



FOR RELEASE
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Seniors kept up to date on Whistle Bend continuing care facility design and development

WHITEHORSE—The Government of Yukon is continuing to engage with Yukon seniors about options for affordable and sustainable continuing care.

Health and Social Services staff are meeting with Yukon seniors to discuss the programming and physical plans for the new continuing care facility planned for Whistle Bend. The meetings about the 150-bed care facility began on September 8 and will continue until late October. Health and Social Services Minister Mike Nixon said initial reaction has been positive.

"People want to know what the facility will offer and what it will look like to make sure they will be well cared for in this new facility," Nixon said. "They see an obvious need and want this done now."

Health and Social Services staff have met with seniors and seniors' organizations in Dawson City and Whitehorse and have been invited to present to the Yukon Council on Aging and the Yukon Order of Pioneers.

Nixon said these meetings and an advisory group will inform program and design refinement. The advisory group includes health care professionals, resident advocates, community members and First Nations representatives.

"This facility will be home for many residents, and we want to do our work now to make sure that it is comfortable and provides the services and supports seniors want," Nixon said.

The minister noted Yukon is following the national trend to build larger facilities rather than several smaller ones because a higher level of care can be provided from a central location.

"These are not seniors lodges or supported living residences; they are facilities for seniors and adults whose care needs are too great for family or friends to manage at home and who need medical assistance daily. This facility provides a suite of services that could not be supported in smaller facilities," Nixon added. "There is a demonstrated need for these services in Yukon, and this new continuing care facility will be built to address those needs."

The new facility, slated for completion in 2018, will house a community hospice palliative care unit. Additionally, the facility will have a designated space for individuals who require specialized mental health services. The entire facility will be designed to accommodate residents with dementia, and will support all levels of care with specialized design features.

The new facility will join the Thomson Centre, Copper Ridge Place and the newly rebuilt Alexander McDonald Lodge in Dawson City as continuing care facilities in Yukon.

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