

Island Health MLA Update



Welcome to the January 2016 edition of Island Health's MLA Update. Happy New Year!

Island Health has been working closely with the Ministry of Health on the strategic priorities for health care, and this collaboration is fundamentally shaping the work we are doing in our communities.

Our focus for delivery of health care services is shifting to make sure we have effective primary care services so people can live well and so we can prevent, reduce or delay hospital or facility-based care. We are also focusing on appropriate programs for frail seniors, those living in rural and remote communities and those in need of effective and targeted treatment for mental health and substance use issues. And we are implementing plans to improve access to diagnostic and surgical services.

This edition of the MLA report includes updates on how Island Health is involved in efforts to safeguard and educate those at highest risk from drug overdoses, and the expansion of HIV testing for patients who attend the Emergency Department at NRGH. There is news about how Island Health is increasing patient access to MRI, and an exciting new partnership that will allow paramedics in some remote communities to provide more patient care. You will also find a feature on our PARTY program, which is helping teens make safe decisions.

The next edition of Island Health's MLA Update will be issued in February. If there is information you would like to see in future updates, for example about a topic your constituents are asking you about, please contact suzanne.germain@viha.ca.

Need information? Here's who to contact:

We know your staff work regularly with Island Health program staff to respond to constituent questions. We have provided several helpful links below as well as the following contact information for your inquiries:

North/Central Vancouver Island:	Valerie Wilson	250-739-6303 valerie.wilson@viha.ca
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Useful Links

News: www.viha.ca/about_viha/news/. Information about new initiatives, partnerships and programs.

Facts & Stats: www.viha.ca/about_viha/. Information about Island Health, our populations and our staff.

Local Area Profiles: www.viha.ca/mho/stats/lha_profiles.htm. Community population and health statistics to support local health and wellness planning.

Performance Indicators/Accountability: www.viha.ca/about_viha/accountability/

Wait Times: www.health.gov.bc.ca/swt/. Surgical wait times by physician and facility.

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1. Island Health Responds to Overdose Fatalities

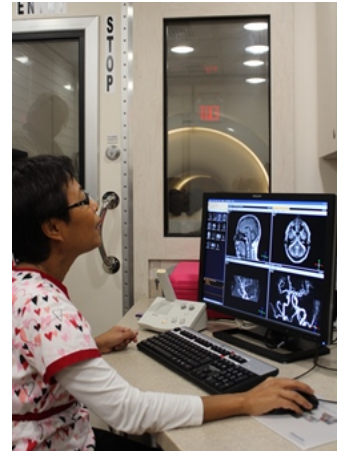
Since late December and continuing into early 2016, a surge in overdoses, both fatal and non-fatal, have occurred in the Greater Victoria and Nanaimo area. Island Health Public Health is coordinating responses to the situation with the B.C. Coroner's Service, B.C. Ambulance, Island Health Emergency Departments as well as community organizations serving people who use drugs. Coordinated responses have included increased education and distribution of naloxone—a powerful antidote to opioid overdose, in emergency departments in Victoria and Nanaimo as well as in the community. Safer drug use messaging has been distributed to key populations. Monitoring and surveillance of the situation is ongoing. More information about take home Naloxone is available at: <http://towardtheheart.com/naloxone/>.



Emergency Department staff at NRGH with take home naloxone kits, which are being distributed to those at risk of overdose.

2. More MRIs Being Done on Vancouver Island

Following the [announcement](#) by the Province of BC in November regarding additional funding for MRI, Island Health's plans to increase the number of MRIs being performed are well underway. Recruitment for additional MRI technologists to carry out the additional procedures is ongoing, with individuals already being hired for the South Island and Nanaimo as well as for the mobile service in Port Alberni, Cowichan and Campbell River. This fiscal year, Island Health will be adding 3,160 more MRI scans in Victoria, Duncan, Nanaimo, Port Alberni, Courtenay and Campbell River. By year four of the strategy, 41,730 MRIs will be done on Vancouver Island – and increase of 55% from current volumes. [Read more](#) information about MRI.



3. Pharmacy Expansion Enhances Patient Care

Island Health is improving medication safety for patients with an Island-wide project to establish a closed-loop medication system at its care locations. The Unit Dose Medication Distribution (UDMD) Project will make a full range of medications available in a ready-to-administer, bar-code-labelled format.

As part of this project, Island Health today released the tender for a \$2.5-million dollar pharmacy renovation and expansion at Nanaimo Regional General Hospital (NRGH).

The \$2.5 million allocated for the pharmacy construction is part of the \$4.64-million UDMD project to construct and equip NRGH for the new medication delivery system. Funding is split 60-40 between the Province of British Columbia and the Nanaimo Regional Hospital District. [Read more.](#)

4. North Island Hospitals Project Sets New Environmental Standards

The North Island Hospitals Project (NIHP) will set new standards in energy usage and carbon emission reductions. The new hospitals will be among the most efficient in the world, using roughly half the energy of the current hospitals in Campbell River and the Comox Valley. In addition, green-house gas (GHG) emissions will be 70% lower than the existing hospitals. What this means is that the new hospitals will come very close to meeting the Province's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Targets Act 30 years ahead of schedule. The most significant design feature supporting lowered GHG emissions is the hospitals' heating plants. Other features contributing to energy efficiency include higher levels of roof and wall insulation, higher performance windows, more efficient lighting and low flow plumbing fixtures. Check out the [project web site](#).

