



ourpulse

Your Care, Our Priority Highlights from our Year in Review

We are pleased to present the Yukon Hospital Corporation's Year in Review for April 2015 to March 2016. This is one of the ways our three hospitals share our successes and challenges and report to the communities we serve.

Here are some of the highlights:

- Participating in a national initiative along with 17 other hospitals to adapt our care for older adults
- Managing on-going bed pressures at WGH to ensure patients have the right care, in the right place, and at the right time
- Continually looking at how we can improve
- Putting a spotlight on our First Nations Health Programs
- Celebrating the first year of MRI – the only service of its kind in Canada's North
- Introducing new sight-saving technology
- Making significant progress made on WGH expansion
- Working together to build a safe and connected electronic health system
- Collaborating with health partners to support Yukoners with diabetes

*Read the full 2015/16
Year in Review report
at [yukonhospitals.ca/
publications](http://yukonhospitals.ca/publications)*

Taking steps

What the new privacy rules mean for **you and your hospital care**

As information systems and health records become increasingly electronic and inter-connected, our patients trust that we make every effort to keep personal health information safe.

Making sure your privacy is protected

Under Yukon's new *Health Information Privacy Management Act* (HIPMA), our hospitals are considered 'health information custodians'. This means HIPMA regulates how we collect and access patient information, making the hospitals and our individual staff accountable for keeping your personal health information confidential.

What does HIPMA mean for you

Our patients need to know what information we collect as well as how we use and disclose it. For example, you could provide information such as your health card number, name and address, date of birth



The nursing team is working hard along with physicians, pharmacists, social workers, liaison workers, therapists and others to adapt practices to better suit the needs of older patients.

Did you know?

Regular monthly services offered at WGH chapel

The Whitehorse General Hospital chapel, located off the atrium (near the emergency department), holds services presided by a local chaplain on the first Wednesday of every month, beginning at 1 pm. An up-to-date list of the visiting chaplains can be found inside the chapel. All patients, visitors and hospital staff are welcome.

and health history. We use this information to treat and care for you, and when appropriate, we may share it with other health providers involved in your care. We may also use information to monitor and improve our services or locate you while you're in hospital.

You also have specific rights and we have clear responsibilities. You can request your health information and (subject to certain limited exceptions) withdraw consent for us to share it with a specific health provider. We will confirm your admission or location with your family and friends unless you tell us not to release any information.

Our responsibilities include taking steps to protect/secure your information, monitor our compliance, ensuring our health team protects your privacy and asking permission before disclosing information for purposes not directly related to your care.

Our full privacy statement and more information about HIPMA is available on our website at www.yukonhospitals.ca

**We value your privacy & we're
taking steps to protect it**

Find out more at yukonhospitals.ca





In its first year, WGH's MRI performed more scans than projected. In fact, nearly three times the number of scans were provided to Yukoners as compared to before the service was introduced to the territory

Bringing care closer to home

Celebrating one year of MRI in Yukon

For more than a year now, Yukoners have had access to a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) exam closer to home – and the results have been overwhelmingly positive. Roughly 2,000 scans – a number which is actually higher than projected – have been conducted since the MRI service opened in 2015 at Whitehorse General Hospital.

In fact, three times the number of MRI scans are being conducted now as compared to before the introduction of this service because there are fewer barriers to care.

While wait times for an MRI scan may vary based on the urgency, Yukoners continue to receive a scan here sooner than outside the territory. For example, the numbers show that the average wait for an urgent MRI in BC and Alberta is five weeks, while in Yukon these scans are provided within seven business days. That means improved and provided timelier access to care for you and your loved ones.

Having MRI in the territory means reduced patient stress and cost. Thousands of Yukoners were able to stay at home rather than travel south for this important test. This means less time away from family and work, which has a positive impact on patients and the overall health care experience.

Wait times for MRI scans are based on urgency

Because MRI is not an 'emergency' diagnostic tool, you may be on a wait list for a scan. However, when your need is urgent or semi-urgent, and MRI is the most appropriate test for you, a scan was provided within 7 and 30 days respectively. Less urgent or follow-up scans will require a longer wait.

