

# Island Health MLA Update



## Introduction

Welcome to the Fall Edition of the Island Health's MLA Update. Fall is a time of transition and re-focusing after the summer months – a mini 'New Year' of sorts.

At Island Health we continue to focus on our higher risk populations. In this edition, you will find information about how Island Health is supporting Aboriginal patients and staff; find out more about **public health initiatives** that promote HIV testing and reduce exposure to second-hand smoke; read about the importance of **Advance Care Planning**; get an update on Island Health's **end-of-life plan**; learn how a new mobile app will support **youth living with mental health issues**; read a primer on how physicians are working in local communities to support practices and care, and see how **technological innovations** that are improving patient care.

The next edition of Island Health's MLA Update will be issued mid-November. 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.

**New Resource!** Unfortunately, substance use among youth is a reality. Although rates have been declining, many youth, their parents and caregivers are dealing with how to support young people coping with substance use issues. Island Health has brought together resources and information for parents and youth at:

[www.viha.ca/children/youth/healthy\\_body/substance\\_use.htm](http://www.viha.ca/children/youth/healthy_body/substance_use.htm) and [www.viha.ca/cyf\\_mental\\_health/resources.htm](http://www.viha.ca/cyf_mental_health/resources.htm).

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### 1. New Residential Care Facilities in Nanaimo and Saanich

A ground-breaking ceremony took place on September 17 in Nanaimo to officially start construction for **Eden Gardens**, a new publicly-funded residential care facility. The Nanaimo Travellers Lodge Society will build and operate Eden Gardens, and will relocate the existing 90 residential care beds from its current location, as well as add 40 new licensed beds. The project is a partnership between the Society, Island Health and the Government of BC.



Eden Gardens will provide different types of licensed residential care all under one roof, including licensed dementia care. This care model approach has proven highly successful in meeting the care needs of many individuals assessed as needing complex care due to moderate dementia and other cognitive conditions, but who otherwise have lower medical or physical needs.

On October 16, 2014 **The Heights at Mt View**, a new 260-bed residential care facility, will officially open on land owned by the Capital Regional District on Carey Road in Saanich. This innovative project is part of a regional plan and partnership with the Province of British Columbia, Island Health, the Capital Regional District and Baptist Housing to replace obsolete residential care



facilities in the Capital Region and provide more care and housing options for the growing senior population. The Heights at Mt View will provide complex (residential) care and will replace the suites at two previous Baptist Housing facilities in Victoria: Mount Edwards Court and Central Care Home.

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## 2. Employment Program Supports Recruitment and Retention of Aboriginal Staff

Island Health's Aboriginal Employment Program is marking a significant milestone this month with the hiring of its 500<sup>th</sup> employee who has self-identified as being of Aboriginal descent. Island Health strives to have a workforce that reflects the population we serve. As part of this, the health authority is focusing on the recruitment and support of Aboriginal staff, while also emphasizing cultural awareness among non-Aboriginal staff.



Island Health's 500<sup>th</sup> self-identified Aboriginal staff member is Sabrina Blanchard, a Licenced Practical Nurse who will be working on the neuro unit at Victoria General Hospital. Sabrina is from a small and remote community in the Yukon with limited health care services; as such she brings a unique perspective to health care and helping those in need.

Island Health seeks to be a leader in employment in the community and an employer of choice for Aboriginal people. The Aboriginal Employment program offers mentoring and support for Aboriginal people ranging from student outreach, promoting awareness of career opportunities in health care, job-seeking support, through to mentorship for existing Aboriginal staff. More information about the Aboriginal Employment Program is available at [www.viha.ca/careers/aboriginal](http://www.viha.ca/careers/aboriginal).

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## 3. Focus on Cultural Safety in Island Health

Cultural Safety is a key part of Island Health's values, particularly as it relates to the value of Respect (*to value each individual and bring trust to every relationship*) and Empathy (*to give the kind of care we would want for our loved ones*). Health care services delivered in a culturally safe manner enhance the care experience and improve health outcomes for First Nations, Inuit and Metis people.

