



Government of Yukon

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April 6, 2010

Secure Medical Unit a new option for mental health patients

WHITEHORSE – Health and Social Services Minister Glenn Hart and Yukon Hospital Corporation chief executive officer Joe MacGillivray have formally opened the Secure Medical Unit at Whitehorse General Hospital.

"I am pleased that funding from Health and Social Services enabled this secure unit to become a reality for Yukon residents who require psychiatric hospital care," Hart said. "It will benefit mental health patients and provide a measure of security and safety for all involved."

MacGillivray said the new unit was created by reconfiguring existing hospital beds. The renovations resulted in five rooms, plus two seclusion rooms, with a secure door that can be used to increase patient safety.

"We now have 24-hour mental health nursing, plus increased social work support," MacGillivray said. "The focus of the unit is mental health but if hospital bed occupancy is high and use of this unit is low, we have retained the ability to use the beds for general medical clients."

The formal opening was attended by representatives of Mental Health Services and local psychiatrists.

"This new unit will improve hospital and patient security and will assist with patient treatment. The focus will be on diagnosis and stabilization but this is an excellent solution to meet patient needs," local psychiatrist Dr. Armando Heredia said.

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See photo below.

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Psychiatrist Armando Heredia explains the features of the new secure medical unit to Health and Social Services Minister Glenn Hart and Yukon Hospital Corporation Board member Wes Wirth.

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