

FOR RELEASE
October 14, 2009

#09-242

Social Inclusion Strategy to Address Poverty Issues

WHITEHORSE – Health and Social Services Minister Glenn Hart announced today the development of a social inclusion strategy for the territory.

“A social inclusion strategy is a significant advancement in social policy in Yukon. Social inclusion ensures that services target those in need and are accessible for all members of society,” Hart said. “Social inclusion is a measure of any government on how it deals with those citizens in need of support.”

Poverty is one of the most obvious factors in excluding people from participation in healthy living and the minister applauds the work of the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition in calling attention to the growing effects of poverty.

In addition, social exclusion refers to inadequate housing, education, employment or social participation as well as inadequate financial supports.

“We need to look at all areas that result in people being excluded from healthy living such as exchanges, practices and rights of society,” Hart said. “To focus our work solely on poverty would not assure us that we are providing the appropriate and needed support in all aspects of healthy living.”

There will be four phases in developing the strategy:

- Creating a collaborative process.
- Collecting data and consulting.
- Developing a strategy to address priorities from the data and consultations.
- Reviewing and reporting annually.

Over the next several months, Health and Social Services will take the lead in developing the strategy, working with partner departments and non-government organizations to create a strategy that will provide evidence-based research and measured social indicators on which to base decisions within government.

To support Yukon Poverty and Homelessness Action Week, the department has also provided funding for the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition to host guest speaker Dr. Bernie Pauly, a member of the City of Victoria’s Task Force on Breaking the Cycle of Homelessness, Addiction and Mental Illness. Dr. Pauly teaches a research course on housing and homelessness at the University of Victoria.

-30-

Contact:

Emily Younker
Cabinet Communications
867-633-7961
emily.younker@gov.yk.ca

Pat Living
Communications, Health & Social Services
867-667-3673
patricia.living@gov.yk.ca