Island Health's Aboriginal Health Cultural Safety program offers face-to-face training and online courses to all staff in the health authority and we work closely with the Provincial Health Services Authority's Cultural Competency Training Program to support and enhance cultural safety throughout our organization. See <http://www.culturalcompetency.ca/> for more information. Since 2009, over 2,000 Island Health employees have completed cultural safety training



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## 4. Having ‘The Talk’ – The Importance of Advance Care Planning

Advance care planning is about having conversations with family, friends and health care provider(s) so they know what treatment a patient would agree to, or refuse, if they became incapable of expressing their own decision. It is also about identifying someone who would make health care decisions on the patient’s behalf if they cannot do so themselves. This fall, Island Health is holding a series of free sessions to encourage residents to think about, and act upon, Advance Care Planning.



For more information and dates on the South Island see [www.viha.ca/NR/rdonlyres/5CBD3904-76F3-4DB1-BBDB-89F451CBD98D/0/acp\\_fall2014sessions.pdf](http://www.viha.ca/NR/rdonlyres/5CBD3904-76F3-4DB1-BBDB-89F451CBD98D/0/acp_fall2014sessions.pdf). On the Central and North Island, see the Vancouver Island Federation of Hospices Advance Care Planning website at <http://advancecareplanningvi.ca/>.

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## 5. New mobile app designed by youth to improve their mental health

One in five young people experience mental health challenges, but youth can be difficult to reach through conventional services. Later this month, Island Health will launch [BoosterBuddy](#) a free mobile app that uses a ‘gamified’ approach to help youth experiencing early psychosis, anxiety and depression.

*BoosterBuddy* is [available for download](#) on Apple and Android smartphones. Among its many features, the leading-edge app offers youth help with coping skills, getting started on tasks, following self-care routines, appointment and medication tracking, daily check-ins on how they are feeling, increasing real-life socialization and having a crisis plan.

Island Health collaborated with youth and families who have experienced mental health challenges to conceive, design and test the app throughout its development. *BoosterBuddy* was made possible through a \$150,000 donation by Coast Capital Savings to the Victoria Hospitals Foundation’s *Building Care Together* campaign.

A little boost can make a big difference.  
Introducing **BoosterBuddy**, a free app to help young people improve their mental health.

Download on the **App Store** | **ANDROID APP ON Google play**

[viha.ca/boosterbuddy](http://viha.ca/boosterbuddy) | **coastcapital SAVINGS** | **island health**

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## 6. Supporting the Clean Air Bylaw on Southern Vancouver Island

On September 10, the Capital Regional District Board introduced [Clean Air Bylaw No. 3962](#), increasing the scope of the ban on tobacco smoking within the Capital Regional District. This bylaw makes all parks, playgrounds, playing fields, public squares and bus stops smoke-free and extends the smoke-free buffer zone outside doorways, windows and air intakes from three metres to seven metres.



Beginning April 15, 2015, Island Health will be enforcing the bylaw and is working closely with the CRD and community partners on a public education and awareness campaign. The CRD is also developing 'No Smoking' signage that will be installed at the entrances to smoke-free spaces. More information is available at [www.crd.bc.ca/project/proposed-clean-air-bylaw](http://www.crd.bc.ca/project/proposed-clean-air-bylaw).

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## 7. Rapid HIV Testing available in Pharmacies

Two Vancouver Island pharmacies are offering customers free HIV tests that will provide results in less than five minutes. Pharmacists at the 'Medicine Shoppe' drugstores have been trained by HIV nurses from Island Health to provide testing as part of a year-long pilot project. Offering HIV testing at these locations helps reduce stigma around testing.



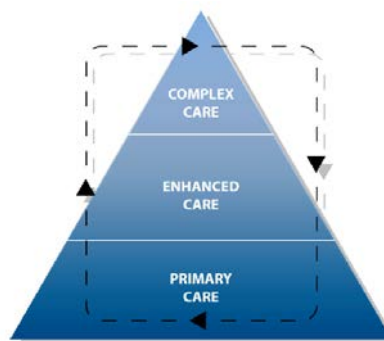
The pilot project, also implemented by Vancouver Coastal Health, will determine whether HIV testing in pharmacies can complement existing programs at community testing sites, hospitals, walk-in clinics and through family physicians. The Medicine Shoppes at 22-1150 Terminal Park Ave in Nanaimo and 104-1964 Fort Street in Victoria, are near walk-in medical clinics where doctors will provide support to patients and link them to treatment if required. Find out more:

[www.viha.ca/about\\_viha/news/news\\_releases/NR\\_HIVPharmacyTestingPilot\\_18Aug2014.htm](http://www.viha.ca/about_viha/news/news_releases/NR_HIVPharmacyTestingPilot_18Aug2014.htm).

