

FOR RELEASE #09-067
March 17, 2009

HPV Study to Begin in Yukon

WHITEHORSE – A study on Human Papillomavirus (HPV) is set to begin this month in Yukon, announced Dr. Brendan Hanley, Medical Officer of Health. HPV is a sexually transmitted infection that can cause genital warts and cause cervical cancer in some women.

“The purpose of the study is to determine the prevalence and types of HPV that infect Yukon women,” Hanley said. It will also attempt to ascertain if life factors increase the chance of getting the infection. The results of the study will help public health decision-makers understand better how HPV is transmitted, and will help develop more effective cervical cancer screening and sexual health programs for Yukon residents.

“Yukon Health and Social Services is pleased to be a partner in this study,” Health and Social Services Minister Glenn Hart said. “The results will provide vital information to help reduce the incidence of cervical cancer in Yukon women.”

The study involves collecting cell samples from a woman’s cervix during regular Pap screening and testing the cells for HPV. Each woman tested will be asked to fill out a short questionnaire.

The study is being undertaken by Government of Yukon Health and Social Services department, McGill University and the Public Health Agency of Canada. The survey will run until March of 2010. Similar studies are running across the country.

All Yukon women, from age 14 to 69 years old, are invited to participate by talking to their health care provider or calling the Yukon Medical Officer of Health at 667-5771 or toll-free in the communities at 1-800-661-0408 extension 5771.

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