
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2020HLTH0208-001195
June 29, 2020

Ministry of Health

Vancouver Island's first nurse practitioner primary care clinic opens

NANAIMO – People and families in Nanaimo now have access to more primary health-care services with the opening of the first primary care clinic led by nurse practitioners on Vancouver Island.

The Province is launching Nexus Primary Care Clinic, in collaboration with the Nurses and Nurse Practitioners of BC and Island Health, to provide team-based primary care services to residents. Nurse practitioner-led primary care clinics are part of B.C.'s primary care strategy and are developed by nurse practitioners.

Nurse practitioners are health practitioners who can work on their own, or with physicians and other health professionals, to provide care across a person's life span. This includes diagnosing and treating illnesses, ordering and interpreting tests, prescribing medications and performing medical procedures.

"Our priority is to find new, innovative ways of working, co-ordinating services and delivering care so that British Columbians don't have to wait so long, travel so far and search so hard for the care they need," said Adrian Dix, Minister of Health. "Nurse practitioners are a viable, patient-centred solution to improving access, but we know that compared to other jurisdictions, B.C. has not made the best use of nurse practitioners. This is the first nurse practitioner primary care clinic that we have established under the Province's Primary Care Strategy, and there is more to come. These clinics will connect more people with the care they need, when they need it most."

Located at #3-1273 Island Hwy., Nexus Primary Care Clinic offers team-based primary care to residents. This includes attaching approximately 6,800 people to a primary care provider in the next three years.

The clinic will open gradually starting on Tuesday, June 30, 2020, with two full-time nurse practitioners. By Sept. 15, the clinic will have four more nurse practitioners, two registered nurses, a social worker and mental-health clinicians to provide team-based care to people in the greater Nanaimo area.

Current hours of operation at the clinic are Monday, Tuesday and Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Wednesday and Thursday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Once fully staffed on Sept. 15, the clinic hours will expand to include evenings and Saturdays.

"We know that thousands of people in Nanaimo do not have a consistent primary care provider. The Nexus Primary Care Clinic is another valuable resource for people to get attached to a nurse practitioner and to receive primary health care," Dix said. "Island Health and Nurses and Nurse Practitioners of BC are to be thanked for their continued support in helping

residents live their healthiest lives.”

The B.C. government is providing an approximately \$2-million operating budget, as well as approximately \$495,500 as a one-time cost.

The establishment of nurse practitioner-led primary and community care clinics coincides with the Ministry of Health’s 2018 announcement to create 200 nurse practitioner positions in primary care settings throughout B.C. This is to fully leverage and integrate nurse practitioners into the province’s primary care system to improve access to primary health care for British Columbians.

Learn More:

To learn more about the Province’s primary health-care strategy, visit: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2018PREM0034-001010>

To learn more about the Province’s strategy to increase the number of nurse practitioners, visit: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2018HLTH0034-000995>

To learn more about the Province’s strategy to recruit and retain more family medicine graduates, visit: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2018HLTH0052-001043>

Two backgrounders follow.

Contacts:

Ministry of Health
Communications
250 952-1887 (media line)

Island Health
Communications
250 370-8878 (media line)

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: news.gov.bc.ca/connect

BACKGROUND 1

For Immediate Release
2020HLTH0208-001195
June 29, 2020

Ministry of Health

What people are saying about team-based care

Sheila Malcolmson, MLA for Nanaimo –

“I am proud that a nurse practitioner primary care clinic is opening in Nanaimo. It is an exciting step forward for people living in the community. I am especially looking forward to the added services that I know will make a big difference in the lives of thousands of residents.”

Doug Routley, MLA for Nanaimo-North Cowichan –

“Team-based and patient-centred care has been growing since our government launched its primary care strategy in 2018. I am excited for the next step that we are taking – creating clinics led by nurse practitioners. I am proud that people in my community, Nanaimo, will be the first to benefit from it.”

Michael Sandler, executive director, Nurses and Nurse Practitioners of BC (NNPBC) –

“Nurses and Nurse Practitioners of BC are pleased to have helped to lead the process of conceptualizing and opening these nurse practitioner (NP) primary care clinics with strong community support. It has been with the diligence and advocacy of the NP council of NNPBC and, in particular, our director of NP provincial initiatives Danielle Daigle and project manager Patricia Telford whose detailed knowledge of the inner workings of NP practice within the larger health-care delivery context has been key to getting where we are today. We applaud this approach to team-based care that taps into the expertise of nurse practitioners as primary care providers as well as all health-care staff. This clinic is key to ensuring B.C. families can access timely health-care services when they need them, and we are thrilled about the opening of the first NP primary care clinic in Nanaimo.”

Leah Hollins, board chair, Island Health –

“This first of its kind clinic on Vancouver Island will be an important part of the network of care that serves the people of Nanaimo. The centre will connect people to an integrated team of professionals to provide them with the timely, appropriate care they need.”

Contacts:

Ministry of Health
Communications
250 952-1887 (media line)

Island Health
Communications
250 370-8878 (media line)

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: news.gov.bc.ca/connect

BACKGROUND 2

For Immediate Release
2020HLTH0208-001195
June 29, 2020

Ministry of Health

Nexus Primary Care Clinic

The new nurse practitioner primary care clinic in Nanaimo is owned and operated by the Nexus Patient and Community Care Society.

- The centre will open gradually, starting with two nurse practitioners on June 30. Appointments at this time will be conducted both virtually and in person. The current hours of operation at the clinic are Monday, Tuesday and Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Wednesday and Thursday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- Once it is fully staffed by Sept. 15, 2020, hours will expand to include weekday evenings and Saturdays.
- Services include:
 - new client intake and screening visits
 - regular/followup visits with clients concerning:
 - new symptom or diagnosis
 - chronic disease management, including diabetes, asthma and heart disease
 - pregnancy/prenatal/postpartum care
 - contraception advice and treatment options
 - mental health assessment/treatment/support
 - substance use and addiction treatment/support
 - medication prescription refills
 - screening, e.g., sexually transmitted infections, well child checks, cervical cancer/PAP smear
 - treatments/procedures, e.g., intrauterine device (IUD) insertion, cerumen (ear wax) removal
 - referrals to medical specialist and social services and help completing forms
 - support with systems navigation (health care and social systems) with a community health worker
 - support with social determinants of health (e.g., finance, housing, education, etc.) with a community health worker
 - outreach to local community partners
 - harm-reduction supplies
- Patients will be received via referral and through community partners, walk-in, outreach, online or phone.
- Nexus Primary Care Clinic will work with the Nanaimo Division of Family Practice and Island Health to support primary care network planning in Nanaimo as it develops.

Contacts:

Ministry of Health
Communications
250 952-1887 (media line)

Island Health
Communications
250 370-8878 (media line)

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: news.gov.bc.ca/connect