

## APPENDIX A



### **The Government Minute**

The Government's Responses to the Reports of the Standing Public Accounts  
Committee on the Reports of the Auditor General

February 2022

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## **BACKGROUND**

Section 77(7) of the Legislative Assembly Standing Orders (2006 Revision) states that the Government Minute shall be laid on the Table of the House within three months of laying of the report of the Standing Public Accounts Committee and of the report(s) of the Auditor General to which it relates.

The Government Minute constitutes the Government's response to the Report of the Standing Public Accounts Committee tabled in the Parliament on 08 12 2021 on the following Report prepared by the Auditor General:

1. Follow-up on past PAC recommendations 2021 – Report 1 – August 2021.

The Government Minute also constitutes the Government's partial response to the Report of the Standing Public Accounts Committee tabled in the Parliament on 10 04 2019 on the following Report prepared by the Auditor General:

1. Follow-up on past PAC recommendations 2019 – October 2018.

## Follow-up on past PAC recommendations 2021 – Report 1 – August 2021

The Public Account Committee (“the Committee”) noted that “On review of the Office of the Auditor General’s Report *Follow-up on past PAC recommendations 2021 – Report 1 – August 2021*, which considered two earlier reports, *Ensuring Quality Health Care and a Healthy Population (January 2017)*, and *Government Programmes Supporting Those in Need (May 2015)*, and on critical analysis of two days of witness testimonies and deliberations amongst the Committee Members, the PAC endorses and supports the Auditor General and her team’s thirteen (13) recommendations for the Ministry of Health and Wellness and twenty-five (25) recommendations for the Ministry of Investment, Innovation and Social Development.”

### Ministry of Health and Wellness

*Ensuring Quality Health Care and a Healthy Population (January 2017)*

**Recommendation 1 - The Government should update the National Health Policy and Strategic Plan for the Cayman Islands, including developing the operational plan necessary for its implementation and the monitoring and evaluation plan required to track progress and results. (OAG).**

#### ***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

##### *Ministry of Health & Wellness:*

The Ministry of Health & Wellness (the Ministry) undertakes to review the National Health Policy and Strategic Plan (NHPP) by end of year 2022 (December 2022) with a view to engaging relevant stakeholders for a full comprehensive review of the NHPP. This is following further discussions whereby an extension of the last policy is not suitable.

Development of an operational plan is slated for FY 2023 upon issuance of the updated policy.

Delays during FY 2020-2021 were primarily driven by the focus on the COVID pandemic and the lack of human capital capacity within the Ministry. The shortage of staffing is being addressed with the commencement of two additional Senior Policy Advisors being added, albeit on a temporary basis to start. One commenced in December and the other commenced February 2022. The Ministry is also seeking a Policy Advisor for Health which it anticipates will be realized in April 2022; discussions are on-going with an interested candidate who is seeking a secondment opportunity. Additionally, the Ministry is in the final stages of acquiring an additional Deputy Chief Officer (DCO) to supplement the current DCO.

**Recommendation 2 - The Government should proceed with a law review for the systematic updating of the health system legislative framework. (OAG)**

***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

*Ministry of Health & Wellness:*

Various pieces of legislation are slated for review during the 2022-2023 period. Some of the key immediate priorities are:

1. The Pharmacy Act. This has been reviewed by the current Pharmacy Council and the Ministry is currently reviewing for submission to Caucus which it expects to submit in April 2022, once the Hon Minister has approved such for submission. Once received and reviewed this will be presented to the Minister/Caucus/Cabinet for onward progression.
2. The Public Health Act. An updated Act has been drafted and is awaiting further committee discussion in order to be presented to Minister/Caucus/Cabinet for onward progression. It is anticipated that a draft will be available by June 2022. Stakeholders have been identified for re-engagement and will be contacted during Q2 2022 with discussions to occur thereafter. During FY 2020-2021 resources were primarily focused on responding to the life-threatening COVID pandemic with numerous changes to the Public Health Regulations occurring in the interest of health and safety of the public.
3. The Health Practice Act. This requires the establishment of a review committee for which the identification of relevant stakeholders is anticipated to occur during quarter 2 of 2022.

The additional human capital resources noted in Recommendation 1 above will facilitate moving the updates to the identified legislative priorities forward to accomplish the proposed implementation dates noted.

