
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2020HLTH0296-001789
Sept. 18, 2020

Ministry of Health
Island Health

New nurse practitioner primary care clinic opening soon in Victoria

VICTORIA – People and families in Victoria will soon have access to more primary health-care services with the opening of a primary care clinic operated by nurse practitioners on Sept. 28, 2020.

The Province is launching Health Care on Yates, a nurse practitioner primary care clinic, in collaboration with the Victoria Primary Care Society, Nurses and Nurse Practitioners of BC and Island Health to provide team-based primary care services to residents.

This nurse practitioner primary care clinic is developed by nurse practitioners and forms an integral part of government's broader primary care strategy. Similar to clinics led by family doctors, it will provide patients with more opportunities to get attached to a primary care provider and to receive the care they need when they need it the most.

"We are implementing innovative ways to give people more access to primary health-care services. Nurse practitioners are part of B.C.'s primary care strategy and work together with doctors and other health-care professionals to improve the primary care system in the province," said Adrian Dix, Minister of Health. "This is the third nurse practitioner primary care clinic that we are establishing under our strategy and the first in Victoria. These clinics will connect more people with the care they need, closer to home."

The clinic is undergoing renovations and has begun gradually registering area residents without a primary care provider since Aug. 10. In the first two weeks, the clinic received over 1,000 registration requests. People who do not have a primary care provider and who live within the clinic's catchment area can become a patient by completing a registration form.

As of Sept. 10, more than 550 patients and families have been registered and are able to book virtual primary care appointments with clinic nurse practitioners. In-person and same-day, team-based primary care appointments will be available at 1139 Yates St. once renovations are complete.

Health Care on Yates is open for virtual care appointments Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Once renovated, hours will expand to Monday to Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 8 p.m., Fridays 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Saturdays from 8:30 a.m. to noon.

Currently, six full-time equivalent (FTE) nurse practitioners are employed by the clinic. When fully staffed, the clinic will include registered nurses, a social worker and a mental health and substance use clinician, for a total of 10 FTE health-care staff and four medical office assistants.

As a team, they will work to attach approximately 6,800 people without a primary care provider to a nurse practitioner over the next three years and will integrate into a primary care network,

along with other primary care clinics in Victoria.

“The clinic would not be possible without the dedication of Island Health, Nurses and Nurse Practitioners of BC, and committed local nurse practitioners,” Dix said. “We will continue our collaborative work to make sure that clinics led by nurse practitioners become an integral part of health care throughout the province.”

The B.C. government will provide annual operating funding of approximately \$2 million when fully staffed, as well as fund one-time startup costs of \$445,500.

This is the third nurse practitioner primary care clinic in B.C. and the second to be announced on Vancouver Island. The first clinic opened in Nanaimo in June 2020 and the second opened in Surrey in September 2020.

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.

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BACKGROUND 1

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What people are saying about team-based care

Carole James, MLA for Victoria-Beacon Hill –

“I am proud that a nurse practitioner clinic is opening in Victoria, as it will benefit thousands of individuals and families in the region. Team-based care is making a real difference in our lives and this clinic will make it even easier for people to get the care they need.”

Rob Fleming, MLA for Victoria-Swan Lake –

“Launching a nurse practitioner clinic in Victoria shows our government’s commitment to make life easier and healthier for residents in the community. It will help thousands of people connect with a consistent primary care provider, helping them live their healthiest lives.”

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

“Nurses and Nurse Practitioners of BC are pleased to have helped 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 NPs 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 private NP primary care clinic in Victoria.”

Leah Hollins, board chair, Island Health –

“Health Care on Yates NP primary care clinic will be an important part of the network of care serving the people of Victoria. The centre will connect more people to an integrated team of health professionals to provide them with the timely, appropriate services they need and complement the current care provided by family physicians.”

Lynn Guengerich, clinic director, Health Care on Yates

“Health Care on Yates is the culmination of a remarkable amount of work by many caring and dedicated people who share the Ministry of Health’s vision to make primary care more accessible for everyone in our communities. I am grateful to all who helped pave our path, and especially proud of the team who will be working in the clinic. The nurse practitioners and other staff are incredibly talented and committed to building a health centre that will not only

respond to illness but will be integral to transforming health care for people in Victoria. I am honoured and humbled to work among them.”

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BACKGROUND 2

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Health Care on Yates NP Primary Care Clinic

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.

The new nurse practitioner primary care clinic in Victoria is owned and operated by The Victoria Primary Care Society, an non-governmental organization responsible for managing daily operations.

- Services currently available 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
 - primary care during pregnancy/prenatal/postpartum care
 - contraception advice and treatment options
 - mental health assessment/treatment/support
 - substance use and addiction treatment/support
 - medication prescription refills
 - screening (i.e., sexually transmitted infections, well child checks, cervical cancer/PAP smear)
 - treatments/procedures (i.e., intrauterine device insertion, cerumen, or ear wax, removal)
 - referrals to medical specialist and social services and completing forms
 - support with systems navigation (health care and social systems) with a community health worker
 - support with social determinants of health (finance, housing, education etc.) with a social worker
 - future outreach to local community partners
 - harm-reduction supplies
- People who live within the clinic's geographic boundaries and who do not currently have a primary care provider can become a patient by completing a request for registration by visiting: www.npclinics.ca/yates/
Once renovations are complete, people may drop by the clinic to request an application.

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