
NEWS RELEASE

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Office of the Premier
Ministry of Health Services
Fraser Health

PREMIER ANNOUNCES NEW ER AND CARE TOWER FOR SURREY

SURREY – A new state-of-the-art critical care tower at Surrey Memorial Hospital (SMH) will increase the number of acute care beds by over 30 per cent and will include a new emergency department almost five times the size of the old ER, Premier Gordon Campbell and Health Services Minister George Abbott announced today.

“This new tower will mean a significant improvement to patient care in Surrey, and will compliment the new Surrey Outpatient Hospital and the earlier 26 per cent expansion of acute care beds at Surrey Memorial since Fraser Health was created,” said Premier Campbell. “The project will significantly increase the number of beds at SMH, adding 151 beds for a total of 650 when complete, and will allow patients to be admitted more quickly. It will also help plan for the future, with the addition of more academic space at Surrey Memorial, helping us to train more doctors.”

Surrey Memorial’s ER is one of the busiest in the province. It currently sees around 71,000 patient visits per year, which is projected to increase to 101,000 by 2020. The new tower will help address Surrey’s future health needs and ease current congestion at SMH. The total capital project value is estimated in the range of \$500 million to \$600 million. The final cost of this public-private partnership project will be determined once a contract is signed and the full scope finalized

At around 6,100 square metres (65,652 sq. feet), the new emergency department will be close to five times the size of the current emergency department and will provide specialized mental health and geriatric units. It will also include a separate children’s ER, an enhanced minor treatment unit, and an improved area for acute patients. These enhancements will substantially improve Surrey Memorial’s efficiency, provide the best emergency care to patients and place the hospital in a prime position to continue attracting and retaining the finest medical expertise, supported by the latest medical equipment and technology.

The five-story tower will also feature a dedicated perinatal centre. The perinatal centre will include 48 neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) beds, needed to treat premature infants and newborns in critical distress. The maternity department will also be expanded and 13 new obstetric beds will be added. Family-centred care will be the focus of the expanded facility, and families will play an integral role in the care team.

In addition to the new perinatal centre and ER will be two floors of additional inpatient beds, as well as an expanded adult intensive care unit, which will help meet the acute care needs of Surrey, and will play a crucial role in decreasing emergency room congestion. Additional academic space will be created, to support the growing partnership between Fraser Health (FH) and the University of British Columbia medical school. When complete, SMH will become part of FH’s clinical academic campus, working in conjunction with Royal Columbian Hospital, improving the province’s capacity to train new doctors. A new rooftop helipad will be located on the top of the new tower.

“The community has identified upgrades to Surrey’s health care facilities as a top priority,” said Surrey-Cloverdale MLA Kevin Falcon. “Surrey’s growing population is increasing the demand for additional health services and we are working diligently to meet these needs.”

“This new tower is fantastic news for the people of Surrey,” said Dave S. Hayer, MLA for Surrey-Tynehead. “Not only are we keeping our commitment to address the critical needs at SMH, but we are going above and beyond those promises with the acute-care plans announced today.”

“The provincial government’s redevelopment and expansion of Fraser Health’s Surrey Memorial Hospital is wonderful news for our health professionals and for the people we serve,” said Dr. Nigel Murray, CEO of Fraser Health. “Enhancing SMH’s role as a regional hospital is well-supported by the collaborative clinical planning for the Lower Mainland and is a significant step forward in meeting the changing health needs of our rapidly-growing communities.”

The critical care tower at SMH will be undertaken as a public-private partnership; the renovations to the existing hospital will be delivered through traditional procurement. A Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is being released to select a team to design, build, finance and maintain the tower. The estimated capital cost will be confirmed once the procurement process is complete and a successful proponent is selected. All health services will be funded by the public sector through Fraser Health, in keeping with the Canada Health Act.

The need for a new emergency department and perinatal centre at SMH was set out in the Surrey Health Services Capacity Initiative (SHSCI), endorsed by government in December 2005. Also recommended in the report was a new outpatient facility to provide a full range of ambulatory care services, and a primary-health-care clinic. The \$239-million four-storey Surrey Outpatient Hospital will be located within one kilometre of SMH, and will accommodate approximately 450,000 annual outpatient visits when it is opened in 2011. With approval of this project, government has exceeded its commitment to the SHSCI.

Construction on the new tower is expected to begin in 2010 and create approximately 3,760 jobs. Dependent upon the procurement process, the new emergency department is planned to open to patients in spring 2013, with final construction of the tower complete in spring 2014.

2 backgrounder(s) attached.

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