

# Island Health MLA Update



## A message from Dr. Brendan Carr, Island Health President and CEO

Welcome to the July 2016 edition of the Island Health's MLA Update.

*I'm pleased to provide you with updates on several key initiatives across our health region, including our IHealth implementation at Nanaimo Regional General Hospital, Dufferin Place and Oceanside Health Centre, new employee education to support the handling of confidential information, how Island Health is meeting our charter obligations to provide medical assistance in dying, and our work around integration of health services through Primary Care Homes.*

*Significant work has been done with the Ministry of Health to update provincial strategic priorities for health care. At Island Health, that is focused on:*

- *Effective primary care services so people can live well and so we can prevent, reduce or delay hospital- or facility-based care*
- *Targeted and effective mental health and substance use services for those living with these difficult conditions*
- *Meaningful services for those living with chronic health conditions such as diabetes, heart failure or COPD*
- *Appropriate programs and services for frail seniors*
- *Effective networks of services in rural and remote communities*
- *Better access to, and reduced wait times for, surgery and diagnostic tests.*

*The next edition of Island Health's MLA Update will be issued in October.*

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 [moira.mclean@viha.ca](mailto:moira.mclean@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:	Shannon Marshall	250-370-8270 <a href="mailto:Shannon.Marshall@viha.ca">Shannon.Marshall@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.

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### 1. Medical Assistance in Dying Available in Island Health

On June 7, 2016, the Federal Government passed legislation guiding the provision of Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID) in Canada. This means that MAID – also known as Physician Assisted Dying – is now a legal, publicly-funded medical service. MAID is a complex, emotional topic for most people, including for patients who may be considering MAID, for their families and caregivers and for physicians and health care providers. Island Health’s approach is to provide a patient-focused, compassionate service that aligns with the patient’s wishes. Island Health can provide MAID to patients who wish to receive the service and who meet all the criteria required under the legislation. There are also physicians in the community who are not directly affiliated with Island Health who are trained to deliver MAID. Patients seeking MAID should speak to their physician or other primary care provider. The service can be provided in a person’s home, in a community-based care setting or in hospital. More information is available on [Island Health’s website](#).

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## 2. Protecting Confidential Information

Island Health has implemented a new, comprehensive and harmonized education module to ensure employees and physicians understand their responsibilities for information management. The learning module provides individuals with 10 decision supports to help apply the law, various information handling standards and practice principles to health workers day-to-day work activities.

Island Health recently uncovered three significant privacy breaches involving three employees 'snooping' in health records. Island Health President & CEO Dr. Brendan Carr expressed his frustration with what he calls a gross breach of patient, client and public trust, and sincerely apologized on behalf of the organization.

[Read the news release](#)

[Read more information about information management at Island Health](#)

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## 3. IHealth Implementation at NRGH, Dufferin Place and Oceanside Health Centre

There has been much in the media about the implementation of Island Health's new electronic health record, IHealth. Efficient and effective electronic health records are important in the delivery of safe, high-quality care.

Island Health strongly believes IHealth and its fully integrated electronic health record will lead to better treatment of patients, and reduced errors related to manual processes, particularly around medication ordering and administering.

IHealth will track and document every health care interaction a patient has, from lab, medication history, medical imaging results, hospital activity, and residential care. It will provide one single health record for each individual, allowing for a better sharing of information between the patient and all of their care providers.

But activation of IHealth is more than simply plugging in a new system. We are integrating complex systems across multiple departments and locations, training thousands of health care providers and developing and testing thousands of clinical processes that consider thousands of potential clinical interactions. We continue to work closely with our physician colleagues and clinical staff, who are providing valuable feedback and helping refine our new IHealth tools and processes.

Everyone at Island Health is passionate about doing the best we can for our patients and clients, and patient safety is paramount as we work to create a system that will truly allow us to provide excellent health and care, for everyone, everywhere, every time.

We are proud of the tremendous commitment of health care providers at NRGH, Dufferin Place and Oceanside Health Centre in leading this transformational change to ultimately improve care for the people we serve.

