

**YUKON  
HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES  
COUNCIL**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**2002 – 2003**

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## **MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR**

The Mission Statement of the Council, as adopted in August, 1992 is,

**“ TO RECOMMEND AND PROMOTE ACTION  
THAT IMPROVES THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING  
OF YUKON PEOPLE”**

“The Yukon Health and Social Services Council is a forum for ongoing public participation in the movement towards healthy communities.” (Terms of Reference May 1990). This annual report provides a synopsis of 2002-2003 activities undertaken by Council in its efforts to meet its legislated mandate. Time has been spent reviewing issues and strategies under consideration by government, and listening to and discussing points of view put forward by various community representatives in light of encouraging improvement in the health and well-being of Yukon people.

Council members are presented with volumes of information to consider, analyze and discuss at every meeting. Recommendations put forward are done through a consensus model; members believe that the consensus recommendations put forward demonstrate a cooperative and broad public consensus aimed at achieving marked improvement in the quality of life in Yukon as stated in Council’s Terms of Reference.

Council continues to encourage cooperation of health, justice, social services and education departments and is encouraged by ongoing progress in this area. Thank you to all past and present members for the dedication, commitment and hard work demonstrated by each of you towards this end.

Sincerely,

Colleen Wirth  
Chair

## **COUNCIL ACTIVITIES**

### **COMMUNITY AWARENESS**

- “All people have a role to play in bringing health to our communities.” (Yukon Health and Social Services Council Terms of Reference p.1). Announcements of Council meeting dates and members’ names and phone numbers are placed in both local newspapers and French newspaper prior to meeting dates. These announcements also invite Yukon residents to contact Council members if interested in presenting relevant issues at meetings; Council continues to receive and accommodate requests from Yukon residents.
- The minutes of Council meetings are public documents and are circulated to individuals and organizations upon request.

### **HEALTH INVESTMENT FUND**

- In 2002-03, Council continued to have a representative on the Committee that reviews requests for funding from the Health Investment Fund. The Council representative attends all regular meetings and provides quarterly updates to the Council.

### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND**

- In 2002-03 Council had a representative on the Committee that reviews requests for funding from the Professional Development Fund for non-YTG employees. The Council representative attends all regular meetings and provides relevant Council updates.

### **COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE ACTIVITIES**

- At the request of the Minister of Health and Social Services, sub-committees were established to address specific issues. Based on sub-committees’ work, Council reviewed and provided comments on the following:

-Anti-Poverty Strategy

-Romanow Commission Report – Yukon recommendations

-Legislation – *Supported and Substitute Decision-Making*

## **PRESENTATIONS TO COUNCIL**

### **SUPPORTED AND SUBSTITUTE DECISION-MAKING - CONSULTATION**

Department staff provided a detailed update on the development plan for this legislation. Extensive consultations and opportunities for input by all Yukoners are a critical part of the process intended to garner important broad perspectives. Council will be provided with regular updates and was asked to provide input on draft principles.

### **YUKON COLLEGE – VISION, MISSION, DIRECTION**

Sally Webber, President of Yukon College provided Council with copies of the newly released “*Strategic Plan 2002-2007*”. An overview of the College, the people it serves, where it has been, where it is and how it aims to meet a comprehensive full-range of adult needs in a complex challenging and ever-changing locale was given. Of note were the “Yukonized” words chosen in the governance model End Statements: the word mission was replaced by “Journey” implying progressive; the word values was replaced by “Trails”.

Despite static funding and a number of financial pressures the College has been able to maintain the majority of its current programs plus add new ones. Video-conferencing technology, as an example, is providing access to networking, education and bridge programs and offers exciting opportunities for connections within and outside Yukon. Yukon College is also a leader in the *University of the Arctic*.

### **NGO PROJECT: INFORMATION**

Jon Breen, Up North Training Services, was hired by the Minister to consult with Non-Government Organizations (NGO’s) in an effort to build stronger relationships. Jon met with 48 organizations to discuss issues, suggestions and recommendations. Thirty one NGO representatives participated in a one - day seminar. Themes emerging from the seminar included: staffing, policy, service delivery and funding. It is anticipated that the report will contain practical suggestions/recommendations for Minister’s consideration along with an updated list of NGO’s.

During a follow up presentation, copies of the Final report dated July 8, 2002 – Non Government Organizations “*Planning for the Future*” and a questionnaire regarding *Group Insurance Plans – Interests and Needs* were distributed. Four recommendations were made. The Minister met with NGO’s August 5, 2002 to clarify statements and the direction of the project. One immediate outcome of note in the project was an on-going email sharing of information relevant to most NGO’s.