MRI use is based on what your physician needs to know

An MRI scan is requested by your doctor based on what he/she needs to know. Another diagnostic imaging exam (CT scan or X-ray) may be deemed more appropriate. Every MRI request is reviewed by a radiologist to ensure the test is safe and appropriate for you – and provided first to those patients with the most urgent need.

Enhancing the patient experience

Specialized assessment training for emergency nurses

A number of emergency department (ED) nurses at Whitehorse General Hospital (WGH) recently became certified instructors in the Canadian Triage & Acuity Scale (CTAS) – a system that allows hospitals to effectively assess illness and injury and then prioritize urgency of patient needs.

This specialized CTAS assessment training was provided by Vancouver General Hospital and means Yukon's hospitals now have a dedicated group to provide instruction on an on-going basis to its emergency room nurses.

"CTAS is an important skill for our ER nurses to have and to apply in daily practice because it ensures our patients get safe and timely access to care," says Geoff Zamarinuk, WGH's Director of Patient Care. "And having this specialized expertise in-house we now have the ability to better support our people as well as a more positive hospital experience for patients when coming to emergency often under stressful and unexpected circumstances."

In the past, CTAS instructors were brought to the Yukon. Today, training can be offered when needed to new ED nursing staff members, while also available to keep current staff triage skills up to date.

CTAS is a national standard used by emergency departments across Canada. This means a triage nurse asks a number of questions (when possible), completes a brief medical history and measures vital signs in order to assign a score from 1-5:

1. **emergent/resuscitation required** (i.e. cardiac arrest)
2. **emergent** (i.e. unconscious)
3. **urgent** (i.e. moderate abdominal pain)
4. **semi-urgent** (i.e. back pain)
5. **non-urgent** (i.e. sore throat)

This allows the nurse to identify patients that need to be seen first and create a priority list for those patients waiting for treatment. For example, those individuals with more acute conditions are seen first in order to reduce the risk his/her condition may deteriorate. CTAS also allows the hospital to monitor the type of emergency care it provides in order to understand community needs, examine how it delivers care, improve patient flow, manage workload, and determine resources.



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Message from the Board of Trustees Chair

Your care is our priority

You are our reason for being. You call on us every day to be the best we can be and provide the best possible care. This is our privilege, our responsibility and our priority.

For this reason, we are committed to safe and excellent hospital care and everything this entails – from quality, timely and compassionate treatment to on-going improvement and well-managed facilities.

To continue to deliver on this promise to you, we are guided by four clear priorities.

- 1. Create excellence in patient care
- 2. Support and engage our people
- 3. Build a strong family of hospitals
- 4. Enhance our partnerships

Over the last year, we’ve continued to make progress on all of these fronts. We’ve also had to ensure we are keeping pace with advancements in health delivery, while also meeting the increasing challenges from bed shortages. Many of these issues are not new to Canada’s health system, but have a growing and significant impact on the Yukon.

We are a part of a national program to share practices that will help us better provide hospital care to seniors – a growing proportion of the territory’s population. We are undertaking quality improvement initiatives

to prevent and control infections as well as expanding services so your hospital stay can be shorter and you feel better sooner.

We also continue to listen to what you have to tell us about your care so we can make your hospital experience more positive.

We are expanding and updating Whitehorse General Hospital (WGH) so we have modern patient care areas that meet high standards in safety, comfort and security. We are also pleased to report that this project is on time, on quality and on budget. We are introducing new technologies to perform more advanced surgeries and offer more diagnostic tests. We also continue to support programs that ensure all of our hospitals are safe and healing spaces for all Yukoners. We’re very proud to report on these and the many activities our team does to ensure your care is our priority.

Our work is not possible without the incredible support of our extraordinary hospital and medical staff, our Board of Trustees, health system partners, government, foundation, donors and many other community supporters. We will continue to make your care our priority by continuing to strive to meet your needs and expectations, look for ways to improve, involve you more in your care and deliver on our promise to provide safe and excellent hospital care closer to home.



