

FOR RELEASE
April 21, 2016

Government of Yukon shares preliminary FASD Prevalence Study results at national conference

WHITEHORSE—Preliminary findings of a Government of Yukon-supported study into the prevalence of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder in Yukon's corrections system were presented by principal investigator Dr. Kaitlyn McLachlan, along with members of the study team, to delegates at the National Biennial Conference on Adolescents and Adults with FASD Conference on April 7.

The Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Prevalence Study aims to better understand how individuals in Yukon's corrections system face challenges linked to FASD, mental-health disorders and substance-use problems. The study was undertaken in collaboration with Yukon's Department of Justice, Dr. McLachlan, the Child and Family Research Institute at BC Children's Hospital and the University of British Columbia.

"The Department of Justice has received the preliminary study results and looks forward to evaluating the results of the complete data analysis," Minister of Justice Brad Cathers said. "On behalf of the Government of Yukon, I would like to thank Dr. McLachlan and the entire study team for their hard work and dedication. This study helps create a stronger information base to use in making strategic decisions that inform service delivery and response."

Of the 80 fully assessed participants, 14 people – or 17.5 per cent of the total sample – were diagnosed with FASD. Preliminary evaluation of the data also suggests significant rates of cognitive impairment, addiction and mental health difficulties. All participants were offered support during and after the study in order to help them engage in the services they need.

The study was undertaken in parallel with Yukon Health and Social Services initiatives to train and implement an adult FASD assessment and diagnostic team, and with the engagement of the Yukon First Nations Health and Social Development Commission.

"Collaboration is important as we strive to find the best way possible to serve clients across a broad spectrum of ages and service needs," Minister of Health and Social Services Mike Nixon said. "The Government of Yukon continues to provide a comprehensive range of initiatives, services and programs related to FASD in partnership with other organizations and government departments."

Through the prevalence study, local professionals were trained in FASD research, assessment and diagnosis, creating capacity for the community clinic that now assesses adults in Yukon with the goal of developing supportive strategies for those individuals.

Yukon is a member of the Canada Northwest FASD Partnership, representing the three northern territories and the four western provinces.

-30-

Contact:

Dan Macdonald
Cabinet Communications
867-393-6470
dan.macdonald@gov.yk.ca

Tyler Plaunt
Communications, Justice
867-667-3221
tyler.plaunt@gov.yk.ca

News Release #16-154



Stay up to date with the latest Yukon government news by subscribing to our RSS feed here:
<http://www.gov.yk.ca/news/rss.html>. Or follow us on Twitter @yukongov.