

Island Health MLA Update



Introduction

Welcome to the Winter Edition of Island Health's MLA Update. We have enjoyed keeping you up to date on many Island Health initiatives over the last year through this publication and we thank you for reading it.

In this edition of MLA Update, you will find important information about influenza and the value of getting immunized, the Care for Men Campaign, falls prevention for the elderly and much more. As we head into the final days of 2014, we would like to wish you and your loved ones a safe, happy and healthy holiday season and all the best for 2015.

The next edition of Island Health's MLA Update will be issued in January 2015. 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.

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1. Help us Fight Flu

Beginning December 1st, anyone who has not had a flu shot will be asked to wear a mask while in patient care areas at health care facilities across BC.

This policy was first implemented last year, to protect vulnerable patients from serious and often fatal complications of influenza. It applies to health care workers and visitors.

Masks will be available at the entrances to all Island Health facilities. You can get more information about the policy, and where you can get a flu shot, at www.viha.ca/flu.



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2. Preventing Falls in the Elderly

A fall can have a devastating impact on the mobility and quality of life for a senior. Seniors can go from being healthy and living independently to becoming frail and dependent on 24/7 care because of a fall. In fact, falls account for 85% of all injuries among seniors and are a leading reason why older adults lose their independence.

Island Health focuses on preventing falls and hip fractures in older adults, with a particular emphasis on enhancing mobility through strength and balance training. Ways to reduce the risk of falls include:



- Improving mobility and balance
- Increasing physical activity and muscle strength
- Following Canadian guidelines for calcium and vitamin D
- Having regular vision check-ups
- Reviewing medications with health care providers
- Reducing trip and slip hazards

An online questionnaire helps seniors – or their loved ones – assess the risk. For more information, see www.viha.ca/seniors/safety/falls.htm and www.hiphealth.ca

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3. Protecting Vulnerable Adults is Everyone's Responsibility

Island Health is a designated agency to receive and respond to concerns about abuse, neglect or self-neglect of all vulnerable adults on Vancouver Island. While this important adult protection mandate is typically associated with vulnerable seniors, Island Health's duty of care applies to all vulnerable adults 19 and above.

The legislation supporting this work is the *Adult Guardianship Act* part 3. Island Health encourages all members of the public with concerns about abuse, neglect or self-neglect of vulnerable adults to read our adult abuse and neglect page ([Adult Abuse and Neglect](#)) to learn more about recognizing adult abuse, neglect or self-neglect and how to get help.

On December 1st, 2014, another section of the *Adult Guardianship Act* (AGA 2.1, or statutory property guardianship) comes into effect that will improve how we work with vulnerable adults. This new legislation modernizes how Island Health and the Public Guardian and Trustee of BC work together to support our most vulnerable and at risk adults with substitute decision making for financial and legal affairs.

This progressive and timely legislation comes into effect now in part as a response to the 2013 [Ombudsman of BC special investigation and report: No Longer Your Decision](#).

4. Privacy: Caring for Information is Caring for People

Information access and privacy are important ethical principles and practices at Island Health. As conscientious care providers, Island Health's overarching C.A.R.E. (Courage. Aspire. Respect. Empathy) values inspire and guide staff every day in how to share patient information to support effective and timely care, while at the same time respecting and protecting patient privacy.

Island Health also complies with the access and privacy provisions of the BC *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. As such, its expert staff in the Information Stewardship, Access & Privacy Office (ISAP) respond to Freedom of Information requests, information sharing and other access requests and investigate information privacy complaints. It also promotes information access and privacy awareness and best practices across the organization through consultation and education.

If you or your constituents require records from Island Health or want to report an information privacy complaint or concern, please contact the ISAP Office directly by telephone at: 1.877.748.2290 or email at: foi@viha.ca or privacy@viha.ca.

More information is available at: www.viha.ca/info_privacy/.

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**The only thing that
smoke cures is salmon.**

Welcome to your smoke-free hospital



5. Smoke-Free at Victoria General Hospital

Earlier this fall, Victoria General Hospital (VGH) kicked-off a new month smoke-free campaign with the goal to encourage staff, patients and families to stop smoking, particularly while at the hospital. While Island Health has had smoke-free premises policy in effect since 2008, the reality is that peoples' addiction to nicotine means that smoking still occurs on hospital grounds, despite ongoing enforcement.

The VGH smoke-free campaign was developed by representatives from over 10 service areas within VGH as well as a patient advisor – who developed the awareness posters.

Since the campaign launch in mid-October, there has been a noticeable decrease in the number of staff and patients smoking on VGH property.

New signage has been posted throughout the VGH site; both inside and out and educational material is available near the main entrance. Nurses have been supported to collect smoking history on all patients admitted to VGH and Hospitalists have been alerted to the fact that they may see more requests for Nicotine Replacement Therapy. Nicorette gum is available for staff who wish to use this product and everyone – staff, patients and visitors – are encouraged to become VGH Smoke-Free Ambassadors.

Over 17 pounds of cigarette butts were collected from the grounds of VGH in September. A

graph showing the weight of butts collected over the campaign will be displayed – all in the hope to see a dramatic decrease in the number of butts littered on VGH property over the coming weeks and months.

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6. New Information Resource to Reduce the Risk of Breast Cancer

New research and treatments for breast cancer means more women are surviving and thriving than ever before. But equally important is taking steps to reduce the risk of getting breast cancer.