Craig Tuton, Chair
Board of Trustees
Yukon Hospital Corporation

Make your visit a positive one

Everything you need to know starts at **yukonhospitals.ca**

Where to go • What to expect • What to bring
Visiting hours • Information about WGH expansion
Parking and directions • Career opportunities
and other useful information



yukon hospitals

Visiting patients at the hospital

At Yukon Hospitals, we welcome and encourage family and friends to visit patients staying in the hospital. Visitors provide much-needed support to our patients during the healing process, helping them to feel less lonely and more comfortable.

General visiting:
10am-9pm

We understand there are some cases when extended hours are required. This includes parents who are expected to stay with their child or if you are providing support to a family member or loved one.

For more information about visiting the hospital, including meals and snacks available, hand washing tips, parking and directions, please visit **yukonhospitals.ca**.

Quick facts (for the year ending March 31, 2016)

	Whitehorse General Hospital	Dawson City Community Hospital	Watson Lake Community Hospital
Staff	486	28	32
Admissions	3,329	69	135
Patient Days	18,195	1,007	901
Patient Days greater than 30 days	3,847	–	–
Emergency visits	32,923	3,018	2,291
Imaging visits	18,190	529	537
MRI Scans	1,868	–	–
Lab Visits	28,163	2,176	1,622
Chemotherapy Visits	827	–	–
Specialist Visits	8,885	–	–
Therapies Visits	5,777	–	–
Surgeries (same-day & inpatient)	2,938	–	–
Births	407	–	–

Putting more local in hospital care

Food grown closer to home helps with healing



Leslie Carson, WGH's Manager of Nutrition and Food Services, is finding ways to incorporate more local food into the hospital.

Healthy and good tasting food is an important part of the healing process. WGH's food and nutrition team puts this philosophy into practice each day as they plan and prepare meals for patients, staff and visitors to the hospital.

The department's manager, Leslie Carson, along with her talented and skilled team of chefs, dietitians, and kitchen staff is working to introduce more locally produced food into the patient menu – especially when Yukon grows great things right here, closer to home. "Why buy potatoes from a warehouse in Edmonton?" asks Carson, "When you can buy fresh from a local supplier a few miles away."

Our hospitals have partnered with Yukon Grain Farm, located just outside Whitehorse, to supply our kitchen with fresh, local options such as potatoes, cabbage, carrots and beets. The hope is to continue to increase local food

content by introducing items like arctic char and farmed elk, but Yukon's climate means a short growing season.

WGH's kitchen is also always accepting donations of wild game from reputable outfitters to help prepare traditional meals as part of the First Nations Health Programs.

"Many people may not realize how important it is to have fresh, healthy food when you're sick or recovering from a procedure," says Carson. "Local and traditional foods provide our patients with tremendous comfort, helping them to feel better and return home sooner."

Good tasting, healthy food is crucial to positive hospital experience. Follow us on Facebook to see some of our team's culinary creations and learn about upcoming events in the WGH Café.



Seeking Donations of Wild Game

First Nations Health Programs is seeking donations of Wild Game for our traditional diet menu. We would not be able to provide this service to our First Nations, Inuit and Metis patients without your donations.

If you would like to make a donation to our program please contact

Annie Blake, Cultural Programs Coordinator
at 867 393 8891

We are grateful for all donations and the on-going support for this important program.



Involving the community in its care

Yukon Hospitals welcomes volunteers

Volunteers are a valued part of hospital teams across Canada, providing compassionate service and giving their time to support patients. Hospital volunteers assist patients in a number of ways – by providing directions, offering comfort or simply being a friend through conversation and recreation activities.

