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**DEPRESSION IN WORKPLACE FOCUS OF MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS WEEK**

WHITEHORSE – Health and Social Services Minister Brad Cathers is pleased to see Mental Health Services partnering with community businesses and organizations including Northwestel, Yukon College and the City of Whitehorse to organize sessions on depression in the workplace for supervisors, human resource professionals and other employees.

“This is a good example of where we can work together to support the people who work for us,” Cathers said.

Mental Illness Awareness Week, taking place in Yukon Sept. 30 to Oct. 6, will focus on depression in the workplace. Organized by Health and Social Services, along with several community partners, the week features events designed to help educate employers, employees and the public on depression.

“Depression is the most common mental health problem, and will affect one out of every five Canadians at one point in their lives,” Mental Health Services Clinical Manager Marie Fast said. “There is still a stigma attached to depression and other mental illnesses. People need to understand that depression is treatable. It is an illness, and not a sign of weakness or something to be ashamed of.”

Two psychologists from British Columbia will be speaking on depression, with one speaking specifically on how depression impacts the workplace and how it can be managed in a workplace setting.

“Depression doesn’t go away when you leave for work each day, it goes with you to work,” Fast added. “Human resource professionals and supervisors need to understand how to assist employees experiencing depression, and employees need to be educated to recognize the signs and symptoms of depression and how to access help.”

Presentations and workshops for supervisors and employees are scheduled throughout the week. In addition, two public events are scheduled for Oct. 1. These include a noon-hour concert in the atrium of the Elijah Smith building and a presentation on the nature and treatment of depression in the multi-purpose room of the Canada Games Centre, 7 to 9 p.m. Both events are free of charge.

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More information on the week’s events can be found at [www.hss.gov.yk.ca/programs/health/mental\\_health](http://www.hss.gov.yk.ca/programs/health/mental_health).

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