



Government of Yukon

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NEWS release

FOR RELEASE #09-068
March 18, 2009

Faster Medical Diagnosis with New X-Ray Technology

WHITEHORSE – Health and Social Services Minister Glenn Hart today announced a teleradiology project, budgeted at \$3.5 million, to provide more timely medical diagnosis for Yukoners in rural communities.

New digital teleradiology equipment will replace existing film x-ray machines in community health centres, and give access to x-ray technology to Beaver Creek and Destruction Bay, who currently don't have x-ray equipment in place.

Converting to digital technology will enable digital x-rays to be electronically sent for diagnosis, allowing diagnosis to occur much faster than the current situation where film x-rays need to be physically mailed to a radiologist outside of the territory.

"Waiting for diagnosis can be a stressful time for patients and their families," Hart said. "Providing more timely access to diagnosis will help reduce this wait-time, and ensure that treatment, if needed, occurs in a timely manner."

Replacing the existing film machines will also improve workplace safety for health centre employees, as they will no longer have to handle hazardous materials used in manual film processing.

Canada Health Infoway is providing \$2.8 million towards the project, with the remaining \$700,000 being funded by Yukon Health and Social Services, pending legislative approval.

"Advancements in digital diagnostic imaging are closing the geographical barriers in health care, enabling authorized health care professions to provide essential services regardless of where the test was conducted or where the health care provider is located," Richard Alvarez, president and CEO of Canada Health Infoway said. "The result is faster diagnosis, allowing treatment to start sooner."

Canada Health Infoway is an independent, not-for-profit organization funded by the federal government. Infoway jointly invests with every province and territory to accelerate the development and adoption of electronic health record projects in Canada. Fully respecting patient confidentiality, these secure systems will provide clinicians and patients with the information they need to better support safe care decisions and manage their own health. Accessing this vital information quickly will help foster a more modern and sustainable health care system for all Canadians.

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