

FOR RELEASE
September 9, 2016

Government of Yukon supports distribution of pregnancy tests

WHITEHORSE—The Government of Yukon has provided \$6,000 to Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society Yukon to buy, install and stock four new pregnancy test dispensers.

"This pilot project has shown that we can work together to support women in making informed choices by providing access to the tools they need," Minister of Health and Social Services Mike Nixon said. "The Government of Yukon is pleased to continue to support this worthwhile project."

In March 2015, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society Yukon joined the University of Alaska's two-year pilot project, which included the installation of pregnancy test dispensers and posters at key points in Whitehorse. The goal of the study was to assess the best method to increase awareness of the effects of alcohol during pregnancy on the unborn fetus.

"While we won't have the results of the University of Alaska study before early 2017, we are very encouraged by the uptake of the pregnancy tests," Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society Yukon executive director Wenda Bradley said. "It's a simple idea that we hope will have a big impact on the public's awareness of the effect of alcohol on a developing fetus and thus reduce the number of people affected by fetal alcohol spectrum disorder in the future."

In the pilot project, dispensers were installed at the Dirty Northern Pub and Yukon College in Whitehorse, funded by Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society Yukon, and at the Downtown Hotel in Dawson, funded by the Canadian Prenatal Nutrition Program. All three establishments have agreed to keep the dispensers in place. They will be joined by four new dispensers at the following Whitehorse locations: Canada Games Centre, Gold Rush Inn, High Country Inn, and the Integrated Supports for Yukon Youth Centre.

The funding is in place for the 2016/17 fiscal year and covers the cost and installation of the dispensers. Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society Yukon will continue to maintain all dispensers.

September 9 is Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Day.

Yukon is a member of the Canada Northwest Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Partnership, made up of the three territories and the four western provinces.

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