prescription program, genetic information, informed knowledgeable implied consent, disclosure for research purposes, duties and obligations to custodians, the Commissioner, substitute decision makers, offences and penalties and health information regulations.

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A copy of the Select Special Health Information Act Review Committee's final report is available online at www.hiareview.assembly.ab.ca.

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Backgrounder

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