



FOR RELEASE  
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## **Public input sought on proposed health privacy legislation**

WHITEHORSE—The Government of Yukon is moving to provide greater protection of Yukoners' personal health information and is seeking input from residents on how to do that.

New legislation is being proposed and Yukoners are invited to comment on the ways the legislation will protect privacy and help health care workers and government provide improved health services.

"There are very important reasons why an individual's personal health information needs to be appropriately shared among doctors, nurses, pharmacists or other health care providers. This can help save lives or make treatment easier," Health and Social Services Minister Doug Graham said today in announcing the consultation. "However, our government is very aware of the need to share this information in a way that protects the privacy of individuals and provides them with more control over their information."

The department is seeking public input on proposed health privacy legislation that is intended to balance protecting personal privacy of Yukoners with the need to appropriately share personal health information, so that Yukoners receive the highest level of care possible.

The feedback received will help shape the legislation and ensure it has the appropriate balance between an individual's right to privacy and the needs of health care providers and government. In this instance, health care provider refers not only to doctors and nurses, but may also include other health professionals such as dentists, physiotherapists, psychologists, and optometrists. The public input process will also explore which other health care providers should be included in this legislation.

"This legislation will create the framework for initiatives, such as the development of electronic health records," Graham added. "Having this legislation in place will make it easier to introduce electronic health systems such as a drug information system."

Most Canadian jurisdictions have similar laws in place or under development that protect health information. The proposed Yukon legislation will bring Yukon in line with other jurisdictions.

All Yukoners are encouraged to provide feedback. A discussion document explaining the key issues in the proposed legislation can be downloaded from the Health and Social Services website. A printed copy can be obtained by calling 867-667-5747. Comments will be received until July 31.

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