

FOR RELEASE
August 15, 2017

Three deputy ministers join the Government of Yukon

New deputy ministers have been appointed in three departments: Health and Social Services; Tourism and Culture; and Education.

Stephen Samis will be the deputy minister of Health and Social Services effective September 18. Assistant deputy minister Brenda Lee Doyle has been acting as deputy minister since November 2016.

In Tourism and Culture, Valerie Royle will become deputy minister effective August 15. Murray Arsenault, who has been serving in the position since April 2015, is leaving the government.

Rob Wood will take on the role of deputy minister of Education effective September 20. Judy Arnold, who has been serving as the deputy minister of Education since May 2015, has retired.

Samis, Royle and Wood were all successful candidates selected through a competitive recruitment process.

Jim Connell has been appointed as the Cabinet secretary and deputy minister of the Executive Council Office effective August 15.

The deputy minister positions at Highways and Public Works and Public Service Commission will be filled through competitive recruitment. In the Public Service Commission, Tom Ulyett will continue to act as the public service commissioner until a recruitment process is completed. In Highways and Public Works, Paul McConnell will continue to act as the deputy minister while an ongoing recruitment process is completed. Lesley McCullough will continue to act as the deputy minister in Justice.

Quotes

"I am pleased to have these three seasoned professionals join the Government of Yukon. As leaders in the public service, we look to the deputy ministers to support our efforts to serve Yukoners and provide positive direction to the government.

I would also like to thank Murray Arsenault and Judy Arnold for their years of service. Their efforts and accomplishments are lasting contributions to the Government of Yukon."

–Premier Sandy Silver

Quick facts

- Deputy ministers are the most senior public servants in Government of Yukon departments. They are responsible for the department's budget, day-to-day operations and program development.
- Deputy ministers are appointed and serve at the pleasure of the Premier.

See backgrounder for biographies.

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Biographies

Stephen Samis

Stephen Samis brings over 20 years experience in healthcare improvement, health policy and population health. Since 2010, he has been vice president of programs at the Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement. Prior to that he was national director of health policy for the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada and manager of population health at the Canadian Institute for Health Information. He has also worked with the BC Ministry of Health and AIDS Vancouver Island.

Stephen has chaired, participated in and supported a number of professional committees and associations. Most recently he was invited to join the Advisory Council of the Canadian Population Health Initiative of the Canadian Institute for Health Information. Stephen holds a Master of Arts in Sociology from Simon Fraser University as well as an Honours Bachelor of Arts in Political Sociology from Concordia University and has pursued professional development training in leadership development.

Valerie Royle

Valerie Royle is the sole proprietor of an executive management consulting business. She previously worked as the vice president of Workplace Safety and Apprenticeship at Bluedrop Performance Learning Inc. and before that served as the deputy minister of Education in the Government of Yukon from 2012 to 2015 as well as the president and chief executive

officer of the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board from 2005 to 2012.

She is an online lecturer in disability management through the Pacific Coast University for Workplace Health Sciences as well as in business administration through the Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador. She holds a Masters of Business Administration degree as well as a Certified Disability Management Professional Designation from the Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Rob Wood

Rob Wood brings significant executive-level experience leading large complex organizations in both the public and private sectors. He has held several deputy minister and assistant deputy minister roles in British Columbia, Nova Scotia and the State of Victoria in Australia. Rob's experience crosses a range of portfolios including education, social services and justice. He brings a genuine passion to education as well as significant cross-government experience. He is currently the chief executive officer at Melbourne Polytechnic in Australia.

He holds a Masters of Public Administration from the University of Western Ontario, a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Victoria. He has received Canada's highest award for organizational excellence, a Canada Award of Excellence from the National Quality Institute as well as a British Columbia's Premier's Award for Service Excellence.

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