

# Island Health MLA Update



## Introduction

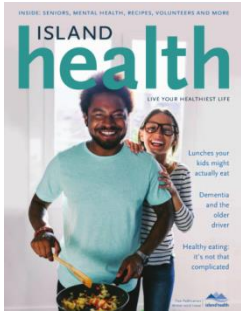
Welcome to the February 2016 edition of the Island Health's MLA Update.

This is a very exciting time at Island Health, as we get set for the imminent implementation of IHealth, our quality-focused single electronic health record. Like any major change, we expect there will be some bumps along the way as IHealth is implemented, as staff and physicians get up to speed with the new system. We know these bumps will be worth it because of the positive patient care outcomes it will support. We thank our staff and physicians for their support of this initiative. We also thank our patients and clients in advance for your understanding as we implement IHealth.

Significant work has been done with the Ministry of Health to update the provincial strategic priorities for health care. At Island Health, this has us 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.

We are focusing on more local involvement in health planning and decision-making. This is crucial to developing health and care strategies that meet unique local needs. Our new leadership structure supports a local lens on decision making, and developing plans and setting priorities created in partnership with the community.



Grab a coffee and settle in with the latest edition of [Island Health magazine!](#)

Learn how to simplify healthy eating, and get tips for family meals, school lunches, even some brown bag ideas to bring to work. You will also find articles on drivers with dementia, OCD and the benefits of telling stories. You can also find print copies of Island Health Magazine at Island Health Facilities and local rec centres. [Read Island Health Magazine](#)

The next edition of Island Health’s MLA Update will be issued in April. 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.

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## 1. IHealth set to launch with new computer platform



Island Health is about to celebrate a significant milestone in its journey towards IHealth – a major initiative that will, among other things, create a single electronic health record for every Island Health patient, resident and client.

As part of the staggered launch of IHealth, at 12:01 am on February 21 a “new platform” will be launched across Island Health. The new platform is a system upgrade to existing electronic health record applications (Cerner PowerChart, FirstNet, PharmNet, SurgiNet). This is necessary to support new functionality and workflow changes that are associated with the complete IHealth system.

As with any computer or software change (think upgrade from Windows 7 to Windows 10...), it will take time for staff to adjust to the change. While Island Health hopes the shift will be invisible for patients, public-facing areas such as registration, scheduling, lab, medical imaging and pharmacy are all involved in the change.

At 12:01 March 19, IHealth itself will ‘go live’ at Nanaimo Regional General and Dufferin Place. IHealth will then be activated across other areas in Island Health throughout the remainder of 2016 and into 2017. Once complete, IHealth will connect health information across facilities, programs and services, including records from medical labs, medical imaging, pharmacy and other care providers to serve patients, family members, staff and physicians better.

Like any major change, initial slowdowns and challenges are to be expected. Island Health thanks patients, family, visitors and staff in advance for their understanding and patience during the transition.

For more information about IHealth, go to: <http://ihealth.islandhealth.ca/>.

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## 2. Journey for better wellness in the Cowichan Valley



In December, staff from Island Health, Aboriginal Health and the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) were treated to an all access tour of Ts'ewulhtun Health Centre, site of a new community-based primary care service model designed to provide culturally safe, enhanced health services to patients in Cowichan Valley.

The “teamlet” model, designed by Cowichan Tribes in partnership with Island Health and FNHA, includes a general practitioner (GP), nurse practitioner, registered nurse/clinic manager and two registered nurses in part-time health promotion and prevention roles. The collaborative care team is rounded out by three health coaches, all licensed practical nurses, who provide individualized support and advocacy for the centre’s clients before, during and after medical appointments.

Prior to the new model, many community members reported barriers to better health outcomes in access to a consistent GP, culturally respectful care and ongoing clinical support. As a result, the local emergency room was overused in situations where preventable symptoms escalated after chronic-care conditions were left untreated.

Dr. Daniele Behn Smith, GP at Ts'ewulhtun, says this service model offers benefits for any community looking to adopt a holistic approach to health and wellness. "The teamlet model currently being adopted at Ts'ewulhtun Health Centre is promising to be a revolutionary way in which to deliver culturally safe, community-member centred care that is very high quality."

