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**CARDIAC PATIENTS GETTING SERVICE CLOSER TO HOME**

WHITEHORSE –Beginning in early February, most Yukon residents who previously had to travel to Vancouver for pacemaker checkups with the cardiologist will be able to have the procedure done closer to home.

Health and Social Services Minister Brad Cathers, and Yukon Hospital Corporation Board Chair Craig Tuton today announced the introduction of a pacemaker clinic at Whitehorse General Hospital.

“We are always looking for ways in which to provide improved health care services for our residents and to further improve their quality of life,” Cathers said. “This program means that Yukon residents with pacemakers will not have to leave the territory for medical check-ups on their pacemakers. They will not have to disrupt their lives for several days, for what, in other jurisdictions, is a minor health procedure.”

Tuton said the Health and Social Services department and the Whitehorse General Hospital have been working on the project for several months and credited Dr. Sue Alton as being instrumental in bringing pacemaker services to Whitehorse.

“As the territory’s sole acute care facility, we need to ensure that our services meet the needs of Yukon residents and that those services fit in with the other services we provide. It makes good sense to have a visiting specialist come to the Yukon who can undertake these check-ups,” Tuton added.

There are approximately 60 Yukon residents with pacemakers who will now be able to be seen by a cardiologist traveling to the Yukon under the specialist program. The cardiologist will bring his team of technologists and they will be located in the specialist clinic at the hospital.

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