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FOR RELEASE #11-056

May 5, 2011

Government spearheads interim solution to hospital pressures, "orphan" patients

WHITEHORSE—The Yukon Health and Social Services Minister Glenn Hart today announced that departmental officials have been working closely with the Yukon Medical Association (YMA) and the Yukon Hospital Corporation to find an interim solution to the problem of "orphan" patients currently without physicians and to alleviate pressure at the hospital's emergency room.

"We have been working collaboratively for the past several weeks to address the void created by the recent departure of several of our special licence physicians," Hart said. "Several new physicians will be setting up practice in Whitehorse over the coming months and we want to put in place a short-term solution to ensure patients currently without physicians receive health care services in the interim."

Yukon Hospital Corporation CEO Joe MacGillivray said a collaborative approach is what is needed to respond to the situation.

"We are seeing increased numbers of individuals in the emergency room. A solution that we can all support will help everyone, including the hospital ER staff," MacGillivray said.

YMA president Rao Tadepalli said physicians were aware of the potential for problems and had already been in discussion with government and the hospital about possible solutions.

"We are still working out the details, but we believe that together we have come up with an urgent care solution that will accommodate patients without family physicians," Tadepalli said.

The minister said a joint announcement should be made very soon.

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