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YUKON MORE ATTRACTIVE FOR NEW PHYSICIANS

WHITEHORSE – Health and Social Services Minister Brad Cathers today announced new initiatives, under the Health Human Resource Strategy, to make Yukon a more attractive place for new doctors.

“Last year, through our Health Human Resource Strategy, we introduced a bursary to support students in both medical and health profession post-secondary institutions, as well as a Family Physician Incentive Program for New Graduates. Today, we are announcing new features to further improve access to health care for all Yukon residents,” Cathers said.

Funds will be provided through the Yukon Medical Association (YMA) in four separate areas. One fund will help renovate and expand space in existing medical clinic buildings to accommodate new physicians. Criteria clearly states that renovations must increase space for at least one new physician who qualifies to have hospital privileges.

The second initiative provides start-up funds for physicians looking to establish a practice in Yukon. The funds announced today will be for experienced physicians looking at Yukon as a new place to practice and who are eligible for hospital privileges. Support for new graduates moving to Yukon to enter a practice was introduced last year.

In addition, physicians who are preceptoring resident physicians in Yukon will also receive a stipend.

“A preceptorship is when qualified physicians oversee or supervise students during their residency period. Many universities already provide this funding, but this support will help students from universities that do not cover this cost,” Cathers said. “We hope to also encourage more local physicians to undertake this role. It is an important part of any student doctor’s training and we want to encourage more of these kinds of experiences here in Yukon because they help make the Yukon more attractive to new doctors.”

The minister added that the department will continue working with the YMA in the areas of recruitment and retention, and developing new tools and campaigns to attract physicians to the territory.

“All of these initiatives are helping us to meet the demands of the population for physician care. Things have improved from where we were last year, but we need to keep on top of the situation to ensure Yukoners can access care,” Cathers added.

Dr. Rao Tadepalli, president of the YMA, says these initiatives are positive developments and he appreciates the opportunity to work collaboratively with the Yukon government.

Funding for these initiatives has been provided under the Territorial Health Access Fund.

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