
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2020HLTH0291-001751
Sept. 15, 2020

Ministry of Health
Vancouver Coastal Health

Improving primary care in Vancouver

VANCOUVER – Government is transforming everyday health care for people living in Vancouver by establishing six primary care networks, including supports for First Nations and Indigenous primary care through team-based primary care providers to strengthen support to the region.

“As part of our government’s primary care strategy, we’re transforming the way people throughout the province access health care to improve the end to end patient experience. Primary care networks deliver team-based health care, giving people a better and more seamless patient-centred experience that is responsive to the unique needs of each community,” said Adrian Dix, Minister of Health. “These primary care networks in Vancouver will further support residents in getting access to the comprehensive care they need and deserve.”

The Ministry of Health will provide approximately \$36 million in annual funding to the primary care networks, once they are fully operational.

Over the next four years, residents of Vancouver will benefit from 197 full-time equivalent (FTE) health providers and administrative staff who will provide better access to quality primary health care. This includes family physicians, nurse practitioners, clinical pharmacists and allied health professionals such as social workers, physiotherapists, mental health counsellors, dietitians and cultural support workers.

Approximately 136 existing Vancouver clinics are now a part of these primary care networks, providing people with a more co-ordinated approach to care, timely access to services and better health outcomes.

These six primary care networks are City Centre, Centre North, Northeast, Westside, Midtown and South primary care networks. Community partners will work together to ensure tens of thousands of people have access to comprehensive and team-based primary care services for their daily health-care needs.

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

- better access to chronic disease and chronic pain management;
- improved access to services for individuals with mild to moderate mental health and substance-use services;
- better co-ordinated services for families and seniors who are frail and people with complex health issues;

- improved access to maternity care;
- more access to comprehensive services for people living in poverty; and
- culturally safe care for Indigenous peoples.

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 six networks will work to attach approximately 111,250 patients to a consistent primary care provider in the region, while also providing team-based and culturally safe care to local residents.

The networks, which include supports for First Nations and Indigenous primary care, will also ensure Indigenous peoples receive holistic primary care at clinics, both on and off reserve. The clinics will provide both western and traditional medicines in a culturally safe environment.

The primary care networks are a partnership between the Ministry of Health, Vancouver Coastal Health, Divisions of Family Practice and First Nations communities. The planning and implementation of the primary care networks were also supported by the First Nations Health Authority.

Learn More:

To learn more about how patients can register, visit to be attached to a family physician or nurse practitioner, visit: <https://www.divisionsbc.ca/vancouver>

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 Vancouver primary care networks (PCN)

According to BC Stats data, the communities that the Vancouver primary care network will serve have a combined population of 631,486. There are an estimated 110,000 unattached patients across Vancouver. Services will be available in all regions of Vancouver.

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 lifelong 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.

In addition to the six new primary care networks in Vancouver, an expansion of the Lu'ma Medical Centre occurred in October 2019. It was the initial First Nations-led project to be announced under the government's primary care strategy.

City Centre Primary Care Network

- The ministry approves the addition of 26.5 FTE primary care resources to support attachment in the general population, to include family physicians, nurse practitioners, registered nurses in a team-based environment. These resources will generate capacity to attach net new patients.
 - 10 full time equivalent (FTE) family physicians
 - 9 FTE nurse practitioners
 - 7.5 FTE registered nurses
- Target attachment for these new resources is 25,250 by Year 4 (2022-23).

Centre North Primary Care Network

- The ministry approves the addition of 19 FTE primary care resources to support attachment in the general population, to include family physicians, nurse practitioners, registered nurses and allied health professionals in a team-based environment. These resources will generate capacity to attach net new patients.
 - 5.0 FTE family physicians
 - 4.0 FTE nurse practitioners

- 1.5 FTE registered nurses
- 7.5 FTE allied health professionals
- 1.0 FTE clinical pharmacist
- Target attachment for these new resources is 11,000 by Year 4 (2023-24).

Northeast Primary Care Network

- The ministry approves the addition of 22.5 FTE primary care resources to support attachment in the general population. These resources will generate capacity to attach net new patients.
 - 6.0 FTE family physicians
 - 4.0 FTE nurse practitioners
 - 4.0 FTE registered nurses
 - 7.5 FTE allied health professionals
 - 1.0 FTE clinical pharmacist
- Target attachment for these new resources is 13,500 by Year 4 (2023-24).

Westside Primary Care Network

The ministry approves the addition of 32 FTE primary care resources to support attachment in the general population. These resources will generate capacity to attach net new patients.

- 12.0 FTE family physicians
- 7.5 FTE nurse practitioners
- 4 FTE registered nurses
- 7.5 FTE allied health professionals
- 1.0 FTE clinical pharmacist
- Target attachment for these new resources is 24,500 by Year 4 (2023-24).

Midtown Primary Care Network

- The Ministry approves the addition of 26 FTE primary care resources to support attachment in the general population. These resources will generate capacity to attach net new patients.
 - 8.0 FTE family physicians
 - 5.0 FTE nurse practitioners
 - 4.5 FTE registered nurses
 - 7.5 FTE allied health professionals
 - 1.0 FTE clinical pharmacist.
- Target attachment for these new resources is 17,250 by Year 4 (2023-24).

