

**For immediate release
September 6, 2017**

WGH expansion construction now complete, new emergency department set to open in early 2018

Whitehorse – Construction of a two-storey, state-of-the-art expansion to Whitehorse General Hospital has finished on schedule with the facility's new emergency department remaining on track to see its first patients early next year.

With the 40,000 square-foot building now complete, the hospital team has already turned its attention to getting ready to provide care in the new space when doors officially open in January 2018.

“In the lead up to the new emergency department’s public opening, there will be several months of training, testing and other preparations,” says Jason Bilsky, Yukon Hospitals’ CEO. “In emergency situations, time is critical, so these activities give our hospital and medical staff an opportunity to set up and use new equipment and systems as well as hold practice drills and conduct run-throughs. Our goal is to get everyone familiar with and comfortable in the new space in order to provide the best care possible on day one.”

Yukoners will have their own opportunity later this year to meet our team and see the new emergency department firsthand when public tours are held in December.

“Thank you to our entire team who, along with PCL Constructors Westcoast Inc., kept the project on schedule and on budget,” adds Bilsky. “A large part of this success is due to community involvement and support, which includes nearly 100 Yukon-based businesses and specialized trades who ensured this new facility was quality built. Everyone’s commitment and dedication is reflected in this incredible facility.”

Construction on this latest phase of expansion began in June 2015. The new hospital wing not only features improved emergency care, but also a new critical care unit, shelled space on the second floor for future use, a data centre for advanced information systems that support patient care as well as upgrades to hospital power and mechanical systems. Planning is underway on how to best use the shelled space in the expansion as well as the soon-to-be vacated space in the existing hospital.

The new facility is designed to provide more direct access to emergency care and meet high standards in infection control, safety, comfort and security. This will create an improved healing space for patients and enhanced work environment for our hospital and medical staff. The \$72-million project is funded by Yukon Government and represents the first major enhancements to WGH in nearly two decades.

-30-

Contact:

James Low
Communications, Yukon Hospitals
james.low@wgh.yk.ca
(867) 393-8698

For more information on WGH Expansion, including photos, videos, FAQs, publications and other resources, visit yukonhospitals.ca/WGHexpansion.