## **YOUTH OUTREACH PROGRAM**

Michelle Rabeau, Female Outreach Counselor, Yukon Family Services Association, (YFSA), discussed program details as well as some of the challenges of working to help raise the positive profile of youth in our community and supporting street-involved youth. This position offers a variety of services including one-to-one counseling, group counseling, educational and career counseling, “on the spot” counseling, youth parenting information, crime prevention, parent-teen mediation, street outreach, health sex information and products, drop-in programs and access through the street clinic. This program, designed for individuals ages 15 through 25, is currently funded by three organizations – funding runs out in February 2003.

## **MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES – FOLLOW-UP**

Paula Pasquali, Director Community Health Programs and Marie Fast, Clinical Manager, Mental Health Services, presented Council with an update. The re-organization of the health services area resulted in four directors instead of five; this allowed for the new position of Clinical Manager.

A proposal to federal government was made for \$1.4 Million for a telehealth project involving four components: Mental Health, Learning, Radiology and Tele-family visit. \$1 Million was approved, YTG is contributing “Connect Yukon” and the program is being rolled out to five communities: Dawson City, Mayo, Watson Lake, Haines Junction and Old Crow. Training to use the teleconferencing equipment is complete for ongoing clinical services and professional development with the University of British Columbia.

An update of current issues and overview of future plans was given. Current initiatives included streamlining services so clients with treatment issues can have services along with support by various groups such as Anxiety Management Group. Future plans included a number of collaborative initiatives such as the establishment of an Advisory Committee with membership including consumers and stakeholders.

## **HOMELESSNESS INITIATIVE**

Council members were forwarded copies of the “*Summary Version of the Whitehorse Community Plan on Homelessness*” document. The Whitehorse Planning Group on Homelessness (WPGOH), formed with representation from 17 organizations researched assets and gaps or demands for additional services through consultations with stakeholders. The response to call for proposals dealing with homelessness was tremendous. There is great concern about sustainability of the projects post funding. An evaluation of the Community Plan and individual projects will be conducted and measured on their qualitative and quantitative outcomes and results. WPGOH would like to see the support and partnership among local governments towards continuation of the

efforts to address homelessness in Yukon beyond the federal initiative that officially ends in March 2003.

### **CHILD CARE SERVICES REVIEWS REPORT AND CHILD ADVOCATE VS COUNCIL CONCEPT:**

Anne Westcott, Director Family & Children's Services (F&CS), provided a brief background for, and purpose of, the two reviews conducted by Jim Anglin and Child Welfare League of Canada (CWLC). The Anglin report on Group Homes, released in January 2002, contains 24 recommendations under four sets of priorities; the CWLC contains 15 recommendations along with two resource papers: 1) First Nation issues and 2) Focuses on filing system of Family and Children's Services.

Recommendations speak to four areas: 1) Staffing shortages in social services area; 2) How to serve communities outside of Whitehorse; 3) Engage community stakeholders in discussion of community strategy for children and youth services and 4) Advocacy. Many recommendations require funds; a number can be met independent of those requiring funds. F&CS have begun developing an implementation plan. The Minister has established a five-year time frame to complete the implementation of the plan.

### **HEARING MATTERS PROPOSAL**

Karen Panter, Owner/Operator of Hearing Matters provided a synopsis of this business that dispenses and fits hearing aids along with a summary of discussions that took place between her and the Department regarding the business of fitting hearing aids. The difficulty of competing with government selling hearing aids at cost was discussed. Potential benefits to the government and general public in having government focus on diagnostic testing and monitoring children's hearing while allowing this business to sell hearing aids were presented.

### **FOSTER PARENTING/CHILD WELFARE**

Frances Woolsey, retired social worker, provided an insightful session on this topic. The difficult history including Mission Residential Schools and the resultant gap with FN people being unable to learn to live and function within a family unit because they had been removed from the family unit at young ages was discussed. The focus of child welfare used to be re-building the family so the child could be returned into a good environment. She noted that First Nations (FN) do not apply for fostering because they do not want the intrusion which home assessments cause nor the paperwork involved, hence the shortage of FN foster parents.

### **CHAMPAIGNE/AISHIHIK TREATMENT CENTER**

James Allen recounted the background, difficulties faced and lessons learned in the experience of starting this independent treatment center in the wilderness. The Strategic Plan was based on “whole” family treatment and inclusion of all cultural ideas of healing in order to deal with both addictions and the root causes of addictions. The forensic audit conducted stated that no wrong was done however the Aboriginal Healing Foundation (AHF) was not prepared at that time to give a second chance. The need for treatment and for the center still exists.

