

NDP Caucus News

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O’Leary Calls on Government to Address the “Revolving Door” in Mental Health Care

Today in the House of Assembly, MHA Sheilagh O’Leary (St. John’s East–Quidi Vidi) questioned government on its plans to improve access to mental health supports.

Addressing the “revolving door” in mental health care, O’Leary called on government to develop a public, long-term supportive care model for people living with mental illness who need ongoing, full-time support to thrive.

O’Leary emphasized that our healthcare system cannot measure success simply by how quickly someone can be discharged from hospital but rather must focus on ensuring people can live with dignity, stability, and access to the around-the-clock supports they need.

“Speaker, I was glad to meet with the Minister of Health last week, discussing the revolving door and gaps in mental health and addictions care in our province. We need supervised and supportive residential options for people whose illnesses make independent living unrealistic. We need public long-term strategies designed around the reality of severe and persistent mental illness – not around the hope that another apartment and an occasional visit will somehow produce a different result. I ask the Minister, does he agree?”

“Our mental health system must stop measuring success by how quickly someone can be discharged from hospital and start focusing on quality of life, dignity, and the long-term supports people need. This week, we heard about a person living with a developmental disability who was ‘graduated’ from an NLHS program that helped him live successfully, despite needing ongoing support,” said O’Leary. “While I’m glad to see that decision reversed, this case raises concerns for many others who depend on long-term support and deserve stability and the opportunity to thrive.

“I ask the Minister, will he develop a public alternative long-term model that gives people living with mental illness the support they need to live with dignity?”

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