**Recommendation 3 - The Government should strengthen its relationships with private health care providers and the two-way communication required for it to develop an effective health care system. (OAG)**

***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

Recommendation implemented as at October 2018.

**Recommendation 4 - The Government should assess whether it has the capacity required to execute the roles and responsibilities it has assumed for the Cayman Islands health system, and take appropriate corrective action. (OAG)**

***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

*Ministry of Health & Wellness:*

Further to the mentioned staffing in recommendation 1 above, the Ministry continues to add additional human capital resources as necessary. The 2022-2023 budgets reflect funding to enable this. Other roles being pursued are: a National Epidemiologist to strengthen public health data collection and reporting; a Chief Nursing Officer (Public Health) – to focus on strategic development on a national scale; Communications Manager (Ministry); full-time Chief Medical Officer (replacement); Chief Human Resources Officer to supplement the current two-member team and a Business Manager to focus on risk management, Information Rights and FOI. Ongoing assessment as to required human capacity for a Ministry of Health structure, in comparison to other jurisdictions.

**Recommendation 5 - The Government should review policies and practices for the registration of practitioners and the inspection of health care facilities. It should take steps to ensure that all qualified practitioners are appropriately registered and regulated and that all facilities at which health care services are provided by qualified practitioners are appropriately inspected and certified. (OAG).**

***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

*Ministry of Health & Wellness:*

There is a legislative framework to register and license practitioners and health care facilities, as well as to regulate compliance. The legislation requires a provision to impose fines for those persons who provide health services but are not registered with any of the Councils. This will be reviewed as part of the review of the Health Practice Act and Regulations. Policies and practices will be reviewed in line with any revised legislative framework.

As noted above in recommendation 2, a review of the Health Practice Act is slated.

**Recommendation 6 - The Ministry of Health should receive regular reports on the nature and extent of compliance with the Health Practice Law and Health Insurance Law and Regulations to ensure that it has the information it needs to take appropriate corrective action as necessary. (OAG)**

***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

Recommendation implemented as at October 2018.

**Recommendation 7 - The Government should put in place a performance management and reporting framework for the Cayman Islands health system to inform decision making and provide accountability to the Legislative Assembly and the public. (OAG)**

***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

*Ministry of Health & Wellness:*

The former Chief Medical Officer (CMO) intended to develop and rollout a National Healthcare Standards programme using the UK's NICE guidelines which was to be adopted by all health care facilities. So far, the meetings held included a multi-stakeholder group of public and private persons. In addition, the CMO intended to provide an annual report on the health system to be tabled in Parliament by the Minister of Health & Wellness. The Current CMO will provide prior to her departure.

This (development of National Healthcare Standards) had to be deferred due to the COVID pandemic, however it is anticipated that this will be revisited mid-year 2022 to determine if stakeholder engagement is possible to be re-started prior to end of 2022.

**Recommendation 8 - The Government should evaluate the design and performance of the CayHealth programme and, as appropriate, extend it to cover a wider population. (OAG)**

***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

*Ministry of Health & Wellness:*

The Ministry intends to seek a presentation by the HSA on this program for consideration by the Minister/Caucus/Cabinet as to whether this would be feasible for roll-out to civil servants. The presentation has been requested and the Ministry is awaiting a suitable date for HSA to present. This is being sought for April 2022.

**Recommendation 9 - The Government should ensure that health statistics used for purposes of planning, management and accountability distinguish between Caymanian and non-Caymanian populations. (OAG).**

***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

*Ministry of Health & Wellness:*

This recommendation was not accepted. However, once a national epidemiologist is retained this should facilitate better reporting of data to enable better decision-making by policy makers.

**Recommendation 10** - The PAC recommends that the Ministry re-assess the report: and as well as carefully consider the nine recommendations and produce a plan to implement the suggested recommendations. (PAC)

**Latest Government Update (February 2022):**

*Ministry of Health & Wellness:*

See above responses for the update on the various recommendations.

