

FOR RELEASE #09-237  
October 6, 2009

**Art and Recovery is the Theme for Mental Illness Awareness Week**

WHITEHORSE – Four different art forms will help to celebrate Yukon Mental Illness Awareness Week, which runs from October 6 to 16. Mental Health Services will present a play, stand-up comedy, an art show, and a film screening.

“These events show how art can be used to both support recovery and teach others about mental illness,” Health and Social Services Minister Glenn Hart said. “The *Dirty Laundry* play, *Stand Up for Mental Health* comedy, and *The Soloist* film provide different perspectives on stigma, prejudice, and discrimination regarding mental illnesses that are touching, humorous, and educational.”

“For too long, Canadians with mental illnesses have been in the shadows,” clinical manager of Mental Health Services Marie Fast said. “Too few Canadians know about the burden of mental illness on our society, and too few sufferers seek help when they need it. The goal of Mental Illness Awareness Week is to provide information to the public about living with – and recovering from – mental illness as a normal part of life.”

Two performances of the Marilyn Avient’s *Dirty Laundry* will be held in Whitehorse and one in Dawson City. *Dirty Laundry* is described as an engaging, poignant, and sometimes humorous tale of a woman’s intimate struggle with, and eventual triumph over, a mental health issue that affects thousands of Canadians.

David Granirer will perform his stand-up comedy routine in Whitehorse and Haines Junction. *Stand Up for Mental Health* is a look at the lighter side of taking medications, seeing counselors, getting diagnosed, and surviving the mental health system.

*Out of the Shadows* art show is a display of visual art created by clients of Mental Health Services and their families in the recovery process.

*The Soloist* is an award-winning film that captures the true life story of Nathaniel Ayers, a former cello prodigy whose schizophrenia landed him on the streets. Journalist Steve Lopez befriends Ayers and supports him in his plight with mental illness.

Admission to all events is free. Everyone is welcome.

More information and a schedule of the week’s events can be found at [www.hss.gov.yk.ca](http://www.hss.gov.yk.ca).

-30-

The schedule of events is attached.

Contact:

Emily Younker  
Cabinet Communications  
867-633-7961  
[emily.younker@gov.yk.ca](mailto:emily.younker@gov.yk.ca)

Roni-Sue Sparvier  
Communications, Health and Social Services  
867-667-3611  
[roni-sue.sparvier@gov.yk.ca](mailto:roni-sue.sparvier@gov.yk.ca)

## **Schedule of Events for Mental Illness Awareness Week**

### **The Soloist – Film Screening**

Whitehorse  
Qwanlin Cinema Centre  
October 6, 2009  
7:00 pm

### **Out of the Shadows – Art Show**

Whitehorse  
Old Fire Hall  
October 9 and 10, 2009  
6:00 to 7:00 pm

### **Dirty Laundry – Play**

Whitehorse  
Old Fire Hall  
October 9 and 10, 2009  
7:00 pm

Dawson City  
KIAC School of the Arts  
October 13, 2009  
7:00 pm

### **Stand Up for Mental Health – Stand-up Comedy**

Whitehorse  
Yukon Beringia Centre  
October 15, 2009  
7:00 pm

Haines Junction  
Convention Centre  
October 14, 2009  
7:00 pm