

# Island Health MLA Update



## Introduction

Welcome to the January 2015 edition of the Island Health's MLA Update and Happy New Year!

This is the time of year when many people resolve to make positive changes — whether it's becoming more active, eating a more balanced diet, getting a better handle on household finances or many other worthwhile goals. The challenge is always how to stay motivated. In this edition of the MLA Update, we are happy to provide a list of resources that will help us, those we love and those we partner with in the community meet their goals.

This edition also includes information about a **new collaborative care clinic** in Port McNeill, new **hospice beds** coming to the Comox Valley, the increased **use of technology** to support patient care, **expanded mental health and substance use services** and **Ebola planning**.

In addition to continuing with a strong emphasis on community-focused health and care in 2015, Island Health's other identified priority areas – in alignment with the Ministry of Health's strategic priorities – include providing an exemplary patient experience, delivering excellence in quality and safety and supporting a great place to work and learn for our staff and physician partners.

The winter edition of [Island Health Magazine](#) will be online February 15 and available at local community centres and Island Health locations the following week. This upcoming issue features articles on understanding heart disease, family fun for Family Day and reducing the stigma of mental illness.

The next edition of Island Health's MLA Update will be issued mid-March. 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](mailto: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 <a href="mailto:valerie.wilson@viha.ca">valerie.wilson@viha.ca</a>
South Vancouver Island:	Suzanne Germain	250-370-8294 <a href="mailto:suzanne.germain@viha.ca">suzanne.germain@viha.ca</a>

## Useful Links

**News:** [www.viha.ca/about\\_viha/news/](http://www.viha.ca/about_viha/news/). Information about new initiatives, partnerships and programs.

**Facts & Stats:** [www.viha.ca/about\\_viha/](http://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](http://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/](http://www.viha.ca/about_viha/accountability/)

**Wait Times:** [www.health.gov.bc.ca/swt/](http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/swt/). Surgical wait times by physician and facility.

## Table of Contents

1. [Resources to help keep track with resolutions for 2015](#)
2. [Mental Health and Substance Use Services Strengthened Island-Wide](#)
3. [Influenza Affecting Vancouver Island Residents](#)
4. [Port McNeill Clinic and Island Health collaborate for health and care](#)
5. [North Island Hospitals Project Public-Patient Advisory Committee Established](#)
6. [New Hospice Beds Coming to the Comox Valley](#)
7. [Nanaimo Regional General Hospital Starts Countdown to IHEALTH Launch](#)
8. [What is IHealth?](#)
9. [Telehealth Continues to Expand](#)
10. [Island Health has planned for Ebola](#)

## 1. Resources to help keep on track with resolutions for 2015

HealthLinkBC ([www.healthlinkbc.ca/](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/)) is a great place to start for suggestions on [staying motivated and meeting goals for 2015](#). Other helpful resources on staying on track with healthy choices for the year include:

### Quitting Smoking:

- BC Lung Association ([www.bc.lung.ca](http://www.bc.lung.ca), [www.quitnow.ca](http://www.quitnow.ca) )

### General Health and Wellness:

- Healthy Families BC ([www.healthyfamiliesbc.ca](http://www.healthyfamiliesbc.ca))

### Physical Activity:

- Physical Activity Line ([www.physicalactivityline.com](http://www.physicalactivityline.com))
- Participaction ([www.participaction.com](http://www.participaction.com))
- BC Recreation and Parks Association ([www.stayactiveeathealthy.ca](http://www.stayactiveeathealthy.ca))

### Healthy Eating:

- HealthLink BC ([www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthyeating/](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthyeating/))
- Canada's Food Guide (<http://healthycanadians.gc.ca/eating-nutrition/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php>)

### Men's Health:

- Government of Canada: (<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/jfy-spv/men-hommes-eng.php>)
- Canadian Men's Health Foundation: (<http://dontchangemuch.ca/?gclid=CLS9ouPu9L4CFQjUfgod-o0Ayw>)

### Women's Health:

- Government of Canada: ([www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/jfy-spv/women-femmes-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/jfy-spv/women-femmes-eng.php))
- Breast cancer: ([www.fiveplusbc.ca](http://www.fiveplusbc.ca))

### Budgeting:

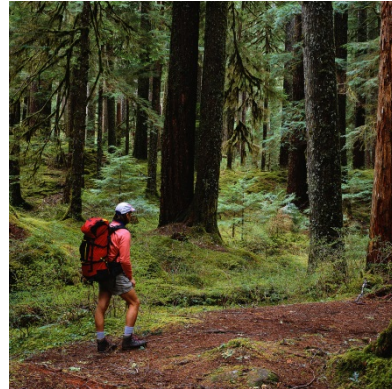
- Industry Canada budget guide: ([www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/oca-bc.nsf/eng/ca02154.html](http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/oca-bc.nsf/eng/ca02154.html))

[Back to Top](#)

## 2. Mental Health and Substance Use Services Strengthened Island-Wide

Island Health is expanding supports for people living with mental illness and substance use challenges.