**Recommendation 11** - The PAC strongly recommends, given the magnitude of the expenditures and the impact of these findings on the Health of the Country, that the Government address these concerns with some urgency:

- (a) “The Ministry of Health, with the advice of the HSA Medical Director, and in consultation with the Medical and Dental Council, should issue a policy on how to develop Caymanian Doctors, to Board certification level and provide a grant to the HSA to fund these staff developments through proper training. (PAC)

**Latest Government Update (February 2022):**

*Ministry of Health & Wellness:*

The Ministry undertakes to ensure that a formal policy is presented to Minister/Caucus/Cabinet by end of quarter 2 of 2022.

Currently the Ministry funds \$150,000 to the HSA per annum for Medical Internships to develop Caymanian Doctors. Further information is being gathered to form the policy therefore additional details will be shared at such time.

- (b) The Ministry of Health in consultation with the Health Insurance Commission should review relevant legislation to enable private sector coverage into retirement. (PAC)

**Latest Government Update (February 2022):**

*Ministry of Health & Wellness:*

The Ministry undertakes to review the provision/access for insurance to persons at retirement age obtaining health insurance coverage during 2022. Any prior available consultants assessments and/or reports will be reviewed for any relevant recommendations.

- (c) The Medical Officer of Health should collect relevant health data from the private sector as well as the HSA in future and should publically report on both sets of data on a regular basis to help inform policy and decision making. (PAC)

***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

*Ministry of Health & Wellness:*

Further to response to recommendation 7, the Ministry is also pursuing the addition of a National Epidemiologist which will support improvements to the reporting of national data. The job description is being developed and a Consultant Epidemiologist is being considered for the interim.

**Recommendation 12 - MHECH should consider Canada as an option for Caymanian doctors to obtain specialty board certification. (PAC 2019)**

***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

*Ministry of Health & Wellness:*

This will be considered as part of the policy noted under response to recommendation 11a above.

**Recommendation 13 - MHECH should consider ways to reduced costs of healthcare such as duty removal from drugs and medical supplies as well as educing HSA's 100% mark-up on the cost of drugs. (PAC)**

***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

*Ministry of Health & Wellness:*

This will be considered further during 2022.

The Committee also recommended that responses to the following areas be provided by the Chief Officer of Ministry of Health and Wellness, in a timely manner:

**PAC Required Undertaking 1** - To find out which Government Minute(s) remained outstanding from the Ministry of Health and Wellness and complete the Government Minute(s) for Tabling in the House. (PAC)

***Ministry Response:***

*Ministry of Health & Wellness:*

The Office of the Deputy Governor coordinates the gathering of Ministry responses/updates to OAG/PAC recommendations in relation to OAG reports. The Ministry of Health commits to providing complete responses, as best as possible, to the ODG reports in a timely manner, to enable the Tabling of the Government Minutes in Parliament within the required timeframes.

**PAC Required Undertaking 2** - To develop a national health care strategy and the operational plan to support the implementation of a national health care strategy, within the next six months. (PAC)

***Ministry Response:***

*Ministry of Health & Wellness:*

See response to OAG recommendation 1 above.

**PAC Required Undertaking 3** - To provide an update on plans to develop and roll-out a national health care standards programme and obtain a corresponding report from the Chief Medical Officer, prior to his departure. (PAC)

***Ministry Response:***

*Ministry of Health & Wellness:*

See response to OAG recommendation 7 above.

**PAC Required Undertaking 4** - To put forward recommendation no. 9 to the Minister, that Government should ensure that health statistics used for purposes of planning, management and accountability distinguish between Caymanian and non-Caymanian populations. (PAC)

***Ministry Response:***

*Ministry of Health & Wellness:*

See response to OAG recommendation 9 above.

**PAC Required Undertaking 5** - To request the Minister bring back draft legislation requiring doctors to report the incidence of cancer in the country, to create an accurate National Cancer Registry, and thereby enable informed decisions to be made about the prevalence of cancer. (PAC)

**Ministry Response:**

*Ministry of Health & Wellness:*

This is a priority area for the current Minister of Health & Wellness so will be reviewed during 2022. The actual tabling of draft legislation is subject to Cabinet's approval of such.

**PAC Required Undertaking 6** - To request the Minister further extend the CayHealth Programme to cover civil servant and HSA staff. (PAC)

**Ministry Response:**

*Ministry of Health & Wellness:*

See response under OAG recommendation 8 above.

