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**SPECIALIST SERVICES SWELL WITH ARRIVAL OF NEW PHYSICIAN**

WHITEHORSE – The arrival of a permanent second general surgeon in the Yukon has increased the number of specialist health services available to Yukoners.

The addition of the new surgeon was announced jointly by Health and Social Services Minister Peter Jenkins, and the new surgeon's partner, Dr. David Storey.

“We are very pleased that Dr. Storey has been able to expand his practice with the addition of Dr. Felicia Huang,” Jenkins said. “I am sure Dr. Storey has felt the pressure of being the only resident surgeon in the Yukon over the past few years. Dr. Huang's decision to move to Yukon permanently will ease the pressure and add greater stability to the practice.”

Dr. Huang, who has moved here from Ontario, took up permanent residence in the Yukon earlier this month. Over the past several years, Dr. Huang has filled in for Storey for short periods of time. Dr. Storey said Dr. Huang is a highly skilled and well-trained general surgeon.

“We must count our lucky stars that she has come here. It is extremely difficult to find high calibre people at this time, and while we all love the Yukon, it is imperative we recognize that these people be welcomed, rewarded well and encouraged by the community to stay.”

Jenkins said the department is continuing to work with the Yukon Medical Association (YMA) to recruit skilled health care providers to the Yukon.

“We recognize the need for physicians as the north continues to grow and we are working diligently towards ensuring the needs are met,” Jenkins said.

The minister said that over the past several years, the department has worked with both the hospital and the YMA to increase services available to Yukoners in the Yukon. Under a pilot project, six knee replacements were performed in the Yukon and this program has now become permanent, with an additional orthopedic specialist and more surgeries added to the roster. Approximately 12 surgeries will be performed in the Yukon in the coming year.

“We saw a very real need to increase the visits from the orthopedic specialist and added a second physician to the roster. This physician will also be performing knee replacements, and it is expected that all the necessary supports will be in place in January,” Jenkins added. “We are continuing to fund this program just as we are continuing to explore options for increasing other specialized services.”

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