

January, 2014

Introduction

Happy New Year and welcome to the second edition of Island Health’s “MLA Update” – our bi-monthly electronic e-mail aimed at giving you, as MLAs, and your office staff information on Island Health activities, priorities and news. This update is one component of ongoing engagement activities that Island Health is committed to as we work with elected officials and their staff to make sure Island Health residents have the information they need to navigate the health care system and recognize its complexities and priorities.

As we begin a new year of health care service delivery on Vancouver Island, the surrounding islands and parts of the mainland coast, Island Health will continue to increase focus on supporting overall population health and wellness. Our aim is to reduce the prevalence of disease, improve the health status of Island Health residents – particularly those whose health status is the most vulnerable – and ensure more residents get the health care information they need and the services they require at the community (primary care) level instead of in hospital (acute care).

Key to improving population health is partnerships with local and regional entities, including government, institutions, organizations and agencies, as well as individuals. Health care services contribute only about 20% of an individual’s health. Other socio-economic determinants of health include lifestyle, education, food security, work, income, housing, community and social networks, environmental conditions (e.g. water, sanitation), the environment and genetics. Everyone has a role to play. We hope that by working with our partners, everyone can begin to achieve improved health in 2014.

The next edition of Island Health’s MLA report will be issued mid-March. If there is information you would like to see in future updates, 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
South Vancouver Island:	Suzanne Germain	250-370-8294 suzanne.germain@viha.ca

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.

Table of Contents

1. Influenza Season and Flu Clinics Update
2. Redesigning Care Models at Nanaimo, Victoria and Royal Jubilee Hospitals
3. New MRI up and running at Nanaimo Regional General Hospital
4. New Residential Care Facility Announced for Greater Victoria
5. Preliminary work underway for new Cowichan District Hospital
6. Local Health Area (LHA) 70 Health Services Review Update
7. Colon Cancer Screening Process Update
8. Oncology (Cancer) Services at Nanaimo Regional General Hospital
9. New Video To Support Patients from Rural and Remote Communities
10. New Website for North Island Hospitals Project Launched
11. "Island Health 2018" – New Strategic Plan Update
12. Celebrating Our Own

1. Influenza Season and Flu Clinics Update

The number of influenza cases in Western Canada has spiked in December and January, although our public health officials are now indicating the flu may have peaked on Vancouver Island. The flu can be a serious illness and poses a particular health risk to vulnerable groups, including the elderly and those with chronic diseases. This year's flu strain is predominantly H1N1, which is affecting younger people more. Emergency Departments are extremely busy and Island Health anticipates these high patient volumes in both Emergency and on inpatient units, including in Intensive Care, will continue over the coming weeks.

The good news is that the H1N1 strain is part of this year's flu vaccine. The flu vaccine has been available to the public since November 1, 2013. Island Health is still encouraging individuals who have not yet had their flu shot and who wish to get it to seek out the vaccine. As public interest in getting the vaccine this year has been heightened, vaccine supplies are becoming extremely limited. More supplies have been ordered, and the vaccine may still be available in limited quantities at private physician offices and pharmacies. The vaccine is generally still available to members of the public who wish to receive it. Island Health is encouraging people to call ahead to their physician's office or pharmacy to make sure they have the vaccine available. The flu mist is also available in limited supplies through Island Health Public Health to individuals who are eligible for the free vaccine and can appropriately get the flu mist.

More information is available at www.viha.ca/flu, or by calling Healthlink BC at 8-1-1.

2. Redesigning Care Models at Nanaimo, Victoria and Royal Jubilee Hospitals

No doubt you have heard about Care Delivery Model Redesign (CDMR) which is subject to public discourse right now. Island Health is introducing a new Patient Care Model at hospitals in Nanaimo and Victoria to improve both the quality of care and the quality of the work place.

This new care model is a collaborative team approach to providing patient care. It creates teams of Registered Nurses working with Licensed Practical Nurses and Health Care Assistants (Care Aides) to provide the right type of care to patients, at the right time, by the most appropriate health care provider. This team approach allows highly skilled nurses to focus on patient assessments, care planning, and communication with patients and their families. Health Care Assistants (HCAs) will help patients with activities of daily living such as dressing, eating and getting up and walking. This focus will result in better care for patients and an improved work environment for staff.