[Learn more about IHealth](#)

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## 4. Primary Care Homes

The establishment of Primary Care Homes (PCHs) is a priority of the Government of BC and the health authorities. Numerous PCH models and approaches are already established, or are in the process of being created, in Island Health. The PCH is the cornerstone of an integrated – or connected – community health and care system. The Divisions of Family Practice and Island Health are collaborating to develop PCHs that meet the health care needs of local

communities. The PCH links primary care providers (e.g. family physician or nurse practitioner) with services delivered by Island Health. Through the PCH, patients can access a range of health services provided by doctors and nurse practitioners as well as by other health care professionals. These include in-home supports, referrals to specialized services and weekend and evening care.

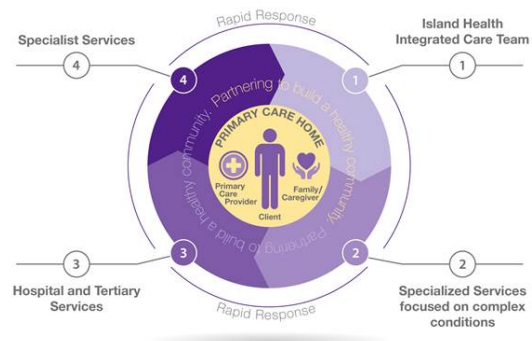
Initially, PCHs are targeting higher-risk population groups: People living, with complex, chronic diseases, frail seniors, individuals living with mental health and/or substance use challenges, vulnerable children and youth and at-risk perinatal women and their families

Not only are these populations at higher risk of needing Emergency Department or in-patient care, many individuals in these populations are less likely to be attached to a primary care provider and may experience barriers to care. PCHs exist, or are being established, in both urban and non-urban areas, including Port Hardy, Port McNeill, Comox, Oceanside, Port Alberni, Ladysmith, Sidney and Victoria.

The longer term goal of Island Health’s Community Health and Care model and the primary care homes is to decrease reliance on acute care, increase attachments to primary care, improve health outcomes for patients and enhance the overall experience of both patients and health care providers.

More information about Island Health’s Community Health and Care strategy, including Primary Care Homes, will be available in the near future.

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## 5. New unit dose medication distribution to increase patient safety

A new unit dose medication distribution system will result in safer care for patients in the Capital Regional District and is one step closer with the approval of \$4.12 million in funding by the Capital Regional Hospital District Board. This amount represents a 40% share of the \$10.3 million South Island Unit-Dose Medication Distribution Project, with remaining funding provided by Island Health.

[Read more](#)

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## 6. National award for innovative approach to diversity and inclusion in healthcare

Island Health has been selected at this year's recipient of the Canadian College of Health Leaders Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion Award.

The recognition validates the impact of the Aboriginal Employment Program on the experience of patients, families, staff and communities of Island Health.

The number of Island Health employees who self-identify as being of Aboriginal ancestry increased from 199 in April 2012 (the year the program went from pilot to permanent) to 582 as of May 2016. These numbers are a snapshot of the broader vision to create culturally safe care at Island Health.

Read the [news release](#) or visit [www.viha.ca/careers/aboriginal](http://www.viha.ca/careers/aboriginal)

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## 7. Innovative Primary Care Teamlet Offers Continuum of Care for Enhanced Health Services in Cowichan Valley

*Holistic Approach Supports Patient Physical, Mental, Spiritual and Emotional Wellness*



A new community-based primary care teamlet is now seeing patients at Cowichan's Ts'ewulhtun Health Centre. The teamlet model allows community members to access most medical services in one location, avoiding lengthy referrals, and with health care professionals they know and trust. This unique program was designed in partnership by [Cowichan Tribes](#), Island Health and [First Nations Health Authority](#) and funded through the Province and FNHA Joint Project Board.

[read more](#)

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## 8. Island Health Board welcomes new director

Island Health welcomes the appointment of Marilyn Joan (M.J.) Whitemarsh to its Board of Directors.

M.J. brings more than 35 years of senior management experience to Island Health's board including in-depth knowledge of board governance, strategic planning, leadership, audit and finance. M.J. and her husband Bill live in Sooke where they operate a consulting business to the technology, health, resource and home building industries.

