

NEWS RELEASE

July 26, 2023

Auditor General releases 2 performance audits and an investigation

WINNIPEG – Manitoba Auditor General Tyson Shtykalo today released 3 reports, including 2 performance audits and one investigation.

The Auditor General's audit of addictions treatment services found Manitobans often did not have access to appropriate addiction treatment services when they needed them. A separate audit found the Department of Justice was not efficiently managing the delivery of court services for the Provincial Court of Manitoba.

"In both these audits, we found long wait times were impacting Manitobans—and this issue was amplified in rural areas and in northern regions," Shtykalo said. "We also noted technology deficiencies and a reliance on paper-based systems, which were contributing to inefficiencies."

The third report, an investigation of the Protection for Persons in Care Office (PPCO), notes serious, systematic issue existed within the organization. The PPCO investigates allegations of abuse and neglect in health facilities.

"We found the PPCO's processes for investigating allegations of abuse were flawed and failed to result in reasonable conclusions," Shtykalo said.

The reports include recommendations that address the issues uncovered during the audits and investigation.

To view the 3 reports, visit oag.mb.ca/audit-reports/

To watch brief overview videos, visit: youtube.com/@AuditorGenMB

BACKGROUND

Auditor General Tyson Shtykalo today released 3 reports. Brief summaries of these reports can be found below.

Addictions Treatment Services in Manitoba

This audit found Manitobans often did not have access to appropriate addiction treatment services when they needed them.

“Substance abuse and addictions can have devastating impacts on individuals directly affected, as well as those around them,” Shtykalo said. “We noted that in Manitoba, capacity did not meet the demand for addiction treatment and as a result, people continued to experience long waits.”

Shtykalo’s report found these issues were amplified in rural areas and in the North.

The audit also found that a system-wide picture of addictions treatment services in Manitoba did not exist. This is because the delivery of addictions treatment was decentralized, records were still largely paper-based, and data collection was siloed.

In addition, the report notes there was a lack of coordination across the different types of treatment services. “Different service providers, both in the public system, as well as not-for-profits and private providers, must work together and coordinate to provide treatment and care to individuals with addictions, regardless of how the health-care system is structured,” Shtykalo said. The report includes 15 recommendations.

Efficiency of Court Services for the Provincial Court of Manitoba

This audit found the Department of Justice was not efficiently managing the delivery of court services for the Provincial Court of Manitoba.

The report notes there were significant staff shortages and technological deficiencies in the systems that support the Provincial Court, and an overwhelming reliance on paper-based systems. “Both the Provincial Court and the Department have acknowledged the staff shortages and technological deficiencies, but there were no strategies in place to address these issues,” Shtykalo said.

The audit also found there were opportunities for the Department of Justice to provide greater autonomy to the Provincial Court, as the administrative structure posed restrictions. “Other jurisdictions provided more autonomy to courts through memorandums of understanding.”

The Auditor General noted that the risks and impacts identified throughout his audit were amplified in Northern Manitoba. The report includes 7 recommendations.

Investigation of the Protection for Persons in Care Office (PPCO)

This investigation confirmed serious systemic issues existed within the Protection for Persons in Care Office.

Shtykalo noted the investigation was launched after his office received several calls from Manitobans describing incidents where loved ones living in personal care homes were physically or verbally harmed. However, the resulting Protection for Persons in Care Office's investigations concluded there was no abuse. "Through the course of our investigation, we found the allegations were valid and were not isolated cases," Shtykalo said.

"The purpose of The Protection for Persons in Care Act is to protect vulnerable people in care," Shtykalo said. "Unfortunately, the processes used by the PPCO to determine if abuse occurred were flawed and failed to reach reasonable conclusions."

The Auditor General noted some victims and families waited over 3 years for the PPCO investigations to start. In addition, the report states that issues with the definition of abuse were identified in 3 separate reports released over the past decade, but the PPCO did not take meaningful action to remedy the situation.

The report includes 12 recommendations to the PPCO to improve the investigation process and protect vulnerable Manitobans.

ABOUT THE AUDITOR GENERAL OF MANITOBA

The Auditor General is an officer of the Legislative Assembly mandated to provide independent assurance and advice to Members of the Legislative Assembly. Through its audits, the Office of the Auditor General seeks to identify opportunities to strengthen government operations and enhance performance management and reporting. For more information visit <http://www.oag.mb.ca/>

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