For more information on the teamlet, contact [Mary Knox](#), Central Island Manager, Aboriginal Health, or visit [Ts'ewulhtun Health Centre online](#).

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## 3. Enhanced Withdrawal Services in Mt. Waddington

Mount Waddington residents who live with substance use challenges are now benefitting from a supportive community residential setting where they can safely withdraw from alcohol and/or other drugs.

The new five-bed space is located at New Beginnings House and is managed by the North Island Crisis and Counselling Centre Society in partnership with Island Health. The anticipated length of stay for clients is five to 10 days.

The community residential withdrawal management service provides supports to adult clients who are experiencing substance use challenges or who are in withdrawal from alcohol and/or



other drug use. The service is an alternative to hospital-based detox, and provides clients with access to withdrawal management services closer to home. Residents are supported by staff 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

At the opening event, the families of Debbie Coon and Albert Prevost were acknowledged and thanked. Their deaths in 2008 underlined the need for accessible, community-based withdrawal management services in Mount Waddington. The facility will be a reminder that people who suffer with addictions deserve to be safe, warm, and supported as they withdraw.

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## 4. North Island Hospitals Transition

Transfer of acute care services into two new hospitals in Comox and Campbell River is on track for fall of 2017.

The creation of two new state-of-the-art hospitals provides a significant opportunity to better integrate acute care services within and between the hospitals, and also an opportunity for Island Health's mid/north island geography to improve alignment of community-based services in keeping with the Ministry of Health's five strategic priorities:

- improve access to primary care;
- improve services for frail seniors;
- improve service for those living with mental health and substance use;
- enhance rural health programs; and
- improve access to surgery.

The new hospitals allow for creation of innovative community and acute models of care and a refreshed, sustained approach to cultural safety with First Nations communities. The new facilities with their integrated technology and equipment will change, challenge and improve existing workflows, team dynamics, clinical decision making, bundles of service and patient/staff/physician/volunteer experience.

There is significant planning and work required to support staff to be ready to work within the facilities. The North Island Hospitals Transition Project has three focus areas:

- 1) Service and people planning
- 2) Orientation, training and education for staff
- 3) Move and facility readiness

St. Joseph's General Hospital has provided acute care services to the Comox Valley for over 100 years. The shift of acute care services to the new Island Health-operated facilities represents a significant change to the St. Joseph's organization and community. The Archdiocese, which owns the hospital, will continue to operate residential care and hospice care after acute care services have moved to the new facility. Island Health has committed to supporting the St. Joseph's organization to sustain acute care services during the transition and will support its staff and physicians to work in the new facilities. Read more at:

<http://nihp.viha.ca/>.

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## 5. Cowichan District Hospital celebrates new Echo Lab!

Heart health clients in the Cowichan Valley no longer have to drive to Nanaimo or Victoria for their echocardiograms, thanks to the newly opened Echo Lab at CDH, funded by the Cowichan District Hospital Foundation.



This \$310,000 capital project allowed the Heart Health program to remodel an existing office at CDH, retrofit the space to meet requirements for echocardiography procedures and purchase a full consult cardiac ultrasound machine and a portable cardiac ultrasound machine.

An echocardiogram is a test that uses sound waves to create pictures or video of the inside of the heart. It is a diagnostic test to check the function of the heart muscle, check heart valves for leaking and narrowing and look for possible causes of stroke.

Thank you to everyone who helped make this project a success and especially to the Cowichan District Hospital Foundation for their generous support!

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## 6. New Chief Medical Officer joins Island Health



Dr. Jeremy Etherington is the in-coming Executive Vice President and Chief Medical Officer for Island Health. Dr. Etherington will assume his new duties March 16, 2016.

Dr. Etherington comes to Island Health from Interior Health, where he has served as the VP Medicine and Quality since 2010. In this role he provided leadership in the areas of medical administration, quality improvement, clinical and enterprise risk management, accreditation, infection prevention and control, ethics, clinical networks, and was the IH academic liaison with the Southern Medical Program.

Dr. Etherington has enjoyed a rich and diverse career in the health and education systems. A former high school English teacher, Dr. Etherington completed medical school at the University of Calgary in 1982 and his residency training in Emergency Medicine at the University of British Columbia in 1987. In 1988, he joined St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver as a staff emergency physician. From 1994 to 2000, he was Chair of Emergency Medicine at SPH and Providence Health Care.