**PAC Required Undertaking 7** - To review and update laws that govern health care and bring them to Parliament for Tabling, such as amendments to the Health Practice Act, the Pharmacy Act and the Public Health Act. (PAC)

**Ministry Response:**

*Ministry of Health & Wellness:*

See response under OAG recommendation 2 above.

**PAC Required Undertaking 8** - To recruit sufficient staff required to effectively execute the roles and responsibilities assumed by the Cayman Islands health care system. (PAC)

**Ministry Response:**

*Ministry of Health & Wellness:*

See response under OAG recommendation 4 above.

**PAC Required Undertaking 9** - To establish a written policy for the development of Caymanian doctors. (PAC)

**Ministry Response:**

*Ministry of Health & Wellness:*

See response under PAC recommendation 11a above.

**PAC Required Undertaking 10** - To provide to the Committee a breakdown of how the \$500,000 scholarship fund, intended for the development of Caymanian doctors, has so far been allocated. (PAC)

**Ministry Response:**

*Ministry of Health & Wellness:*

This was sourced from the Ministry of Education and was provided to PAC on 24 February, 2022.

**PAC Required Undertaking 11** - To provide to the Committee the number of Caymanians who received scholarship funds to study medicine and who are currently: (a) studying within the medical field; and (b) practicing medicine in the Cayman Islands. (PAC)

**Ministry Response:**

*Ministry of Health & Wellness:*

This was sourced from the Ministry of Education and was provided to PAC on 24 February, 2022.

**PAC Required Undertaking 12** - To advise the Committee if the Ministry plans to consider ways to reduce the cost of health care, for instance by removing duty from drugs and medical supplies, or be reducing the HSA's mark-up on the cost of drugs. (PAC)

**Ministry Response:**

*Ministry of Health & Wellness:*

See response to PAC recommendation 13.

**Recommendation 1 - The Government should develop a coordinated social assistance strategy, including clear priorities and the specification of desired results, to provide overall direction for planning and delivering social assistance and monitoring the results achieved. (OAG)**

***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

*Ministry of Investment, Innovation & Social Development:*

This and the KPMG (2017) report identify several different avenues for people to access social assistance. The Needs Assessment Unit (NAU) now sits within the Ministry of Investment, Innovation and Social Development (MIISD) who is undergoing a process of developing a Social Development Strategy over the next two years, which will include a coordinated social assistance strategy. MIISD has direct oversight of NAU, the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), and Sunrise Adult Training Centre.

Within the social assistance strategy, MIISD will be reviewing the roles and responsibilities of these three organizations to streamline processes, as well as form partnerships with other ministries, private sector organizations and non-profit organizations. As part of the existing streamlining of social assistance, the Ministry is forming a partnership with the Ministry of Health and Wellness to streamline access to CINICO services, as well as exploring a partnership with the Ministry of Education to have a single point of access for pre-school financial assistance.

Additionally, MIISD will be repealing the current Poor Persons (Relief) Law and putting in place new Financial Assistance legislation and regulations which are currently being reviewed by focus groups. Additionally, the Ministry is procuring a streamlined case management system for all three social development organizations. The timeline to complete the aforementioned aspects of the social development strategy are by the end of Q3 2022.

In addition, the ministry is undertaking an organizational review with a view to understand strengths and weaknesses of the organization to determine if the organizational structure is fit for purpose. This will allow us to continue to develop the larger Social Development Strategy.

It is important to note, the Minister for Social Development established a Social Development Strategic Policy Advisory Committee (SDSPAC) which includes both private and public sector stakeholders. The key purpose of SDSPAC is to advise Cabinet on the steps being taken by the Ministry responsible for Social Development to develop and implement a strategic plan for social development for the Cayman Islands with focus on

the strategic overview for service delivery by the Needs Assessment Unit, Department of Children & Family Services, and the Sunrise Adult Training Centre.

**Recommendation 2 - The Government should assess the manner in which roles, responsibilities and budgets are assigned, with a view to facilitating a coordinated social assistance programme. (OAG)**

***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

*Ministry of Investment, Innovation & Social Development:*

At the Ministry level, MIISD has distributed roles and responsibilities within the Social Development team to have individual policy advisors responsible for children, adults and families, and older persons, respectively, while also working collaboratively within the aforementioned strategy. Each individual policy advisor within the strategy will be responsible for assessing the various social assistance programmes and services, and forming partnerships.