More information about Island Health's Board of Directors is available at: [www.viha.ca/about\\_viha/board\\_of\\_directors/](http://www.viha.ca/about_viha/board_of_directors/)



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## 9. North Island Hospitals Project employment and skills training reaches another milestone

The number of people working on Island Health's [North Island Hospitals Project \(NIHP\)](#) construction surpassed 1,000 in April and is expected to remain in this range in the months to come. Local workers made up almost two-thirds (64 per cent) of the total April workforce. Ninety per cent of the workers were from Vancouver Island.

The number of apprentices working and learning on the two hospital sites reached new heights as well. April saw 290 apprentices working on the project in areas including plumbing, mechanical, electrical, carpentry, sheet metal, and walls & ceilings.

Read more information about the [North Island Hospitals Project](#).

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## 10. West Coast General Hospital a leader in energy efficiency

The new photovoltaic solar panel system now operating at West Coast General Hospital is Island Health's first-ever photovoltaic installation, and the largest solar panel installation of its kind on Vancouver Island. Four other



Island Health facilities are currently using solar thermal installations to pre-heat domestic water and have reduced natural gas consumption by 850 GJ per year.

[Read more](#)

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## 11. HarbourCats hit a homerun with tobacco-free partnership

Island Health and the Victoria HarbourCats baseball club are teaming up to knock chewing tobacco out of the park this summer, educating youth, players and fans about the benefits of tobacco free sports – especially the dangers of smokeless tobacco products.

Known as “chew,” “dip,” or “snuff,” chewing tobacco is a type of smokeless tobacco product consumed by approximately 8% of Canadians, 15 and older. People who use chewing tobacco are 50% more likely to acquire mouth cancers compared to those who do not use.

[Read the news release](#)

[Information on B.C.'s Smoking Cessation Program](#), or walk into any pharmacy.

For information, tips, and free coaching from a trained quit coach, visit: [www.quitnow.ca](http://www.quitnow.ca).

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## 12. Summer Issue of Award-Winning Island Health Magazine

Print versions of the award-winning [Island Health Magazine](#) are available at Island Health facilities, recreation and community centres, as well as malls and grocery stores, medical offices, and at “free magazine” kiosks.

This issue features an interview with Paul Hasselback about drug overdoses. You can also learn more about when (and when not to) consult with Dr. “staycation” this advantage of this Island Health magazine Health’s region. publication focuses on provides information Island Health.

[Read Island Health](#)



in depth interview with Medical Health Officer Dr. the Public Health state of emergency called due can also learn more about when (and when not to) Google, get tips on planning an Island summer, and find great recipes that take season’s crops.

is written for, and about, the residents of Island Produced by Island Health Communications, this promoting an active, healthy lifestyle. It also on the resources and services available from

[Magazine online](#)

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### 13. The Gift of Sight

For the fourth year in a row, two Island Health units have provided the highest number of eye donations to the Eye Bank of British Columbia. The palliative care unit at NRGH PCU provided the highest number of eye donations, followed by Victoria Hospice.



Each eye tissue donor has the potential to help up to eight other people through cornea and/or sclera transplants. The Eye Bank depends on hospital staff to help inform patients and families about the opportunity to donate eye tissue. At the PCU, an Eye Bank of BC leaflet titled Gift of Sight is included in the information package for every new patient and family.

[Read more](#)

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### 14. New Withdrawal Management Services

In recent months, Island Health has issued a number of Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for new community-based sobering and assessment programs in various island communities. Programs will consist of sobering beds that people aged 17 and up can access for up to 24 hours when experiencing intoxication due to drug or alcohol use.

[Cowichan Valley](#)

[Salt Spring Island](#)

[Campbell River](#)

[Port Alberni](#)

[Port Hardy](#)

This service expansion is made possible through the Province’s commitment to work with health authorities and the not-for-profit sector to create an additional 500 substance use beds across the province for people in need of substance use services.

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*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 Moira McLean at [moira.mclean@viha.ca](mailto:moira.mclean@viha.ca) or call 250-727-4275