
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2020HLTH0288-001748
Sept. 15, 2020

Ministry of Health
Fraser Health

Improving primary care in White Rock and South Surrey

WHITE ROCK – Government is transforming everyday health care for people living in White Rock and South Surrey by establishing a new primary care network, which will bring additional resources and strengthened support for health care in the Fraser Health region.

“As part of our government’s primary care strategy, we’re transforming the way people throughout the province access health care. Through primary care networks, we are supporting team-based health care and giving people a seamless patient-centred experience that is responsive to the unique needs of each community,” said Adrian Dix, Minister of Health. “The primary care network in White Rock - South Surrey will further support residents in getting access to the comprehensive health care they need and deserve.”

The Ministry of Health will provide approximately \$4 million in annual funding to the primary care network once it is fully established.

Over the next four years, residents of White Rock and South Surrey will benefit from more than 28 full-time equivalent health professionals who will provide people with better access to primary care. These health-care providers include family physicians, registered nurses, and allied health professionals such as social workers, patient educators, mental health clinicians and a pharmacist. In addition, the primary care network will increase access to counselling services.

The White Rock – South Surrey primary care network will see community partners work together to ensure approximately thousands of people have access to comprehensive, co-ordinated and team-based health care services for all their day-to-day primary care needs.

The network will provide a full range of accessible, everyday health services that will better support patients and providers. The network was developed to better meet the specific needs of the community and to strengthen services identified as high priority. These include:

- enhanced team-based care to ensure seamless access to health care services and increase support for patients and providers;
- enhanced access to primary care services for vulnerable patients;
- enhanced services for mild- to-moderate mental health clients; and
- culturally safe care for all.

For people and families, it means getting faster, better access to their primary care team or provider, even on evenings and weekends, as well as being connected to appropriate services and supports in the community.

Over the next four years, the network will work to attach 8,900 patients to a consistent primary

care provider in the region, while also providing team-based and culturally safe care to local residents.

The primary care network is a partnership between the Ministry of Health, Fraser Health and the White Rock – South Surrey Division of Family Practice. The planning and implementation of the primary care network has also been supported by First Nations Health Authority and Métis Nation BC.

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.

Contact:

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

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BACKGROUND 1

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Facts about the White Rock primary care network

According to BC Stats data, the White Rock - South Surrey primary care network will support a combined population of approximately 115,000. Services will be available in all areas of White Rock and South Surrey.

Primary care networks mean that patients:

- who do not have a regular primary care provider - a family doctor or nurse practitioner - will be able to get one;
- will have an ongoing relationship with their primary care provider, which is important for their life-long health;
- will get access to faster, more convenient care from their doctor or nurse practitioner and the care team;
- will be provided and connected with a range of appropriate and accessible services and supports;
- will be informed about all aspects of their care in community; and
- will know where to go to get the care they need, even on evenings and weekends.

New resources being allocated include:

- 17.25 full-time equivalent (FTE) registered nurses
- seven FTE allied health professionals
- two FTE mental health clinicians
- one FTE primary care access clinic general practitioners (0.5 FTE each)
- one FTE pharmacist

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BACKGROUND 2

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What people are saying about primary care networks

Dr. Victoria Lee, president and CEO, Fraser Health –

“By working with our partners in White Rock-South Surrey, we are better able to co-ordinate health services and streamline care to support people to manage their health, avoid unnecessary hospital visits and remain healthy and independent for as long as possible. Having a primary care network in White Rock-South Surrey provides patients with more care options and helps attach them to ongoing and consistent primary care services.”

Dr. Tahmeena Ali, board chair, White Rock - South Surrey Division of Family Practice –

"The Division of Family Practice of White Rock/South Surrey strives to make it easy for our physician members to provide quality, accessible and comprehensive care for our patients. The commitment to primary care across our region in recent months is unprecedented. We are jubilant to be part of the latest wave of communities to offer enhanced primary care to keep our community healthy and to ensure when medical care is needed, it is done with ease for both patients and providers."

Dr. Kathleen Ross, president, Doctors of BC –

“The best health-care systems in the world have strong primary care and we hope that the primary care network initiative provides additional needed resources to doctors serving their community, especially those that strengthen longitudinal care in these pandemic times. A primary care network will collectively increase a community’s capacity to provide greater access to primary care for those who need it, especially for vulnerable patients and those with complex health conditions.”

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

“The Association of the Nurses and Nurse Practitioners of BC is pleased that the knowledge, skills and expertise of the entire health-care team will improve access to health care for British Columbians through the new primary care networks. We believe that this approach will be pivotal in ensuring B.C. families feel connected to their health-care team and we are excited to see the launch of primary care networks in B.C.”

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