The budget allocations for 2022 and 2023 were assigned in line with demographic works (i.e. Children and Youth, Adults and Older persons) to achieve the assignment of roles and responsibilities. The CIG has allocated budgets to identify and procure technology and systems that will provide additional coordination of services.

Additionally, an organizational review of the NAU is ongoing, including a review of the current human resources and organizational structure. The job descriptions are being revised and will take into account operational roles and responsibilities to support the coordinated social development strategy. This work is expected to be completed by the end of Q2, 2022.

**Recommendation 3 - The Government should develop the means to measure and monitor performance, and to provide the Legislative Assembly with regular feedback on the results achieved by the social assistance programmes. (OAG)**

***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

*Ministry of Investment, Innovation & Social Development:*

MIISD will be replacing the current internal case management system for a new one which will better meet the needs of the organization and be equipped to gather data more efficiently. Additionally, within the MIISD Social Development Strategy, there are outlined outcomes and outputs that the Ministry will be monitoring on a quarterly basis to be able to respond to performance and service delivery needs. Within the organizational review,

a baseline current state of the organization is being determined, also taking into account the details from the OAG and KPMG reviews of social assistance in the Cayman Islands.

**Recommendation 4 - The Government should develop the means to obtain up-to-date information on potential needs for social assistance as well as information on trends in such needs to assist in the development and maintenance of a coordinated strategy. (OAG)**

***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

*Ministry of Investment, Innovation & Social Development:*

As has been discussed within the responses above, MIISD is currently in the process developing a coordinated social assistance strategy. Within this strategy, the organizational review will provide an updated understanding of the current state of the organization's service delivery and potential challenges. Additionally, the new case management system will allow us to gather data from applicants and clients to identify trends, monitor progress of social assistance delivery and make modifications as necessary.

**Recommendation 5 - The Government should set clear, realistic and measurable objectives for each social assistance programme to provide a basis for assessing its performance.**

***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

*Ministry of Investment, Innovation & Social Development:*

MIISD, within the Social Development Strategy, has set outputs and outcomes for each department to achieve. Additionally, these measures will be Director's performance agreement goals for 2022, which will be monitored and managed by the ministry.

**Recommendation 6 - The Government should develop legislation that provides appropriate authority for programmes to pay benefits to Seamen and ex-service men, and arrange for the subsequent development of policies, criteria and operational procedures consistent with legislation. (OAG)**

***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

*Ministry of Investment, Innovation & Social Development:*

MIISD is in the process of conducting focus groups to review a draft Financial Assistance Bill and associated regulations, which is intended to come into effect following a repeal of the current Poor Persons (Relief) Law. Additionally, the eligibility criteria for the Seafarer Exgratia Benefit Eligibility Criteria was updated with approval from the Minister MIISD on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2021 (see website on nau.gov.ky).

**Recommendation 7 - The Government should follow through on the 2013-14 Strategic Policy Statement to amend the Poor Persons (Relief) Law and to develop accompanying regulations so as to provide sound legislative authority for poor relief programmes including the basis for the development of criteria needed to effectively manage the programmes. (OAG)**

***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

*Ministry of Investment, Innovation & Social Development:*

The Poor Persons (Relief) Law will be repealed and subsequently replaced by the Financial Assistance Act. This Act and accompanying regulations are in draft form and currently focus groups are being held to discuss key components. The previous Law was last revised in 1997 and did not provide adequate legal understanding of social assistance. The revised law and regulations provide, for example, further details on those who are eligible to access social assistance. Following feedback from the focus groups it is envisioned that further enhancements will be made to the bill and will be presented to the Minister responsible for Social Development within the first quarter of 2022.

**Recommendation 8 - The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) together with the Ministry of Health should develop and document policies, eligibility criteria and procedures to guide the assessment of people as indigents for purposes of health insurance and medical services. (OAG)**

***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

*Ministry of Investment, Innovation & Social Development:*

MIISD is in the process of seeking Cabinet's approval for the transfer of indigent medical assessments to be carried out by the Ministry responsible for Health. The rationale for this transfer is to simplify and streamline the process for indigent persons to access health insurance. The NAU will allow access to the Ministry of Health and Wellness (MOHW) to check their database to see if applicants have qualified for indigent services, and then the MOHW will, within their subject-matter expertise, review the application for the health processes as they do for other health insurance applications.