In 2015, Island Health will open 28 new substance use beds and 14 new tertiary mental health care beds. In addition, three new intensive case management teams and a new assertive community treatment team will support recovery for clients with serious mental illness and



addictions in the community.

The new services are part of a three-year plan to address gaps and challenges in mental health and substance use services. Services already introduced since 2012 under the plan include:

- Nanaimo Regional General Hospital psychiatric emergency services and psychiatric intensive care units
- 51 tertiary mental health beds at Cowichan Lodge
- A four-bed high-risk unit at Seven Oaks in Victoria
- Three detox beds for women in Comox
- Two designated beds at Royal Jubilee Hospital for people with eating disorders
- New ACT teams in Campbell River and Port Alberni
- Telehealth services to support children and youth with mental health issues and those with mild to moderate anxiety and depression living in more rural and remote areas
- Education for health care providers in rural and remote areas around suicide prevention and eating disorders
- A new coordinator for child and youth mental health and substance use services based on the North Island
- Supports for children and youth in mental health crisis at Victoria General Hospital.

A complete list of new services opening in 2015 is available at :

[www.viha.ca/about\\_viha/news/news\\_releases/new\\_MHSU\\_services\\_17Dec14.htm](http://www.viha.ca/about_viha/news/news_releases/new_MHSU_services_17Dec14.htm)

[Back to Top](#)

### 3. Influenza Affecting Vancouver Island Residents

Vancouver Island is currently in the midst of a spike in influenza cases which is affecting residential care facilities as well as acute care hospitals. Each year, health care facilities across the continent get busier in the winter months (often referred to as “winter surges”) due to an increase in seasonal illnesses and respiratory infections, and the general decline in health many elderly people face in the winter months.

Public health officials advise the strain of the influenza virus currently circulating (Influenza A H3N2), tends to affect the elderly the hardest. The situation is exacerbated because the virus mutated from what was used to make this year’s vaccine. The vaccine still offers some protection, but not as much as usual.



As a result, this winter Island Health is seeing an unusually high number of patients admitted to hospital with influenza (about 240 as of mid-January, compared to 150 last year for the whole flu season). Almost all of these patients are elderly. This has been happening in other parts of Canada as well. The record number of influenza outbreaks in residential care facilities, which often results in units being closed to admissions, has decreased the number of patients being discharged from hospital into residential care.

Island Health has provisions in place to ensure patients get the care they need during surges. Staff work to discharge people who can be safely discharged home and resources in home

care are increased. Additional beds are opened in temporary areas of the hospitals and transitional beds are created in the community for patients who are past the acute phase of their hospital stay.

To learn more about how to stay health and avoid the flu, go to:

[http://www.viha.ca/about\\_viha/news/news\\_releases/avoid\\_the\\_flu\\_2015-01-08.htm](http://www.viha.ca/about_viha/news/news_releases/avoid_the_flu_2015-01-08.htm)

[Back to Top](#)

#### **4. Port McNeill Clinic and Island Health collaborate for health and care**

Island Health community-based clinicians are partnering with staff and physicians at the Port McNeill medical clinic to improve access to health services.

Local physicians who own the Port McNeill medical clinic recently renovated the building to increase the number of exam rooms. Now called the Port McNeill Collaborative Clinic, Island Health clinicians, through a leasing agreement, are able to use these additional exam rooms to meet with patients on the same day that they have appointments with a physician, nurse or nurse practitioner at the medical clinic.



Providing this broader range of services in one location has many benefits. For example, an Island Health social worker or Mental Health and Substance Use clinician could refer a client directly to a member of the primary health care team. Physicians will also book patients to see the social worker for specific consultation around adult guardianship, advanced directives, navigating the health system and other issues.

*Picture: The Port McNeill Collaborative team includes, from left: Lorraine Lines, Nurse Practitioner; Peta Kelly, Primary Health Care nurse; Sue Bell, Port McNeill clinic medical administration; Kirsten Kucy, Social Worker; Dr. Dave Whittaker; Joanie Hoddinott and Tanna Wesner, Medical Office Assistants, Port McNeill clinic. Missing from the photo: Dr. Prean Armogam, Judy Mitchell, Annetta Murgatroyd, Tina Slater and Karen Bonnell, Mental Health and Substance Use.*

[Back to Top](#)

#### **5. North Island Hospitals Project Public-Patient Advisory Committee Established**

The newly-selected members of the North Island Hospitals Project Public-Patient Advisory Committee had their inaugural/orientation meeting in December. The new committee consists of 14 members representing the diverse demographic of the mid- and north Island. The committee will be involved in engagement activities to gather community and patient perspectives on the new hospitals and to seek input on improvements such as navigation and way-finding within the hospitals.



In the following months, the committee will meet bi-monthly or quarterly, depending on the

project schedule. Members will also have the opportunity to visit mock-up rooms constructed to show everything from the locations of beds and equipment to doors, windows, lighting, power and data connections. Visit <http://nihp.viha.ca/> for more information.