Want to see a bird's eye view of the hospital construction sites?

The flights include a detailed look at the hospital structures, level by level and the locations of various departments and services within:

- [Campbell River tour](#)
- [Comox Valley tour](#)



Significant progress is being made on the new Campbell River Hospital (above) and the new Comox Valley Hospital (below)



5. Island Health Climate Hospital Vulnerability Assessment

Island Health has embarked on a climate vulnerability assessment of Nanaimo Regional General Hospital using the Public Infrastructure Engineering Vulnerability Committee (PIEVC) protocol. This involves a stakeholder process to define the structural and non-structural infrastructure components of the hospital and the climate parameters that may impact them. It is the first time the PIEVC protocol is being used to assess climate vulnerabilities for a health care facility. Defining the current and future climate risks and vulnerabilities of Nanaimo's hospital with the protocol provides a concrete example to show its potential for all health care facilities across Canada.

6. Trauma Informed Practice for MHSU Care

Island Health recognizes the impact and prevalence of trauma on the health and well-being of the people we serve, as well as our staff. As such, Island Health is developing a plan for Trauma Informed Practice (TIP) implementation, including supporting provincial trauma

guidelines and training curriculum to ensure clients, their families and staff feel safe, supported, respected and empowered. This collaborative process will be tailored to individuals' physical, psychological, spiritual and cultural needs.

7. PARTY Program Helps Teens Avoid Risky Behaviours

The Island Health P.A.R.T.Y. Program (Prevent Alcohol and Risk-related Trauma in Youth) gives teenagers a front row seat to what happens when a young person is injured or killed after making a bad decision. PARTY hosts more than 80 sessions annually at 11 different sites, and educates an average of 4000 grade 10 students each school year.

In 2014-2015, 265 volunteers – including hospital staff, chaplain services, funeral directors, administrative support, paramedics, firefighters and many other roles – donated 3205 hours of their time to run the P.A.R.T.Y. program at Island Health sites.



(L-R) Central and North Vancouver Island P.A.R.T.Y. Program coordinator Alexis Stuart with program volunteers Dr. Neil Rogers, Jerry Blackburn, Amanda Lutes and Shelley Bowe.

[Read about a recent PARTY program at NRGH.](#)

For more information and a list of P.A.R.T.Y.'s community sponsors, visit <http://www.viha.ca/trauma/party/>.



8. Island Patients Benefit from Paramedicine Partnership

Paramedics in Cortes Island, Port Hardy, Tofino and Ucluelet will provide more patient care and their communities will benefit from enhanced health services, thanks to an innovative partnership between BC Emergency Health Services and Island Health.

Under this initiative, paramedics will provide primary care services within their scope of practice to increase access to basic health-care services in non-urgent settings in partnership with local health care providers. The enhanced role is not intended to replace care provided by health professionals such as nurses, but rather to complement and support the work these important professionals do each day. [Read more.](#)

9. ARNBC 2015 Awards of Excellence Winners from Island Health

Joanne Maclaren (RN), Darcy Ross (RN) and Victoria Power have won the Excellence in Nursing Advocacy Award from the [Association of Registered Nurses of BC \(ARNBC\)](#).

They have been instrumental in providing leadership to move Nurse Practitioner (NP) practice forward in Island Health and British Columbia. All have demonstrated innovative and progressive ideas and solutions in nursing by advocating for the NP role as a means to advance nursing and effect positive system change. Together, they have made a lasting impact in their support of NP integration in Island Health and beyond.



Penny Cooper (RN) receives Award of Excellence in Nursing Administration from ARNBC

Penny is a Registered Nurse from the Stó:lō First Nation. As South Island Aboriginal Health Manager, Penny has played a key leadership role in creating a clear vision for her multidisciplinary team. Among her many strengths is the ability to foster a collegial environment in which people feel valued, respected, encouraged and involved.

Working collaboratively with Aboriginal community partners and staff, Penny was instrumental in the initiation, development and implementation of the many [Cultural Safety](#) resources at Island Health.

10. Routine HIV Testing Available at NRGH

Did you know that one in four people who are living with HIV in Canada are unaware of their infection? Patients admitted to NRGH through the ER department are now being offered an HIV test as part of their admissions bloodwork. As with all medical investigations, testing happens once patient consent is given.

The initiative is already in place in Campbell River and Port Alberni, and is in accordance with the Provincial HIV Testing Guidelines, which recommend health professionals know the HIV status of all patients under their care.

Early diagnosis and treatment can allow HIV positive individuals to live long, healthy lives and



significantly reduces the likelihood of onward transmission. It is estimated that 54% of new HIV infections occur via transmission from individuals who are unaware of their HIV status. [Read more.](#)

11. Island Health Welcomes Two New Board Members

Island Health is pleased to announce the appointment of two new members to its Board of Directors.

Starr Winchester is a former Courtenay Mayor and councillor, and a life-long resident of the Comox Valley. She has an extensive background in the banking industry. Claire Moglove is a retired lawyer who has lived in Campbell River for nearly 25 years. She served two terms on Campbell River council, and is an active volunteer in her community, with a particular interest in organizing sporting events

[Read more](#) about Island Health's Board of Directors.

Excellent health and care for everyone, everywhere, every time.

For more information, or if you wish to be removed from our distribution list, please contact Suzanne Germain via: suzanne.germain@viha.ca or 250-370-8294.