



FOR RELEASE
April 24, 2012

Medically supported detox coming to the Detox Centre at the Sarah Steele Building

WHITEHORSE—An enhanced level of medical care in the Detox Centre at the Sarah Steele Building will ensure an approach to addictions that is evidence-based and consistent with best practices, Health and Social Services Minister Doug Graham announced today.

"In response to the recommendations from the *Task Force on Acutely Intoxicated Persons Report* we are introducing nursing staff to our detox program at the Sarah Steele building to allow for medical detoxification outside of the hospital for individuals experiencing acute withdrawal from alcohol or drugs," Graham said.

Alcohol and Drug Services (ADS) is moving towards a strategic, health and social service-based approach to addictions that will also be culturally appropriate. This is one of several changes planned for ADS that will enhance how addictions treatment is provided in Yukon.

"A number of very positive changes are taking place in addictions programming at Alcohol and Drug Services," Graham added. "These changes are aimed at enhancing services and addressing program gaps to ultimately provide a broader continuum of care and achieve better health and social outcomes for clients and the community."

The department will meet with First Nations, community agencies and other non-government organizations to look at program re-design and concurrently implement other recommendations of the task force. Part of the work includes designing a new facility that will enable delivery of the expanded and enhanced alcohol and drug program. The new facility will replace the decades-old Sarah Steele Building.

Other enhancements to programming include the development of protocol agreements with service providers to clarify roles and responsibilities and to co-ordinate services. In addition, the Yukon College's Northern Institute of Social Justice is delivering training that focuses on gaining competency in the areas of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and trauma-informed care. Another component of this training is cross-cultural awareness.

"We have an opportunity to make real change in Yukoners' lives," Graham said. "We are taking the time necessary to evaluate our current programming and look at how current best practices can be adopted to ensure we meet the collective need of our citizens. I have every faith that we will succeed in doing so."

-30-

Contact:

Elaine Schiman
Cabinet Communications
867-633-7961
elaine.schiman@gov.yk.ca

Patricia Living
Communications, Health & Social Services
867-667-3673
patricia.living@gov.yk.ca

News Release #12-073