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## 8. Island Health Outlines End of Life Care Priorities

In August, Island Health released updated end-of-life priorities. This strategy was developed by Island Health in collaboration with hospice societies and other community partners. It brings together a range of services such as medical, psycho-social, emotional and spiritual supports that help individuals and families dealing with end-of-life care. The strategy includes details about Island Health's plan to work closely with community partners, physician groups and hospice societies to open additional hospice beds on Vancouver Island between 2015 and 2019.



The end-of-life priorities update document can be found [here](#). Further information about Island Health's end-of-life program is available at



## 9. Divisions of Family Practice and Collaborative Services Committees – A Primer

In 2008, the General Practices Services Committee (made up of Ministry of Health officials, family physicians, Doctors of BC and representatives from health authorities) developed the Divisions of Family Practice initiative to improve patient care, increase family physicians' influence on health care delivery and policy, and enhance professional satisfaction for physicians.



Divisions of Family Practice are groups of family physicians organized at the local or regional level in communities where physicians wish to establish a division. There are eight divisions on Vancouver Island including a rural and remote division made up of four chapters: North Vancouver Island (includes Alert Bay, Port Alice, Port Hardy and Port McNeill), Salt Spring Island, Gabriola Island and Tofino/Ucluelet.

Divisions have undertaken various initiatives to address specific areas of primary care, administration, and physician support. More established divisions are generally working on health clinics, out-of-community physician recruitment and the [A GP for Me](#) initiative. Newer divisions are generally focused on physician recruitment and engagement.

Each Division of Family Practice has a Collaborative Services Committee that includes local division physicians and representatives from Doctors of BC, Ministry of Health and the local health authority. When division physicians identify a patient care challenge in the community, they meet with the Collaborative Services Committee. The Committee discusses the issue and designs solutions through a collaborative consensus-building model. The solution may involve better coordination of services and resources, project management or change management support or a new clinical service agreement. The Collaborative Services Committee may also invite community members to participate in discussions and planning. This is an opportunity for municipal leaders, community groups and non-profit organizations to participate and make sure groups are not duplicating services or working at cross- purposes.

## 10. Telehealth – Improving Care while Saving Time and the Environment

Telehealth has grown from 14 consultations when it was introduced in Island Health in 2007 to 3,600 consultations per year. Over 14,000 provider-client appointments have been delivered over Telehealth, saving more than 5.5 million kilometres of travel — approximately 80,000 hours of driving— and 1,400 CO<sub>2</sub>e tonnes of gas emissions. Many Island Health patients say they would not have traveled to receive care if Telehealth was not available.

Island Health has 58 Telehealth locations in 21 communities providing services in a wide range of areas including: Oncology, Thoracics, Renal, Seniors Health, Genetics, Heart Health, Psychiatry, Eating Disorders, Tuberculosis, Diabetes, Neurology, Speech Therapy, Hereditary Cancer Program, Occupational Stress Injury and Ophthalmology. There are now more than 130 clinicians using Island Health Telehealth.

Innovative technologies such as digital stethoscopes are increasing access to care through Telehealth. Island Health has 90 care providers who have been trained to use digital stethoscopes. In 2014, the innovation and success of the Island Health Telehealth team was recognized nationally with an [Award of Excellence in Canadian Telehealth](#). More information is available at: [www.viha.ca/telehealth/](http://www.viha.ca/telehealth/)



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## 11. Microbiology Laboratory Automation Equipment Installed at Royal Jubilee

On August 31, two trucks loaded with 25 crates rolled into Royal Jubilee's loading dock with new equipment for the microbiology laboratory that will make patients safer and help them get home sooner. Island Health is the first hospital in North America to implement this automated laboratory system, manufactured by BD Kiestra.

Identifying the cause of infections quickly is critical to make sure patients receive the best treatment and to prevent the spread of infection. The new automated system in the microbiology laboratory will take digital photos as cultures grow. This will allow laboratory staff to identify the bacteria much sooner so the patient can be put on the right medication or taken off one they don't need.

The new equipment will also reduce errors and staff workload by standardizing and automating the process used to grow the cultures. It will also increase the



volume of tests that can be done and shorten turnaround times for laboratory results – helping patients get better faster.

Over the next few weeks, staff will begin to be trained on the new \$4.3 million lab automation system. The system will go live later this year.

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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.