[Back to Top](#)

## 6. New Hospice Beds Coming to the Comox Valley

Residents of the Comox Valley will soon have access to community-level hospice services with a new four-bed hospice space at The Views now under construction and slated for opening mid-2015.



The new hospice service and beds are a community partnership involving the Province of B.C., Island Health, St. Joseph's Hospital/The Views residential care facility, the St. Joseph's Hospital Foundation and the Comox Valley Hospice Society. It will create a warm and welcoming clinical environment for patients and their loved ones during a difficult and challenging part of life.

The opening of the four beds in Comox in 2015 is part of a plan by Island Health to double the number of hospice spaces to 64 by 2020, which will ensure high-quality, accessible end-of-life services and supports throughout Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. More information about Island Health End of Life programs is available at [www.viha.ca/pal\\_eol/](http://www.viha.ca/pal_eol/).

[Back to Top](#)

## 7. Nanaimo Regional General Hospital Starts Countdown to IHealth Launch

On December 10, staff and physicians at NRGH and Dufferin Place celebrated the launch of the countdown to the implementation of IHealth, the new electronic system that will be up and running at these two sites next summer. Dufferin and NRGH are the first locations to benefit from what will eventually be an Island Health-wide implementation of an advanced electronic patient care system that will improve both how staff and physicians do their work and how they take care of patients.

The event provided an opportunity for employees to get a 'hands-on' look at the system and the devices that will be used – all with the aim to give staff a better sense of how IHealth will transform how patient care is delivered. Extensive training and staff engagement will be ongoing at NRGH over the coming months.

In addressing staff, Island Health's President and CEO Dr. Brendan Carr acknowledged that the implementation of IHealth will involve significant change and will be hard work, but that it is important because it will improve safety by creating one record and one plan of care, giving care providers a complete picture of the patient, regardless of where in Island Health they may have received care before. Island Health has set up a web page for staff and the public about

IHealth: <http://ihealth.islandhealth.ca/>.

[Back to Top](#)

## 8. What is IHealth?

IHealth is a long term strategy for Island Health. Once fully implemented, every individual who Island Health provides services to will have a single, secure and private electronic health record. It is anticipated that IHealth will be fully implemented across Island Health by the end of 2016. Much more than an electronic health record, IHealth will also:



- Improve safety by reducing errors and provide better information about risks
- Create a stronger continuity of care through better access to patient information for care providers, no matter what Island Health site or service the patient is accessing
- Improve team-based collaboration and care planning
- Increase efficiency by decreasing repeat diagnostics and documentation
- Improve access to test results
- Provide relevant and current data to guide care decisions
- Increase involvement of patients in care decisions and reduce the need for patients to repeat information

[Back to Top](#)

## 9. Telehealth Continues to Expand

Telehealth plays a key role in providing an innovative way to connect patients and providers, no matter where they live. As the use of Telehealth expands, it allows Island Health to extend the reach of care providers, and improve access for patients in remote communities. With the participation of more than 150 clinicians, Island Health Telehealth is an option for all clinical programs and is routine for Oncology, Thoracics, Renal, Seniors Health, Genetics, Heart Health, Psychiatry, Eating Disorders, Tuberculosis, Diabetes, Neurology, Speech Therapy, Hereditary Cancer Program, Occupational Stress Injury and Ophthalmology. Innovative technologies such as digital stethoscopes and specialized cameras leverage local clinical support.

The Home Health Monitoring program (HHM) supports self-management of heart failure, enabling patients to maintain and improve their health while living at home. The benefits of HHM include a 67 per cent decrease in hospital admissions, 75 per cent reduction in length of hospital stays and 65 per cent reduction in emergency department visits.

Since inception, more than 16,000 provider-client appointments have been provided over Telehealth, preventing more than 6.4 million kilometres of travel — approximately 93,000



hours of driving — and close to 1,700 CO<sub>2</sub>e tonnes of gas emissions.

Telehealth is available at 58 sites in 21 Island communities. Island Health's Telehealth team has compiled a collection of testimonials from patients and health care providers from Victoria to Alert Bay at: [www.viha.ca/telehealth/testimonials.htm](http://www.viha.ca/telehealth/testimonials.htm).

[Back to Top](#)

## 10. Island Health has planned for Ebola

While the day-to-day focus and public concern regarding Ebola is less prevalent now, Island Health continues to prepare should a possible case of Ebola presents at one of our facilities. The likelihood of a real case remains very low, but preparedness is important.



On January 7, Island Health conducted a practice Ebola scenario at Royal Jubilee Hospital. Aspects of care tested included activities such as the arrival of a 'patient' via ambulance, moving the patient safely from the Emergency entrance to an isolation room, putting on and taking off personal protective equipment and conducting laboratory tests.

The exercise gave us a lot of valuable knowledge that will strengthen our ability to respond to a potential Ebola case or similar infectious diseases that may occur in the future.

For information about Ebola can be found at: [www.viha.ca/mho/disease/ebola.htm](http://www.viha.ca/mho/disease/ebola.htm)

[Back to Top](#)

---

*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](mailto:suzanne.germain@viha.ca) or 250-370-8294.