**Recommendation 9 - The Government should ensure that regular re-assessments of eligibility are carried out in all programmes that determine eligibility on the basis of a person's financial circumstances. (OAG)**

***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

*Ministry of Investment, Innovation & Social Development:*

MIISD agrees with this recommendation and, depending on the services that each individual receives, they will be re-assessed on what is determined to be a regular basis within new operational policies following the enactment of the new financial assistance legislation. An example of this being assessed on an individualized basis is that older persons or persons with long-term disabilities will be assessed less frequently than able-bodied persons who are temporarily unemployed.

**Recommendation 10 - The ministries responsible should take steps to ensure that eligibility for benefits is determined by robust and transparent application of eligibility criteria, and clearly supported by evidence in programme files. (OAG)**

***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

*Ministry of Investment, Innovation & Social Development:*

In December 2021, NAU online was launched, which makes the criteria and application available online. This improved accessibility has provided increased transparency of decision making as applicants are able to electronically check through the NAU website on the status of their application.

**Recommendation 11 - The Government should develop appropriate appeals processes and ensure that all applicants for benefits are provided with information about how to appeal decisions regarding their eligibility, including who will adjudicate the appeal and when they can expect to be informed of outcomes. (OAG)**

***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

*Ministry of Investment, Innovation & Social Development:*

The draft financial assistance bill includes clear and transparent regulations on appealing a decision. In the interim, NAU has developed an appeals process which is posted on the website-nau.gov.ky. This current appeals process is as follows:

## NAU Appeals Process

If you are unhappy with a decision you have received in response to a complaint, you may submit an appeal to the Director of the Needs Assessment Unit – Ms. Tamara Hurlston. When an appeal is received by the NAU, senior management will review the decision and determine whether or not the decision was made in line with the NAU’s Eligibility Criteria for Financial Relief Assistance and the relevant laws and internal guidelines.

- The Appeal should be submitted in a sealed envelope or via email to the Compliance and Operational Manager ([NAUcompliance@gov.ky](mailto:NAUcompliance@gov.ky)) and to the attention of the Director of the Needs Assessment Unit, Ms. Tamara Hurlston ([tamara.hurlston@gov.ky](mailto:tamara.hurlston@gov.ky)).
- Once the Director has reviewed the matter and has made a decision, a formal response, detailing findings and decisions, will be issued to the applicant in writing.
- If the applicant is not satisfied with the final decision of the Director, the next available remedy would be to seek recourse via the Office of the Ombudsman.
- The Appellant will receive a response from the NAU acknowledging receipt of the complaint within 2 working days and NAU’s formal decision regarding the matter will be provided within 30 calendar days.

**Recommendation 12** - The Government should ensure that social assistance programme terms and conditions are consistent with the resources available to the government for these purposes – including the resources required to administer the programs and provide quality services. (OAG)

### ***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

#### ***Ministry of Investment, Innovation & Social Development:***

The allocated budget for 2022 and 2023 identifies the required resources for each social assistance programme. This budget is being closely monitored by the MIISD finance team and the policy advisors in relation to the outcomes and outputs identified, as well as the trends that will be monitored through the case management system. It is important to note that although we are unable to control community needs, it is our responsibility to assess those needs and provide adequate resources to the best of our ability.

**Recommendation 13** - The PAC would like to suggest that a major overhaul of the procedures and policies, to devolve authority and reduce the bureaucratic duplication that was clearly demonstrated in the public hearings may be a better use of Government resources. (PAC 2016)

### ***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

#### ***Ministry of Investment, Innovation & Social Development:***

The draft Financial Assistance Bill identifies the role and responsibility of the Director and

aims to reduce any bureaucratic duplications. Additionally, following the approval at Cabinet of new legislation, NAU will revise their operational policies and procedures. In the interim, the appeals process, and revised eligibility criteria have been implemented as previously mentioned.

