



The Professional
Association
of Foreign
Service Officers

L'Association
professionnelle
des agents du
Service extérieur

May 17, 2010

Dr. Michel Pinard
Manager
Public Service Health Program Overseas
Health Canada
Vanguard Building - Floor: 9 - Room: 972 Mail Stop: 3709D
171 Slater Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0K9

Dear Dr. Pinard,

I am writing to you as a representative of the Professional Association of Foreign Service Officers (PAFSO), which represents members of the FS occupational group who are rotational employees who serve in positions both in Canada and abroad in Canada's diplomatic and consular missions and other circumstances. As rotational employees frequently working outside Canada for extended periods, often in unhealthy environments, we and our families have a particular interest in the overseas component of Health Canada's Public Service Health Program (PSHP). Your name has been provided as the interim HC Overseas Medical Advisor, so I am addressing this to you as the first point of contact.

It has recently come to our attention that CIC Medical Officers (MOF) posted abroad will no longer be involved in the delivery of the PSHP. After some time searching, I have been unable to find a clear explanation of what services are currently offered by PSHP Overseas to employees posted abroad or what the impact of the withdrawal of CIC MOF participation in the delivery of these services will be. The information available at <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/branch-dirgen/rapb-dgrp/whpsp-psstsp/index-eng.php#cc> and at <http://publiservice.gc.ca/services/hecs-sesc/whpsp/index.htm> provides only vague descriptions of the services offered by PSHP. In fact, the latter reference indicates services are "currently under review" and mentions several services that will continue to be delivered, but this list does not include any overseas services. As a result, I have several questions which I hope you will be able to answer:

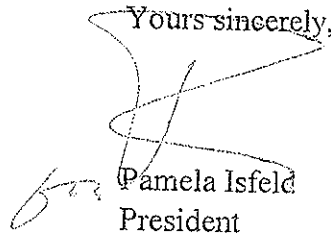
- What services does the PSHP Overseas currently provide to employees and their dependents posted outside of Canada?
- Who is currently delivering these services if CIC MOFs are no longer participating? How do employees access these services?
- What is the status of the review of PSHP services? Is there an opportunity or mechanism for bargaining agents representing affected employees to be consulted or provide input?

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There is currently a lack of information available to employees about what is available to them in terms of health services provided by the employer.

As a result of the recent information indicating CIC MOFs will no longer be participating in the PSHP, our members are concerned that services will no longer be accessible to them and their families while they are assigned outside Canada. As the representative of these employees, PAFSO is concerned that the serious health risks our members already face in some posting environments will be compounded by increased vulnerability of employees and dependents due to reduced health services. I hope you will be able to fill the information gap and we can proceed with a clear understanding of what PSHP is currently offering and what its future plans for service delivery are with respect to our members.

Yours sincerely,



Pamela Isfeld
President

c.c. Dr. Lise Scott