Island Health recognizes the transition to this new team care model has been challenging. Introducing HCAs to care teams is a significant change in how care is provided to patients. Island Health care staff and leaders have provided extensive feedback on September's implementation of the team care model at Nanaimo Regional General

Hospital. We have taken this feedback seriously and have made adjustments, including revising the team model implementation date at Royal Jubilee and Victoria General Hospitals to Wednesday, April 23, 2014. We believe this change will ensure adequate time for team transition, and more time for hiring and orientation of HCAs. Many units are already testing new ways of working together under the new team model, and this allows them more time to do this important work.

For more information about the patient care model, see:

www.viha.ca/about_viha/news/new-patient-care-model.htm.

3. New MRI up and running at Nanaimo Regional General Hospital

A new \$2.8 million Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) system is now in place at Nanaimo Regional General Hospital (NRGH) and is providing central Vancouver Island patients with the latest in medical imaging technology. The new MRI has a faster processing time which means scans will take less time for some patients. The length of procedures varies based on imaging requirements. The new system has the capacity for neurological, breast and cardiac imaging. These may be more complex and take longer than other types of MRI scans.

Funding for MRIs and the types of scans required at NRGH will be factors in the number that will be conducted. Medical imaging staff will have a better idea of the efficiencies of the new technology in the coming months as they become more accustomed to using the new system.

The use of MRI has increased in recent years as the technology has improved and become more and more effective in diagnosing injuries and diseases. Since 2003, the number of MRI scans has increased by more than 75 per cent, from 13,500 in 2003/04 to 23,829 in 2012/13. From April 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014, Island Health plans to complete approximately 25,000 scans. Approximately 600 MRIs are completed each month at NRGH.

Island Health has five MRI machines: three in Victoria (one at Royal Jubilee Hospital and two at Victoria General Hospital), one at NRGH and one mobile unit that travels between Campbell River, the Comox Valley, Port Alberni and Duncan.

For more information about Medical Imaging and MRI, see:

www.viha.ca/medical_imaging/services/mri.htm.

4. New Residential Care Facility Announced for Greater Victoria

Island Health is pleased to partner with the Capital Regional Hospital District (CRHD) on Southern Vancouver Island on a new residential care facility near the corner of Hillside and Blanshard. The facility will replace 247 beds at Oak Bay Lodge and 73 beds at Mount Tolmie Hospital. While these two facilities have a long and proud history of delivering care for seniors in Greater Victoria, they are aging, and their infrastructures no longer meet the complex care needs of today's residential care clients.

Since 2009, Island Health has been seeking to replace the beds at Oak Bay Lodge and Mount

Tolmie with more appropriate beds. The new facility will be a 320-bed residence for the elderly and people living with dementia. Through the partnership with CRHD, the hospital district will own the land and the new building, and Island Health will lease the facility to deliver the care. A Request for Proposal to design, build and maintain the facility will be issued this summer. The new care facility will open in the 2016/17 fiscal year.

For more information, see www.crd.bc.ca/about/news/2013/12/02/renewal-residential-care-unit.

5. Preliminary work underway for new Cowichan District Hospital

The Cowichan Valley Regional Hospital District (CVRHD) will be conducting a land search in the months ahead to identify properties that fit into Island Health's long term plans for the eventual replacement of Cowichan District Hospital.

Acquiring a suitable site for a new hospital is one step in the planning process which remains in the very early stages. A new hospital for the Cowichan Valley would require regional and provincial government approval. At this time no approvals or funding are in place. The acquisition of land does not guarantee provincial funding or approval for a new hospital. Should the long-term strategy for a new hospital eventually be approved and funded, the land acquired by the CVRHD would be part of its 40% contribution to the cost of a new hospital.

Four public open houses were held in the Cowichan Valley in November and December where members of the public were invited to provide feedback on the site selection criteria that will be used in determining a location for a potential new hospital.

In addition, the CVRHD issued a Request for Proposal in November seeking a real estate expert to help with the land search, and submissions are currently being evaluated. An Expression of Interest process will take place later this year inviting landowners to submit properties to be considered as potential sites for a potential future new hospital.

More information is available on the Cowichan Communities Health Network web page: www.cchn.ca/.

