

# NDP Caucus News

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## Reverse decision to eliminate flu shot coverage: Michael

NDP Health Critic Lorraine Michael is calling on the Liberal government to immediately reverse its decision to eliminate doctor-delivered flu shots under MCP. In May 2017, the provincial government cut flu shots from doctors' billing codes with a plan to direct patients to public health care clinics.

"Today the Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association clearly showed that the elimination of this type of flu shot coverage will not save money, but rather increase costs while reducing access to a vital service and putting public health at risk," she said.

The decision will send many patients into overburdened community clinics. Rather than cut costs, this change will cost government more and limit access to flu shots, Michael says.

Information obtained through ATIPP documents related to the decision to cut flu shot coverage from MCP reveal that government's objective was to save money in order to fund the expansion of the HPV vaccination program to include males. The documents also show that public health clinics provided through Eastern Health are already overextended and need increased funds from government to deliver the flu shot services.

The decision to eliminate the MCP fee code that pays doctors to give flu shots was done without consultation with physicians and the Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association.

"We support the NLMA in asking government to reverse its decision and reinstate doctor-delivered flu shots," said Michael.

"We cannot have a user fee for a medically necessary service. Flu shots are a preventative measure that help reduce hospitalizations. Government should be investing in preventative health measures not cutting coverage."

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For information, contact Zaren Healey White, 729-2137 (office) or 693-9172 (cell).