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Hospital expansion moves to next phase

Whitehorse – Construction on Whitehorse General Hospital expansion will continue in the weeks ahead, bringing significant and noticeable changes to the hospital's campus.

Most notable, Yukoners will see a new two-storey structure (home to a state-of-the-art emergency department at WGH) start to take shape.

“Over the last construction season and into the winter, we were able to make great progress and reach important milestones,” says Jason Bilsky, Yukon Hospitals' CEO. “Working with the builder and community partners, we worked to finalize the building's design, completed some site preparation, and most recently, we completed the new, modern ambulance station on schedule.

As expansion continues to move forward, it will involve changes in and around the existing hospital. Here's what to expect:

- **March:** The old ambulance station will be demolished immediately and the expansion area will be fenced off for exterior work to the existing building. Public parking and access to the hospital will remain unchanged.
- **May:** Fencing around the main construction site will be expanded, changing the route service vehicles, public transit, ambulances and hospital/medical staff will take to get to the hospital. The bus stop will be relocated to the eastside of the hospital. Public parking and access to the hospital will remain unchanged.
- **July:** Paved patient/visitor parking areas will be built directly in front of the hospital. During this time, public vehicle and pedestrian access to the hospital via Hospital Road will not change, but public parking will shift to clearly marked nearby areas. Vehicles and pedestrians will take a different path to the hospital's main entrance. This work is expected to take about eight weeks to complete and will result in a permanent and more accessible public parking area for the duration of construction and beyond.

“Existing hospital services will continue to run as normal during this time and a priority will be to minimize the impact on people staying at or coming to WGH,” says Bilsky.

“Construction does come with short-term inconvenience, but this is more than offset by the positive long-term impact the new facility will have for Yukon’s health care.”

Bilsky notes the hospital will be working to get information out on its website and by other means in order to maintain easy and safe access at all times. “We want Yukoners to be as prepared as possible for a trip to hospital so they can get the care they need,” he says.

WGH expansion is designed to meet high standards for infection control, safety, comfort and security, which will create an improved healing space for our patients and enhanced work environment for our health care teams. The project includes an emergency department, shelled second-floor space for future use as well as upgrades to the hospital’s information systems and power infrastructure.

Full funding for this phase of expansion is provided by Yukon government. Construction of the new emergency department is expected to be complete in fall 2017 with the new facility open to the public in early 2018.

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For more information on WGH Expansion, visit
www.yukonhospitals.ca/wghexpansion