

FOR RELEASE
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New Alcohol and Drug Services facility officially opens

WHITEHORSE—Representatives from Yukon First Nations, stakeholder groups, service providers and staff came together today for the opening of the new Sarah Steele Alcohol and Drug Services building in downtown Whitehorse.

"The opening of this facility marks a new beginning for so many things – enhanced alcohol and drug programming for Yukon citizens, new youth addictions services, new cooperative relationships between service providers and a fresh start for those who will come through these doors," Premier Darrell Pasloski said.

The new Sarah Steele building, built at a cost of \$18 million, sits adjacent to the old facility just off 6th Avenue.

"The new building and the enhanced programming will better serve Yukon citizens," Minister of Health and Social Services Mike Nixon said. "We know that awareness of addiction and mental health issues continues to grow, as does the need to respond to those issues. We are now better positioned to do just that."

The facility's staged opening will begin on October 3, following staff orientation and the installation of furniture. An additional 32 staff have been hired to provide the new programming. Alcohol and Drug Services will now offer two separate live-in Intensive Treatment Programs: one for men and one for women, running concurrently. Participants in the programs will explore the physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual effects of addiction and learn skills for living a substance-free life. The programs are a minimum commitment of 30 days and a maximum of 90 days. The length of a stay is determined by the participant's needs and the counsellors' recommendations.

"The new Sarah Steele building is very important to Yukon First Nations," Council of Yukon First Nations Grand Chief Peter Johnston said. "We are pleased with the new expanded programming being offered, which includes the addition of youth programming. The building itself incorporates First Nation holistic cultural aspects and is a very welcoming atmosphere."

Clients will be matched to the service that best meets their needs. These services also include free withdrawal management (detoxification) available at any time, counselling for both youth and adults, and counselling offered by appointment or drop-in. These services will support the community addictions services in rural Yukon communities.

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