To help us provide better hospital experience for Yukoners, Whitehorse General Hospital (WGH) is looking for volunteers to welcome people to

Taking care

Make sense of scents

When visiting any of Yukon's hospitals or coming in for an appointment, please avoid wearing scented products such as perfume, cologne, lotion and sprays. These fragrances don't smell nice to everyone. Scents can cause a serious allergic reaction or aggravate an existing health condition, such as asthma. For these reasons, all of our hospitals strive to keep the air free of fragrance. We want everyone's hospital experience to be as positive as possible. Here's how you can help:

- Use hygiene and cosmetic products that don't contain "parfum" or "fragrance"**
- Check with the nurse before you bring flowers for a patient to ensure there are no allergy concerns.**

Bringing gifts to a patient are appreciated and offer comfort during a time of healing. However, many flowers, especially strong-scented varieties such as lilies, can cause adverse reactions for both patients and staff.

Thank you for not wearing or bringing scented products to Yukon's hospitals.

hospital and provide comfort for patients and their families.

When you volunteer with our hospitals, you can make a difference and have an experience like no other. You will learn, grow and share as part of a community that cares for Yukoners. You help create a sense of home and share your time knowing it will have a lasting impact. To learn more about volunteering or apply to become a volunteer, please contact Volunteer Services at 867-393-8673 or volunteer@wgh.yk.ca.

Building the very best health care, closer to home

Hospital expansion reaches **next milestones** on schedule



Construction crews have made excellent progress over the past few months, as we prepare for the new emergency department's expected opening in early 2018.

After a busy period of construction over the past nine months, WGH has more accessible public parking and the new two-storey expansion is now enclosed to the weather.

Construction on hospital expansion has been underway since April, but now that the new building was walled and closed to the elements in November, work continues inside on what will eventually become a modern, state-of-the-art emergency department.

“Opening the new public parking lot and having an enclosed structure are important and visible milestones in our project,” says Jason Bilsky, Yukon Hospitals’ CEO. “The community can really see the progress we’ve made in a short period of time. What’s more, it creates excitement for the public and our team as you can see the results of everyone’s hard work, every time you come to the hospital.”

Now that most of the construction work has shifted inside, the new patient care areas and work spaces will start to take shape. Hospital teams from all areas are already taking great care through significant planning and preparations to ensure the building and our staff are ready to provide the best possible care, when the emergency department opens in January 2018.

WGH has also started the process on how to best utilize the shelled second-floor space in the new building as well as vacated space within the existing hospital once emergency and other services move.

Bilsky adds that community involvement in the project remains vitally important over the final months of the project and as we get ready for the first patients. “We’re pleased to see that more than 75 local businesses and specialized sub-trades have been a part of this project and represent more than 50% of on-site hours,” he says. “And as we move closer to opening the new emergency department we will be inviting Yukoners inside to see firsthand their new hospital and improvements we’ve made to emergency care.”

WGH Expansion In-Depth

WHY EXPAND?

Quality and safety

Expansion will enable us to provide the best care possible by:

- minimizing the spread of infection
- improving visibility between hospital staff and patients
- ensuring a nurse is the first point of contact in the emergency department
- reducing the distance to emergency department from main entrance
- building our capacity to manage mass casualty incidents

Health care delivery

Expansion will help create an appropriately sized emergency department with suitable treatment spaces to meet the community’s acute care needs.

Yukon health care needs

Yukon’s shift to a larger, older population along with the territory’s unique health needs means the provision of hospital care will become increasingly complex and difficult to manage within the current emergency department. This project will help meet the anticipated future needs of a changing community.

PROGRESS REPORT

By the end of 2016, the project will have reached the following milestones:

- Initial site preparation, including excavation
- Construction and opening of new ambulance station
- Foundation and steel work for new two-storey wing
- Public parking area with an increased number of more accessible spaces
- New building enclosed and clad to the weather
- Plans for the move into and opening of the new emergency department in early 2018
- Minimize the spread of infection
- Improve visibility between hospital staff and patients
- Improve privacy
- Ensure triage personnel is the first point of contact providing more direct access to care
- Create more direct access to emergency department
- Provide more direct ambulance access
- Increase our capacity to meet a wide range and volume of needs

Stay up-to-date on WGH Expansion. Like Yukon Hospitals on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and Instagram or visit us online at yukonhospitals.ca/wghexpansion.