A new web resource, www.fiveplusbc.ca, is a partnership between leading BC cancer organizations that encourages women to take five steps that may help to prevent breast cancer, plus two actions for possible early detection. These are:

1. Maintain a healthy body weight.
2. Maintain an active lifestyle.
3. Limit alcohol consumption.
4. Breastfeed if possible.
5. Weigh the risks and benefits of hormone therapy.

Plus:

1. Be aware of the look and feel of your breasts so you notice any changes.
2. Book a mammogram every two years if you are between the ages of 50 to 74.

Mammograms for women age 40-49 or over 74 can also be considered and women should talk to their physician about this. There is much more extensive and detailed information at www.fiveplusbc.ca.

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7. Care for Men Campaign on Central Vancouver Island



Island Health, the Canadian Mental Health Association (Port Alberni, Mid-Island and Cowichan branches) and the Prostate Centre have joined forces to raise awareness for men's health, especially prostate cancer and mental health issues for men. The campaign runs from November 1st to December 6th.

Island Health is participating in community events in November and December to share information,

including a “Care for Men” card. The public is being encouraged to write a message to show how they care for their men’s health. Read more at:

http://www.viha.ca/about_viha/news/news_releases/careformen_27oct2014.htm

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8. The Heights at Mt. View in Saanich Now Open

The Heights at Mt. View, a new 260-bed residential care residence in Saanich, will provide high-quality care in a modern environment. The new facility replaces the aging facilities at Mount Edwards Court Care Home and Central Care Home in Victoria with a state of the art care facility that will be able to meet the increasingly complex care needs of the aging population on Southern Vancouver Island.

The Heights at Mt. View is unique partnership between the Capital Regional Hospital District, Island Health and Baptist Housing. The facility’s design supports resident-centered care with each floor organized into a series of houses accommodating 20 residents. Each house contains a central living area that serves as the heart of the house, and each resident is provided a private room with a full ensuite bathroom.

More information about The Heights at Mt View is available at

<http://www.baptisthousing.org/communities/heights-mt-view>. More information about publicly funded home and community care is available at <http://www.viha.ca/hcc/>.

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9. North Island Hospitals Project Honoured

The North Island Hospitals Project – which will see Island Health open two new hospitals in the Comox Valley and in Campbell River in 2017 has been recognized by the Canadian Council for Public-Private Partnerships with a national award for Innovation and Excellence in Public-Private Partnerships (P3s).



The project was a silver award winner with the Infrastructure Sustainability Award. Both hospitals are being built to LEED Gold standards and for the first time, a green bond has been used to fund a public-private partnership project in North America. There is extensive information about the North Island Hospitals project at <http://nihp.viha.ca/>

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10. Telemental Health for Children and Youth in Port Alberni and Campbell River Expanded

The Ministry of Children and Family Development and Island Health have formally agreed to work together to support access to psychiatry for children and youth in Port Alberni and Campbell River. The aim is to reduce waitlists for psychiatry services in those communities, support children and youth to stay in their communities, where they usually have stronger support systems, and support local healthcare providers to care for children and youth with mental health and substance issues. The service expansion began in November.

More information about mental health services for children and youth is available at www.viha.ca/cyf_mental_health/.

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11. Booster Buddy App Supports Mental Health Care

There is a new age-appropriate resource available for youth living with mental health and/or substance use challenges. A partnership between Island Health, the Victoria Hospital Foundation and Coast Capital Savings resulted in the launch of “Booster Buddy” – an application (app) designed to help young people improve their mental health.



The app is available free throughout the world and is compatible with Apple and Android devices. It contains evidence-informed coping skills, and self-management tools compiled by Island Health clinical experts.

See http://www.viha.ca/cyf_mental_health/boosterbuddy for more information.

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12. Neighbours Greening the Community

A community tree planting recently took place along Bowker Creek, which flows adjacent to Royal Jubilee Hospital and a residential neighbourhood. In January, Transport Canada ordered Island Health to cut down trees the helipad because they were in the way of the Helicopter flight paths. While neighbours understood the work had to be done, they were understandably concerned the tree-line separating their houses from the helipad would be trimmed back and how this would impact the riparian areas along Bowker Creek. Working with the neighbourhood, community leaders and Saanich Parks, Island Health has supported replanting the area with native vegetation. Royal Jubilee Hospital grounds-keeping crews provided funding for the new plants.

13. Faster Lab Results Means Better Patient Care

The first totally automated microbiology laboratory in a North American hospital will begin testing patients from across Island Health at Royal Jubilee Hospital on December 8, 2014.

Able to run twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, the microbiology laboratory will produce faster results on the cause of patients' infections, helping the care team provide the best treatment sooner. [Read the news release here.](#)



(Picture left) Dr. Pamela Kibsey demonstrates the previous method for reading plates in the micro lab (foreground), while a lab technologist uses the new equipment to view magnified images on a computer monitor, which has captured a precisely timed, properly lit image of the same plate.

(Picture right) Representatives from Island Health celebrate the opening of the new Microbiology Lab at Royal Jubilee Hospital. Co-funding was provided by the Capital Regional Health District, represented by their Board Chair Denise Blackwell (second from left) and Frank Florio (far left) represented B-D Kiestra Canada, manufacturers of the new equipment.



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.