



FOR RELEASE
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Agreement between the Yukon government and Many Rivers Counselling ensures no break in service

WHITEHORSE—With assistance from the Department of Health and Social Services, Many Rivers Counselling Services will assume responsibility for programming previously offered through the non-government organization the Second Opinion Society (SOS).

"We are indeed fortunate that Many Rivers is able to take on this additional responsibility right away, thereby ensuring that those individuals who use SOS and its services will be able to continue on as before," Minister of Health and Social Services Mike Nixon said. "It is a seamless transition between service providers, and allows for continuity in community-based mental health services."

Many Rivers executive director Brent Ramsay explained that Many Rivers Counselling was approached by SOS to discuss the feasibility of assuming the SOS client base if the society disbanded.

"Like any small organization, they were facing some lean times, resource-wise, but did not want to abandon their client group. It is a natural fit for us," Ramsay said. "I see us as the umbrella group overseeing this service."

SOS served primarily as a drop-in centre, providing support, advocacy and resources in a non-judgemental, non-traditional way, five days a week.

"We are pleased with the partnership and new agreement which was approved by both the SOS Board and the SOS membership," SOS acting chair Shannon Shepherd.

SOS volunteers will continue to provide the service while Many Rivers reviews the organization's operations and needs. A steering committee that includes former SOS board members will help guide the management of the program. Money provided to SOS will be redirected to Many Rivers to assist with the additional costs of providing this service.

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