



FOR RELEASE
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Yukon supporting work at national health table

WHITEHORSE—Minister of Health and Social Services Doug Graham says Yukon is aware of the significant and growing impact dementia will have on the territory's support systems and is moving toward solutions.

"At the recent health ministers' meeting in Banff, dementia was identified as a significant issue. We agreed that as ministers we need to take a leadership role in addressing the challenges of dementia through the identification of effective practices to improve the quality of life for individuals living with dementia and their caregivers, and through investments in research that help us to make informed decisions," Graham said.

The minister added that Yukon is contributing to the research agenda with its participation in the Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvements project aimed at reducing the use of anti-psychotic medications for residents with dementia. The need for increased dementia care and support for caregivers has also been considered in planning for future continuing care facilities.

The minister said discussions also centred on healthcare innovation and appropriateness of care, with all ministers looking to build health systems that are sustainable into the future and which deliver the quality of care that Canadians deserve.

"Again, with our focus here in Yukon on collaboration and integration and the work that went on last year through planning for system transformation to identify gaps, I believe we are well positioned to grapple with the challenges of access, quality, and changing demographics and technology, while remaining fiscally responsible," Graham added.

As a smaller jurisdiction, Graham said Yukon was probably better positioned than most to respond to future challenges and to provide other jurisdictions with best practice examples.

Yukon's smoking rate remains high and the minister said close attention will be paid to work underway in other jurisdictions to restrict the availability and use of flavored tobacco products and electronic cigarettes. In addition, ministers agreed to work collectively on the high cost of drugs used for rare diseases.

"Yukon is also impacted by these costs and we will work with our partners to manage the costs of these rare disease drug therapies," Graham added.

The minister said he returned to Yukon feeling confident that the work of the ministers at this table, and the work of the Health Care Innovation Working Group, as well as the Council of Federation, will have significant impact in the coming months and years on the sustainability and quality of health care for all Canadians. Premier Darrell Pasloski is the co-chair of the working group.

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