### **NURSES RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION: YUKON REGISTERED NURSES ASSOCIATION (YRNA)**

Patricia McClelland, President YRNA and Cathy Bradbury, Registrar YRNA, reiterated the purpose of YRNA as stated in the vision statement: “to protect the public.” A detailed presentation of the current realities of the shortage of Registered Nurses in Canada was presented in three parts: 1) Nursing workforce in Canada and Yukon, 2) Factors affecting recruitment and retention (quality professional practice environments) and 3) Recommendations/solutions to address the shortage.

### **ROMANOW REPORT PRESENTATION**

Violet Van Hees, Policy Analyst, HSS provided detailed information regarding this report. Members were provided copies of a number of documents including Kirby Report and Recommendations, Summary of Romanow Report recommendation, Comparison of Romanow and Kirby Reports/recommendations, Kirby’s Response to Romanow Report and recommendations, Summary of Yukon Party’s Platform as it relates to Department of H&SS and Yukon Medical Association “Submission to the Commission on the Future of Health Care in Canada”. All documents are to be considered in the context of Yukon’s Health Summit Report which contains real Yukon issues.

Council received a follow – up briefing on 2003 First Ministers’ Accord on Health Care Renewal and what was captured from Kirby/Romanow reports in agreement. Health Reform Fund will target three specific areas: 1) Primary Health Care, 2) Home Care and 3) Prescription Drugs.

### **PRIMARY HEALTH CARE TRANSITION FUND**

Lindsay DeHart and Jan Horton, Policy Analysts, H&SS provided an overview of this Federal Government initiative. This one time \$4.5 million funding is targeted for transitional cost and sustainable initiatives only. The two initiatives will focus on the refocusing of organizational structures and processes and technology system support. Planning for the initiatives will take place in two phases: 1) Environmental Scan and 2)

Planning Forum. This fund provides opportunity to address health issues, build relationships and improve services and resources.

### **YOUTH DIRECTORATE: UPDATE**

Judy Thrower, Manager of Youth Directorate identified the progress, strengths and ongoing successes of the Directorate since its establishment on April 1, 2002. Key partners are Youth (up to age 25), First Nations, Bringing Youth Towards Equality (BYTE), Whitehorse Youth Center Society, RCMP, Yukon Government Departments, Municipal Governments, Youth of Today Society and Crime Prevention Yukon. The role of the Directorate is to support and work with youth advocacy groups to identify the needs and concerns of youth. Youth Shaping the Future Council, comprised of youth from around the territory who meet on a regular basis to discuss youth issues is a great example of ongoing success. There is more work to be done in promoting youth programming to youth and youth service providers as well as encouraging networking among youth service providers.

### **HEALTHY FAMILIES PRESENTATION**

The Co-Presenters, Debbie Mauch and Mary-Jane Oliver, A/Supervisors, Healthy Families Program, discussed the history and development of this program since its beginning in the Yukon in 1999. The program has 12 critical elements under three categories: 1) Initiation of service, 2) Service content and 3) Selection and training of service provider. The program has now gone through credentialing by Healthy Family America and received a very good report. The credentialing is to be conducted every four years.

### **CHILD CARE REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS**

Truska Gorrell, a Steering Committee Member who has worked and volunteered among cross sections of groups related to children and youth over the past 35 years in the Yukon presented urgent concern regarding the need to implement the recommendations in the Jim Anglin and Child Welfare League of Canada reports. The four areas of concerns under which recommendations were made being: 1) Receiving Homes, 2) Smaller Therapeutic Foster Homes, 3) Raising Age of Children in Care and 4) Child Advocate. The presenter stressed the urgency of the need to act on the recommendations given that all children need to be in a peaceful situation and be loved.

## **MEETINGS**

Under the Operating Procedures, the Yukon Health and Social Services Council is committed to holding at least four meetings a year.

In 2002-2003, four regular meetings took place on the following dates:

May 31 & June 1, 2002

September 6 & 7, 2002

December 6 & 7, 2002

March 7 & 8, 2003

**FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2002-03  
AS AT MARCH 31, 2003**

**YUKON HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL**

<b>BUDGET:</b>		<b>\$40,000.00</b>
Honoraria	\$26,600.00	
Travel Costs	9,029.87	
Meeting Expenses	4,271.65	
Advertisement/Community Awareness	2,736.34	
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>		<b>(\$42,637.86)</b>

## **COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP AS AT MARCH 31, 2003**

- Colleen Wirth - Chair
- Glenis Allen - Co-Chair
- Stanley Noel
- Iris Cormier
- Dorothy John
- David Ravensdale
- James Allen
- Renee Alford
- Lynn Harris
- Niall Sheridan
- Sandra Beckman

### **CONTACT ADDRESS**

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