6. Local Health Area (LHA) 70 Health Services Review Update

Island Health has been working with community stakeholders in Local Health Area (LHA) 70 (Alberni-Clayoquot) to:

- Improve understanding of the health status and determinants of health of Alberni Clayoquot residents
- Identify healthcare system challenges
- Determine how the healthcare system and collaboration with healthcare and community partners might need to evolve to better meet the needs of communities.

To improve population health and health care services in the area, Island Health is considering:

- Population needs, with a focus on vulnerable populations
- Local and geographic realities (e.g. weather, transportation, tourism, etc.)
- Service sustainability – including financial and human resources
- Island Health emerging priorities and Ministry of Health priorities
 - Collaboration and integration (including with non-Island Health services)
 - Prevention and health promotion
 - Key Result Areas (Ministry of Health Priorities).

Engagement sessions identified the need for better communication and collaboration across Island Health services as well as with physicians and other community partners. In addition, Island Health recognizes the need to ensure individuals have appropriate access to primary health care services and community services.

For more information on the LHA 70 review, see: www.viha.ca/NR/rdonlyres/4B558499-3793-468C-B69D-9D7FDCB29609/0/draftlha70discussionthemes.pdf.

7. Colon Cancer Screening Process Update

Colon cancer is easier to treat when found at an early stage. With early detection and treatment, the chance of survival is more than 90%. Screening could save you or your constituent's life.

Age is the biggest risk factor for colon cancer – almost 95% of new cases diagnosed each year in BC are in men and women age 50 or older. Colon cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death for men and the third most common cause of cancer death for women in Canada. All women and men age 50 to 74 without symptoms should get screened regularly for colon cancer.

There are two screening tests available for colon cancer – the fecal immunochemical test (FIT) and colonoscopy. Physicians help individuals decide which is the right test to have if you are in the eligible age-range or have other risk factors that warrant screening.

A province-wide colorectal screening program was launched on April 1, 2013, with the introduction of the FIT test. This test is easier for patients to complete at home and requires no changes to medication or diet. Island Health was the first health authority in BC to implement the new program. Other health authorities are phasing it in throughout the remainder of 2013. Patients who have a positive result from the FIT test generally are referred for a colonoscopy for further screening.

Implementation of the new colon cancer screening program did not come without challenges for Island Health. Demand for colonoscopies increased significantly, beyond the initial projections made by the BC Cancer Agency. As a result, demand for colonoscopies at first outpaced Island Health's capacity. Appropriate access to timely care being a key priority, Island Health took immediate steps to address wait times and barriers to access for colonoscopies. Our action plan:

- Adds capacity for 400 additional colonoscopy screenings over the summer – and continuing with an additional 127 extra procedures per week in South Island for the remainder of 2013/14.

- Streamlines referral processes so patients with a positive test or a family history are referred directly to the patient coordinator for support and booking.
- Reviews wait lists to ensure patients are on the right list and those deemed urgent or semi-urgent are booked in an appropriate manner.
- Addresses hours of operation, booking models and staff schedules to improve through-put and increase efficiencies.
- Increases education to family physicians on the new colon cancer screening program and who should have a FIT test (target is patients aged 50 and 74).

Urgent/emergency services continue to be prioritized. Island Health has been meeting with surgeons and gastroenterologists on an ongoing basis to address volumes and manage waitlists. Our action plan has streamlined processes and is helping to resolve this situation and ensure patient access to care is timely.

For more information on colon cancer screening, go to:

www.viha.ca/health_info/colon_cancer.htm.

8. Oncology (Cancer) Services at Nanaimo Regional General Hospital

The BC Cancer Agency (BCCA) works with local health authorities across the province to offer patients treatment closer to home where possible through community oncology clinics in smaller communities, such as Nanaimo. In Nanaimo, an oncologist recently relocated to Victoria, and the BCCA and Island Health acknowledge this has been upsetting to some patients. This oncologist is, however, available to see patients each Friday in Nanaimo.

This change does not impact cancer care for patients in Nanaimo; patients have been and will continue to receive excellent cancer care. Oncologists formulate a cancer management plan. They are not required to oversee the delivery of chemotherapy and medical care, which can be done by a General Practitioner in Oncology.