Jeremy has strong roots on the Island, including attending the University of Victoria. Both of his parents lived in the greater Victoria area and were members of the Victoria General Hospital medical staff. In his spare time, Jeremy can be found scuba-diving, golfing or playing one of his 19 guitars.

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## 7. Resident Doctors Set Down Roots on Vancouver Island

Dr. Steve Leung is one of the first ever pediatric residents in Island Health, and one of 80 resident doctors undergoing their final medical training on Vancouver Island.



In his first year of residency – he’s thrilled by the warm welcome he’s received from Island Health employees and patients. “The team in pediatrics is fantastic – they have been really receptive, and eager and keen to get us involved,” says Dr. Leung.

The week of February 15-19<sup>th</sup> is Resident Awareness Week – a time to increase understanding about resident doctors and their role in the healthcare system. There are 1300 resident doctors training in BC and that number is growing as programs expand into new training sites.

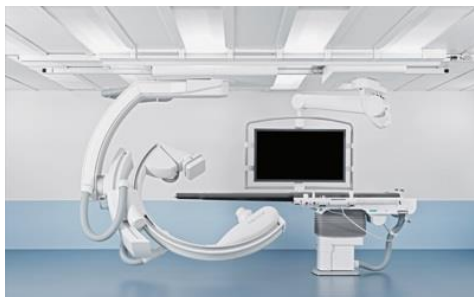
Residents are doctors who are engaged in supervised training prior to independent practice. They have completed medical degrees and are fully qualified doctors. During residency, they choose a medical specialty and complete intensive practical training in their chosen field. Residency programs take between two and five years, and some residents continue their training up to seven years for some specialties.

The term “resident” came about because originally residents would live in the hospitals. This is no longer a requirement of their training, but residents still spend a vast amount of time at the hospital! They are frontline healthcare workers who are often the first point of contact for patients, and provide around-the-clock service in clinics and hospitals. In addition to a regular work week, they also do call shifts, teach medical students, conduct research, and study.

Dr. Leung says the combination of warm people and warm weather – he’s from the prairies – mean he hopes to be here on Vancouver Island for some time!

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## 8. New Technology for Victoria General Hospital



The angiography / interventional radiology system at the Victoria General Hospital is being replaced. Service was suspended on Monday February 8th and the construction and new equipment installation will take about eight weeks. While this

new equipment will ultimately result in improved diagnostics for patients at VGH, it does mean that for about two months, VGH inpatients and emergency patients requiring angiography or interventional radiology procedures will need to be transported to Royal Jubilee Hospital for their procedures.

Medical imaging arrangements are being made to extend service at RJH to accommodate VGH patients during the downtime period. We are working with site clinical directors and ambulance services to ensure safe care and transport of patients during the VGH service downtime.

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## 9. Informed Dining in Island Health facilities

The Informed Dining in Health Care program requires retail food service establishments located in health care facilities to provide customers with nutrition information with a focus on calories and sodium.

The program was developed in consultation with BC's health authorities. Participating establishments provide nutrition information similar to what is available on prepackaged foods at the grocery store.

The nutrition information is provided before or at the point of ordering. Look for the Informed Dining nutrition binder display and posters. Informed Dining was implemented at most Island Health retail establishments before Dec 31, 2015. Remaining outlets will have Informed Dining by March 31, 2016. For more information go to [www.informeddining.ca](http://www.informeddining.ca).

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## 10. New Island Health partnership with Commissionaires

The Canadian Corp of Commissionaires were the successful proponent of the recent RFP for Island Health contract security. The Commissionaires will provide security services Island wide in partnership with Protection Services.

Commissionaires will perform such duties as.

- Constant Watch Services: Island wide
- Mobile Patrol Services: Island wide
- Static Guard Services For: Saanich Peninsula Hospital, West Coast General Hospital, Oceanside Health Center, Port Hardy Hospital, Port McNeil Hospital, Tofino General Hospital, Mental Health & Addiction Services.

The Commissionaires were established in 1937 and have largest security workforce on Vancouver Island's.



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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.