
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Health

New cancer-care centre coming to Kamloops

KAMLOOPS – People in Kamloops and throughout the Thompson-Cariboo region are one step closer to having a new cancer centre at the Royal Inland Hospital (RIH).

“Today’s announcement of the concept plan approval for the new cancer care centre demonstrates our government’s commitment to deliver world-class cancer care closer to home for residents in Kamloops,” said Adrian Dix, Minister of Health. “The new cancer centre will deliver access to modern, high-quality comprehensive cancer-care services for patients in their fast-growing community where it is needed.”

When open, the new centre will help make the B.C. cancer-care system stronger and better equipped to deal with the demand from a growing and aging population by adding expanded cancer treatment facilities and oncology services.

“By building a new cancer centre in Kamloops, we are bringing cancer care closer to home for patients and families in the Interior,” said David Byres, president and CEO, Provincial Health Services Authority. “We look forward to working in partnership with Interior Health to improve capacity for high-quality, culturally safe cancer care across this rapidly growing region and engaging with local communities, patients, families and Aboriginal partners in this process.”

Concept planning, which has been completed, is a key part of the capital management and funding process that takes into account the need for investment, including identifying specific needs and how a project can support service-delivery requirements to ensure the specific needs of the community are addressed.

Business planning for the new cancer-care centre is now underway to determine the project scope, schedule and budget. The new centre is expected to provide space for:

- patient arrival and check-in;
- radiation treatment, including three shielded treatment rooms, known as bunkers;
- three high-energy radiation treatment linear accelerators (LINACS);
- radiation therapy planning;
- one CT simulator;
- one MRI scanner;
- an outpatient oncology ambulatory care unit, including 10 exam rooms and two consulting rooms; and
- staff support, including offices and workstations.

Plans are also underway to build a 470-stall parkade to support staff, patients and visiting family and friends. Additional diagnostic and treatment equipment and services may be identified as a requirement for the new cancer-care centre during the business planning phase.

The investment in new radiation treatment services in Kamloops will prevent patients' need to travel to cancer centres elsewhere for treatment. The new centre is expected to provide radiation treatment to 1,000 patients in its opening year, which will result in 14,000 treatment visits per year.

Some cancer-care services are currently delivered in Kamloops through a community oncology clinic at RIH. It features oral and intravenous cancer treatment, chemotherapy, immunotherapy, targeted therapy and hormonal therapy. The team delivering cancer care through the community oncology clinic provide exceptional care, but the current clinic cannot meet the projected regional demands for service.

In addition to building a new cancer centre, upgrades to the community oncology clinic have also been approved.

Hospital upgrades will include the modernization and increase in the number of cancer treatment spaces and exam rooms at RIH. As well, renovation and expansion of the existing pharmacy will improve functionality, along with the installation of improved dispensing and automated dispensing replenishing area and storage.

The new cancer centre is a part of the 10-year B.C. Cancer Action Plan, which outlines actionable steps to better prevent, detect, and treat cancers, delivering improved care for people facing cancer now while preparing for the growing needs of the future.

Quotes:

Dr. Shallen Letwin, vice-president of clinical operations, Interior Health –

“People living with cancer in Kamloops and area will soon have access to comprehensive cancer care closer to home. The collaboration between Interior Health and BC Cancer to expand care options will help to improve the health outcomes and experiences of the people living in our region.”

Sarah Roth, president and CEO, BC Cancer Foundation –

“The BC Cancer Foundation and its community of donors is ready and eager to partner with the provincial government and BC Cancer on bringing the very best in research, technology and care to Kamloops via this new cancer centre.”

Heidi Coleman, CEO, Royal Inland Hospital Foundation –

“At the Royal Inland Hospital Foundation, we frequently encounter grateful patients who are appreciative of the care they have received, but often share stories about the hardships of having to travel to Kelowna for radiation and other cancer services. This new comprehensive cancer-care centre is a win-win for the whole province. Working together we will make the Interior of B.C. a better place to live.”

Quick Facts:

- Fifty per cent of all cancer patients receive radiation therapy treatment.
- The community oncology clinic at RIH also provides initial consultation and treatment planning with a medical oncologist, supportive care, followup care and patient education.

- Overall care is provided by an interdisciplinary team, including general practitioner oncologists, nurses, pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, social workers and dietitians.

Contacts:

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

Interior Health
Communications
1 844 469-7077 (media line)

Provincial Health Services Authority
Communications
778 867-7472 (media line)

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