

Cash found to keep cancer doctors: Williams

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Newfoundland and Labrador's three gynecologic oncologists will be eligible for the same massive pay increase given in May to other cancer specialists, Premier Danny Williams said Monday.

The decision marks a "dangerous" precedent but was a necessary move, said Williams, aiming to defuse a health crisis in which the three St. John's-based specialists had threatened to quit in December.

The doctors — specialists Lesa Dawson, Cathy Popadiuk and Patti Power — had submitted letters of resignation to improve the care their patients receive.

In addition to remuneration, they wanted increased operating-room time, extra nursing and clerical support, and guaranteed opportunities to upgrade their skills.

Last week, the Newfoundland and Labrador government said it had solved most of the line items, other than remuneration.

Williams said Monday the three doctors, and several others, are now eligible for a large increase offered in the spring to pathologists as well as medical and radiation oncologists.

Deal a must to stop doctor exodus: premier

The Newfoundland and Labrador government astonished the medical community in May with a pay package that included a \$73,000 raise for pathologists alone.

The offer for medical and radiation oncologists was similar to the deal for radiologists, and brought the total compensation package to \$346,668.

Williams said the May deal overnight brought pay rates for applicable specialties from the lowest levels in the country to among the highest.

He said the deal was necessary to stop medical professionals from leaving the province.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association said it was terrific for specific groups, but did not address larger issues and was also divisive, as it did not include other medical specialists, including gynecologic oncologists.

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[burnt head](#) wrote:Posted 2008/09/22

at 10:54 AM ETGreat News

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[NLdoc40](#) wrote:Posted 2008/09/22

at 10:53 AM ET Paying doctors in NL the going rate for most of Canada is "a dangerous precedent"?

Well, Danny, I would argue that NOT doing so is far more dangerous for the future of health care in this province.

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[GentleReader01](#) wrote:Posted 2008/09/22

at 10:52 AM ET Glad to hear it! Lets hope its a sign the government is ready to get serious and sort out the rest of health care.

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