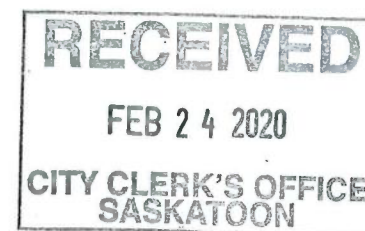


February 14, 2020

Attention:

Mayor Charlie Clark and Members of Saskatoon City Council



cc: Transportation Committee Chair
 Access Transit Manager, Ms. Loewen
 Accessibility Advisory Committee Chair
 Kidney Foundation of Saskatchewan
 Patient and Family Advisory Committee Renal Health SHA
 Federal Ministry of Transportation
 Provincial Ministry of Health
 Provincial Ombudsman, Saskatoon Office

Several months ago you received our letter and referred it to your Transportation Committee and then to your Accessibility Advisory Committee. On behalf of our group of dialysis patients and their partners (that includes my husband and me), we have twice presented to meetings of the latter committee.

In November I was accompanied by presenters [REDACTED] (who has since [REDACTED]) and [REDACTED] (whose [REDACTED]). To the January meeting, I brought descriptions of continued examples of waiting and suffering being endured. Again Friday, a patient who lives 10 minutes from St. Paul's at [REDACTED] did not arrive home by Access from 5-9 treatment until 11:25 p.m. [REDACTED] had several bouts of [REDACTED] as well as [REDACTED] and dialysis treatments. We ride Access together to treatments. My husband was so [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] on bumpy, long rides home like, [REDACTED], to [REDACTED], that we are now borrowing against the sale of our family home to cover Long Term Care, and physio and non-metered wheelchair cab rides at \$32 each three times a week home from dialysis. We still have not received a report from your committee.

We acknowledge Ms. Loewen's commitment to accessible transit for all disabled who qualify for Access Transit. However, in response to her refusal to prioritize travel for any group, even for the very ill-disabled; Access Transit has been prioritizing travel for working disabled for years. Prioritizing essential travel already has precedent in your service.

In response to her claim that Access Transit is a public service not a medical service, every person who applies to use Access buses has to be medically assessed and medically approved to qualify. It is a medical as well as a public service. Those who are granted this human right to access transportation would be supportive of the need to attend first to those riders who are suffering and spouses who can ride along to give required help.

Those riders who are travelling to medical appointments or to church or to meeting family or friends or shop can cancel trips when they are ill. Dialysis patients cannot. Their treatments are life-sustaining. We are having to spend up to eight hours including travel for a four-hour

treatment in order for Access buses to pick up and drop off non-ill disabled and make best use of only two buses for Saskatoon at night.

Transportation if cost-shared by responsible Federal and Provincial departments for those citizens our group represents, is affordable. We realize the cost of alternative cab rides after treatment 3 times per week over a year, per patient, is going to cost enough to compete with all the other essential services you must oversee. Most on dialysis already have cost Medicare a lot. Many have died since our small group began this advocacy with our City Councillor, then with the Saskatchewan Ombudsman and also with Human Rights. We need a Good Samaritan response and not the media one that was offered to me last July when our first letter was seen by reporters at City Council. I replied that we would wait for the recommendations of your committees. May we now have the response of your Council.


Mildred Kerr, BA BSW SVM

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