



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – December 11, 2018**

**Backgrounder for News Release  
Provincial Auditor's 2018 Report – Volume 2**

**Infection Prevention and Control in Long-Term Care Homes**

**Saskatchewan Health Authority (Sunrise) – Preventing and Controlling Infections in Long-Term Care Homes (Chapter 39)**

Provincial Auditor Judy Ferguson found the former Sunrise Regional Health Authority (now part of the Saskatchewan Health Authority) had implemented all four recommendations from a 2014 audit. The 2014 audit had assessed its processes to prevent and control infections in its long-term care homes.

Key improvements included communicating its infection prevention and control practices to the public with brochures and signage at its long-term care homes. Supervisors also adequately reviewed daily cleaning worksheets, which document resident room cleaning. In addition, management of the long-term care homes routinely monitored and analyzed infection rates and trends. They used this information to identify and improve their infection-control activities. In addition, they held annual workshops to keep staff current on practices and reinforce the importance of those activities with them.

Effective infection and prevention control programs helps reduce the risk of exposure of residents and staff of long-term care homes to infections.

**Adult Inmate Rehabilitation**

**Ministry of Corrections and Policing – Rehabilitating Adult Inmates (Chapter 30)**

Rehabilitation programming is an important part of helping sentenced inmates to re-enter into society after completing their sentences. At July 2018, about half of Saskatchewan's adult inmate population was sentenced; the other half was awaiting trial or sentencing by the courts (i.e., on remand).

The Ministry of Corrections and Policing continues to have more work to do on three recommendations, originally made in 2008, about improving its processes for rehabilitating sentenced adult inmates in adult correctional centres.

The audit found correctional staff are not consistently completing assessments of an inmate's risks and needs within 28 days of the inmate's admission into a correctional facility (as required by its policy). The Ministry did not have an effective way to monitor the timeliness of completion of these assessments, or the delivery of identified rehabilitation programming to inmates.

The audit found, for 9 of 30 files tested, staff completed assessments between 15 to 120 days later expected. For 7 of the 30 files tested, correctional facilities did not provide inmates with the identified rehabilitation programming before they were released into the community.

Sentenced inmates receiving appropriate rehabilitation programming have lower re-offending rates. Rehabilitated inmates have more opportunities to work and contribute to society.



## Children in Care

### Ministry of Social Services – Investigating Allegations of Child Abuse and Neglect (Chapter 26)

Prompt and thorough investigation of allegations of child abuse is critical to protect the safety and well-being of children. In 2017-18, the Ministry of Social Services received just over 15,000 reports of alleged child abuse and neglect, and about 40% of them were investigated.

The *2018 Report – Volume 2* reports that the Ministry had many good policies and practices to investigate allegations of alleged child abuse and neglect in place with improvements needed in a few areas.

The audit found that Ministry caseworkers screened reports of alleged child abuse and neglect, as and when expected, to determine whether an allegation required investigation (i.e., a screening decision). In addition, it had a well-established process to investigate alleged child abuse and neglect.

In a few areas, staff did not always follow the Ministry's processes. For example, although the Ministry required an independent second review of screening decisions, these reviews were not always done or timely—particularly where the Ministry decided an investigation was not warranted. Timely independent reviews of screening decisions confirm the Ministry made appropriate and objective decisions about investigating and took timely and appropriate action.

In other examples, at times when investigating allegations, caseworkers conducted family risk assessments, attempted to make face-to-face contact with a child and their family, and finalized investigations later than Ministry prescribed timeframes. Not doing steps within prescribed timeframes increases the risk of a child remaining in an unsafe environment or can delay providing ongoing child protection services.

### Ministry of Social Services – Protecting Children in Care (Chapter 46)

Provincial Auditor Judy Ferguson was pleased with the Ministry of Social Services' recent progress on implementing recommendations related to the protection of children in care. It fully implemented four of five remaining recommendations (originally made in 2003 and 2008) and partially implemented one.

At March 2018, just over 5,200 children were either directly or indirectly in the care of the Ministry. Ministry caseworkers cared for about 94% of them, with 17 First Nation agencies caring for the rest. The Ministry continues to be responsible for these children.

The Ministry better and actively monitored whether staff in its three service areas and the 17 First Nation Child and Family Services agencies comply with its detailed standards for working with children in care. The Ministry took steps to improve compliance with specific standards when they were lower than expected.

The Ministry had signed robust agreements with all but one of the 17 First Nations agencies who provide services to children in care. It expected to sign the last agreement in the near future. Under these agreements, First Nations agencies agreed to give the Ministry information to enable monitoring (e.g., number of children in their care who are the Minister's responsibilities, who they are, and where they live). However, the Ministry needs a better system to check the completeness and receipt of this



information, and follow up on missing reports or information. Active monitoring helps protect children in care.

## Awarding Grants

### Saskatchewan Arts Board – Awarding Grants Impartially and Transparently (Chapter 22)

Each year, the Saskatchewan Arts Board awards between \$6 million to \$8 million in grants to professional artists, professional arts organizations, and communities.

In her *2018 Report – Volume 2*, Provincial Auditor Judy Ferguson looked at the Arts Board’s processes to award grants impartially and transparently. She found that the Arts Board’s processes needed improvements in a few areas to enhance the transparency of them. For example, the Arts Board needs to document its process to select and use independent assessors. It uses them to evaluate grant applications that need specialized expertise (e.g., graphic novels). Having a documented process about selecting and using them would improve transparency with grant applicants.

For another example, it needs to have its jurors and independent assessors sign agreements prior to giving them grant application packages. Under its current practice, jurors return signed agreements the day of the jury session, and independent assessors return them with their assessed grant applications. Receiving signed agreements in advance would reduce the risk of evaluators disclosing confidential information.

## For More Information

The full Provincial Auditor’s *2018 Report – Volume 2*, which includes further details and other Provincial Auditor’s findings and recommendations, is available online at [www.auditor.sk.ca](http://www.auditor.sk.ca).

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