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RURAL RESIDENTS TO BENEFIT FROM EXPANDED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

WHITEHORSE – Health and Social Services Minister Brad Cathers today announced improved mental health services to rural Yukon residents, with the location of a mental health nurse in Dawson City.

“This service expansion recognizes the mental health needs of individuals living in rural Yukon communities and the fact that it’s not always easy for people to get into Whitehorse to get help when they need it,” Cathers said.

The minister added that the new rural mental health consultant will carry a small caseload but will spend most of the time consulting with other health professionals throughout rural Yukon, on individuals who may require assessment, treatment or other case management services. The new consultant will also be available to provide joint assessments in conjunction with community health nurses or physicians, and will be able to make recommendations about treatment plans. In addition, the mental health nurse will be able to assist with referrals to a psychiatrist or to resources in Whitehorse where required.

“We believe this new position will be very important in educating community professionals about how to recognize the signs and symptoms of mental illness and in general, raising awareness in communities about mental illness and reducing stigma – mental illness is not something to be afraid of. The transfer of knowledge is another big plus for creating a rural position,” Cathers said.

Funding for this new position has been provided under the Territorial Health Access Fund.

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