South Primary Care Network

- The Ministry approves the addition of 22 FTE primary care resources to support attachment in the general population. These resources will generate capacity to attach net new patients.
 - 7.0 FTE family physicians
 - 7.0 FTE nurse practitioners
 - 8.0 FTE registered nurses
- Target attachment for these new resources is 19,750 by Year 4 (2022-23).

Interprofessional health team

- The intent of the interprofessional health team is to support requests for allied health resources in the communities of Vancouver City Centre and Vancouver South.
- The ministry approves 15.0 allied health professionals for City Centre and South. Each of these primary care networks also includes one pharmacist to support team-based care.
 - 15.0 FTE allied health professionals
 - 2.0 FTE clinical pharmacists

Primary Care Network Management and Administration

- The ministry approves the addition of 12.0 FTE management and administrative resources to support the functioning of the primary care networks.
 - 6.0 FTE PCN managers
 - 6.0 FTE administrative assistants

REACH Community Health Centre

- The ministry approves the addition of 1.0 FTE nurse practitioners, 2.0 FTE registered nurses, and 1.0 FTE licensed practical nurse to support attachment at REACH Community Health Centre
- The ministry approves the following:
 - 1.0 FTE nurse practitioner
 - 2.0 FTE registered nurses
 - 1.0 FTE licensed practical nurse
- The target net new attachment for this strategy is in addition to attachment targets for Northeast Primary Care Network.

First Nations Aboriginal Primary Care Network (FNAPCN)

Over the past four years, the First Nations Aboriginal Primary Care Network (FNAPCN) Development Committee has worked to ensure that the urban Indigenous population can receive holistic primary care at these five clinics, that provide both western and traditional medicines in a culturally safe environment; Lu'ma Medical Clinic, the Urban Native Youth Association, Vancouver Aboriginal Health Society, Kilala Lelum Health Centre and the Musqueam Indian Band Primary Care Clinic.

Overall, as part of the six primary care networks and funding previously provided to Lu'ma Medical Clinic, the ministry approves additional primary care resources to support attachment in the Indigenous population. These resources will generate capacity to attach net new patients. This includes the addition and support of health professionals, allied health providers, traditional healers and Elders to address the health-care needs of 13,905 attached and unattached urban Indigenous peoples in Vancouver across five clinics.

First Nations and Aboriginal Coalition

- The ministry approves the addition of 11.3 FTE resources to support attachment in the community:
 - Musqueam Indian Band Primary Care Clinic: 0.5 FTE GP
 - Urban Native Youth Association: 1.0 FTE GP and 1.0 FTE NP

- Kilala Lelum Health Centre: 2.3 FTE GP
- Vancouver Aboriginal Health Society: 1.0 FTE NP and 0.5 FTE RN
- 5.0 FTE Elders or traditional healers

These resources are in addition to the 8.85 FTE primary care resources previously approved by the ministry for Lu'ma Medical Centre and the 3.45 FTE resources funded by the First Nations Health Authority:

- 2.0 FTE GP
- 0.75 FTE NP
- 2.0 FTE RN
- 1.0 FTE LPN
- 0.5 FTE dietician
- 1.0 FTE social worker
- 0.5 FTE physiotherapist
- 0.8 mental health clinician
- 0.3 relief
- 1.25 practice manager
- 1.0 FTE social worker/navigator
- 1.2 Elders

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BACKGROUND 2

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What people are saying about primary care networks

George Heyman, MLA for Vancouver-Fairview –

“I hear from Vancouver residents often that they want to be able to get their daily health care needs met easily across different clinics and health care professionals. Through the new primary care network, more health-care providers will be recruited and will work as a team to provide a more integrated health care experience for residents.”

Vivian Eliopoulos, interim president and CEO, Vancouver Coastal Health –

“By working with our partners in Vancouver, we are better able to co-ordinate health services to support people in our community to manage existing health conditions, avoid unnecessary hospital visits and remain healthy and independent for as long as possible. Having these primary care networks in Vancouver will provide patients with more care options and help attach them to ongoing and consistent primary care services.”

Leslie Bonshor, executive director, Aboriginal Health, Vancouver Coastal Health –

“The First Nations and Aboriginal Primary Care Network is an important part of the health network to help Indigenous patients have increased access to culturally safe and appropriate primary health care. These Indigenous-led clinics allow for Indigenous governance and oversight; Nation building; improved access to culturally safe care and fully uphold the principle of ‘nothing about us, without us.’ The clients of these clinics feel safe and welcomed in these spaces. The spaces are designed to embrace them and help them on their wellness journey. Meeting people where they are at and providing access to culturally safe primary care is the key to establishing a long and healthy relationship with care providers.”

Dr. Fiona Duncan, board chair, Vancouver Division of Family Practice –

“The Vancouver Division of Family Practice and our family physicians are looking forward to working with these new resources for our patients. This will allow us to work in innovative and creative ways and provide the wraparound care our patients need and deserve. This team-based care approach will enhance our delivery of health-care needs giving our patients the right care at the right time and in a more centralized manner. We are also looking forward to improving our provider experience.”

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 network. 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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