**Recommendation 14** - The PAC expects that the Government minute will show how the resources to complete the implementation of these recommendations, by the Auditor General, is being provided in the 2016-17 budget. (PAC 2016)

**Latest Government Update (February 2022):**

Recommendation implemented in 2018.

**Recommendation 15** - The PAC re-endorses the twelve recommendations previously made by the Auditor General and the additional two recommendations made by the PAC in 2015 as summarized in Appendix 2 of the report. The Committee urges the Government to implement the recommendations as a matter of priority. (PAC 2018)

**Latest Government Update (February 2022):**

Response as per OAG Recommendations 1 – 12, and PAC Recommendations 13 & 14 above.

**Recommendation 16** - The Committee was concerned that KPMG was commissioned to prepare an Outline Business Case that appeared to only consider two options for welfare payments to those in need (1) keeping the current system in place, or (2) moving to an integrated operation where social service recipients can go to a one-stop-shop for all public assistance programs. (PAC 2018)

**Latest Government Update (February 2022):**

No further action by OAG.

**Recommendation 17** - The Committee recommends that the Government consider the creation of a standard rate payment for welfare recipients, whether they are classed as indigents, seamen, veterans or those receiving temporary assistance. (PAC 2018)

**Latest Government Update (February 2022):**

*Ministry of Investment, Innovation & Social Development:*

The topic of standard rate payments will be added to the SDSPAC Agenda for Q1 of 2022

and will be discussed and an outcome will be determined and subsequently added to the Financial Assistance Legislation.

**Recommendation 18** - The Committee is concerned that the government is integrating systems that are not currently working and there doesn't seem to be a plan to correct the issues that are not working in those units before integration and recommend that systems are not integrated. (PAC 2018)

***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

No specific PAC recommendation made. No further action by OAG.

**Recommendation 19** - The Committee is also concerned that the Chief Officer in the Ministry had redirected the unit's budget for staff to recruit staff to deal with housing repairs, which exacerbated staff shortages. The Committee recommends that staff shortages are rectified as soon as possible. (PAC 2018)

***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

Recommendation implemented as at October 2018.

**Recommendation 20** - The Committee agrees that the Department of Children and Family Services and the Needs Assessment Unit were failed at the ministry level by the lack of strategic policy dealing with social welfare. (PAC 2018)

***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

No specific PAC recommendation made. No further action by OAG.

**Recommendation 21** - The PAC recommends that the Needs Assessment Unit and Department of Children and Family Services remain separate entities whose functions must be coordinated through policy reform from the ministry including the provision of adequate resources. (PAC 2018)

***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

Recommendation implemented as at October 2018.

**Recommendation 22 - The Ministry of Health, Environment, Housing and Culture (MHECH) should develop a housing strategy for the country that includes housing for low income families. (PAC 2019)**

***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

*Ministry of Planning, Agriculture, Housing & Infrastructure*

As the Ministry now with responsibility for housing, we agree with the recommendation that a housing strategy for the country which includes housing for low income families should be developed.

The Ministry of PAHI is committed to undertaking an initial assessment of any reports and documents that were prepared on housing, with the view of submitting a draft strategy to the Government by end of 2023.

**Recommendation 23 - MHECH should review the method for approving medical indigents and establish a post at the HSA to provide easier access. (PAC 2019)**

***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

*Ministry of Health & Wellness:*

The current position is that there is no dedicated post at the HSA for this but the patient services and medical social worker assists persons to navigate the applications process.

**Recommendation 24 - The legislation to replace the Poor Relief Law should be brought to the Legislature as soon as possible. (PAC 2019)**

***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

*Ministry of Investment, Innovation & Social Development:*

The draft Financial Assistance Bill is being reviewed by focus groups to receive feedback and additional recommendations for revisions. The collated feedback will be considered and incorporated. The amended bill will be presented to the Minister responsible for Social Development within Q1 of 2022, and subsequently to Cabinet once it has been approved by the Minister.

**Recommendation 25 - The Ministry of Community Affairs should do a review of the staffing levels of the Needs Assessment Unit to determine that adequate resources are provided to deal with the workload. (PAC 2019)**

***Latest Government Update (February 2022):***

MIISD is undergoing an organizational review, including analyzing human resources capacity, organizational structure and job descriptions as part of the Social Development Strategy.