

FOR RELEASE
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Government of Yukon takes action to improve social service delivery

WHITEHORSE—The Government of Yukon is taking steps to improve service delivery for children and adults with disabilities.

"One of the consistent issues we hear is about the difficulty transitioning from children and youth focused programming to adult services and supports," Health and Social Services Minister Mike Nixon said. "We are making adjustments to the internal workings of the department with the aim to deliver better service to those who use these programs."

Recent changes to the internal structure of the social services division of the Department of Health and Social Services include moving the Family Supports to Children with Disabilities program and the Services to Persons with Disabilities program into one area, reporting to the same director. This change is expected to improve information sharing among staff to make transition planning from youth to adult programming simpler.

"We welcome the adjustment because of the positive impact it will have on Yukon students and youth with disabilities," Minister of Education Doug Graham said. "The changes will better support individuals before, during and after the transition to life after secondary school."

At age 16, youth and their families work with program staff to begin planning the transition process. Support teams will now be able to conduct planning meetings for each youth and be better positioned to develop plans that take them into adulthood and beyond.

"It is extremely important to start early and take steps to create a transition plan that will ensure continued supports to the individual, taking into account the individual's needs and what programs and services are available to support those needs," Nixon added.

A committee has also been established to represent individuals with disabilities and enable parents to contribute to the process.

An additional change introduces respite funding payments to family members to reduce the burden of having to find appropriate respite supports.

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