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Watson Lake Hospital Transfers to Yukon Hospital Corporation

WHITEHORSE – Government of Yukon Health and Social Services Minister Glenn Hart and Yukon Hospital Corporation Chair Craig Tuton today announced that the corporation will assume responsibility for the Watson Lake Hospital.

In February, the corporation entered into a 13-month management agreement with the government to determine if a transfer would be feasible and appropriate. Examining transfer was one of the recommendations contained in the 2008 Yukon Health Care Sustainability Review, and is consistent with the role envisioned for the corporation under the *Hospital Act*.

The board of trustees of Yukon Hospital Corporation agreed yesterday that subject to an acceptable transfer agreement being reached with the Yukon government, the corporation will assume responsibility for the Watson Lake Hospital on April 1, 2010.

“I am pleased that the government and the corporation’s board of trustees agree that the combination of Whitehorse General Hospital and the Watson Lake Hospital under a single management structure will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of acute care delivery in Yukon,” said Hart. “There will be improved hospital services for the community of Watson Lake and Southeast Yukon and staff will have additional professional opportunities with the corporation as their employer.”

“We conducted a complete assessment and we’re now confident that the new building is suitable for use as a modern community hospital and we’re excited about advancing this project for the benefit of the residents of Watson Lake and the surrounding area,” said Tuton. “The corporation looks forward to working with the employees at the Watson Lake Hospital as we prepare for transfer.”

Employees at the Watson Lake Hospital will receive job offers from both the government and the corporation in November, and will have the time they need to reach their decisions prior to the transfer date.

Since April, the corporation and the government have had numerous meetings with staff and physicians in Watson Lake to develop a functional program and conceptual plans for a new hospital, and work has been completed on the feasibility of developing the existing structure, next to the current facility, as the new hospital.

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