This transition from Nanaimo to Victoria allows the oncologist to collaborate with other oncologists and other specialties at the BCCA Vancouver Island Centre to serve patients across the Island, including Nanaimo. In addition, Nanaimo patients may see any of the BCCA's oncologists at the Vancouver Island Centre that specializes in their specific type of cancer. Nanaimo patients are also seen and supported by a group of BCCA oncologists, as part of our network model across the province.

9. New Video To Support Patients From Rural and Remote Communities

Island Health's award-winning multi-media department has developed a video for patients who live in rural and remote communities. This video provides information to support their admission, stay and discharge from hospital.

Island Health wants every patient to have a positive experience in hospital. Navigating a system as complex as health care can be difficult at the best of times, and it can be a

particular challenge for residents of rural and remote communities.

The video is available at: <https://vimeo.com/81739056>.

10. New Website for North Island Hospitals Project Launched

The North Island Hospitals Project – which involves the planning, construction and commissioning of two new \$600 million hospitals that will be built and opened in 2017 in Campbell River and in the Comox Valley – is Island Health’s largest capital project currently underway.

Construction will begin later in 2014 and the project now has a new website with up to date information about the project and improved connectivity. The website includes:

- Regular information updates
- Facts, figures, frequently asked questions, presentations etc. about the two hospitals
- Improved interaction; for example, places to leave questions, sign up for email updates and event notifications
- Expanded sections on community engagement, design principles, project history, etc.

For more information on the new North Island Hospitals Project, see: <http://nihp.viha.ca/>.

11. “Island Health 2018” – New Strategic Plan Update

Development of Island Health’s new Strategic Plan, called “Island Health 2018,” is well underway.

In November and early December, executive and other leadership staff visited 24 island communities across Island Health’s service area hearing from residents, patients and clients, municipal and community leaders, physicians and staff about the future direction of health care in our region. We went to over Island Health 310 sites, units, departments and offices to connect with staff and physicians. We also held 25 public meetings and sessions with community leaders.

In total, Island Health estimates we reached about 4,000 individuals. The feedback is now in the process of being compiled and themed. A draft new Strategic Plan is expected to be ready at the end of March with Island Health’s Board to approve a final plan in late May.

12. Celebrating Our Own

Island Health physicians and staff are part of the community. They are our neighbours, our friends, the volunteers in local community groups, the youth soccer coach and the weekend warrior pursuing a hobby. Every day, Island Health employees perform exceptional work, and often this work is recognized by external partners. Here are just a few examples from 2013:

- The Island **Health Aboriginal Employment Program** received the 2013 Exemplary Initiative Diversity Award at Simon Fraser University for Leadership in Diversity,

recognizing efforts to foster a work environment that reflects Aboriginal people and communities.

- Island Health Medical Health Officer **Dr. Charmaine Enns** has done extensive work to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, including development of a “Safe Infant Sleep Toolkit.” The toolkit is an initiative of the Tri-par-tite First Nations and Aboriginal Maternal and Child Health Committee, led by Perinatal Services BC.
- The Island Health **Energy and Conservation Team** earned the 2013 Energy and Environmental Stewardship Award from the Canadian College of Health Leaders. As part of this, the team presented a donation to the West Coast General Hospital Foundation in Port Alberni to recognize a variety of sustainability measures undertaken at the hospital.
- The Island **Health Royal Jubilee Psychiatric Day Hospital** team won the UBC College of Health Disciplines’ Practice Education award for their inclusive approach to providing services to clients while supporting students in their learning.
- **Dr. Tom Rimmer** of Duncan was awarded BC’s Physician of the Year by the College of Family Physicians of Canada. Dr. Rimmer serves as preceptor to UBC medical students in third-year rural practice and fourth-year family practice programs. He is a member of the care team at Cowichan District Hospital and serves as physician lead of the Mental Health Module with Island Health.
- Island Health achieved **first place in BC Hydro’s Top Ten Power Smart Partners** for 2013. From April 1, 2012 to March 31, 2013, Island Health saved 2,750,000 kilowatts – enough energy to power nearly 275 homes for a year.
- Island Health’s **Victoria General Hospital** was recognized for outstanding results in surgical patient care by the American College of Surgeons National Surgical Quality Improvement Program for having the best outcomes in nine key surgical measures, including surgical site infections, urinary tract infections from catheterization and mortality rates.

Excellent care for everyone, everywhere, every time.

For more information, contact Suzanne Germain via: suzanne.germain@viha.ca or 250-370-8294