



FOR RELEASE  
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## **French language services pilot project goes live**

WHITEHORSE—Minister of Health and Social Services Doug Graham, Minister responsible for the French Language Services Directorate Elaine Taylor and members of the Francophone community officially launched a pilot project that actively offers French language and interpretation services to Yukon Francophone residents at three separate health sector sites.

The pilot project aims to provide Francophones with improved access to frontline services at three pilot sites selected jointly by the French-speaking community and government officials. Insured Health Services, Homecare Services, and the Specialists' Clinic at the Whitehorse General Hospital will begin delivering a program with a client-centered approach to service delivery, known as active offer, in both official languages.

"The addition of interpretation services is a dynamic and concrete approach to the continued improvement of health services in French in Yukon," Minister of Health and Social Services Doug Graham said.

Interpretation services are an important component of the active offer program. In the event bilingual staff is not available to greet and assist clients in French, confidential interpretation services will be delivered over the telephone by trained medical interpreters. These services will be provided by a professional firm currently used in other Canadian jurisdictions.

"This pilot project is a significant milestone in the development of a more strategic and cohesive French-language service delivery model within the Yukon government," the Minister responsible for the French Language Services Directorate Elaine Taylor said. "We look forward to learning from these projects, which will serve as a reference for the development of further services."

Taylor added that the government is also working on guidelines for staffing bilingual positions, which is the third component of this pilot project.

"The Yukon Hospital Corporation is happy to provide improved levels of frontline French-language services at the Whitehorse General Hospital," Yukon Hospital Corporation chief executive officer Jason Bilsky said. "We believe this initiative will result in improved quality and safety of services provided to our Francophone clients."

Signage clearly indicating the availability of services in French is in place and forms are available in French at the pilot sites. Staff will receive formal training as part of the project.

"We encourage the francophone community to use these services, as they represent an important step towards the development of responsive and effective services in French," Association franco-yukonnaise president Angélique Bernard said. "The Association franco-yukonnaise would like to thank the Yukon government for its commitment to improving its French language services."

The Association franco-yukonnaise and the Yukon Francophone Health Network have been active partners in this initiative.

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