
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2015HLTH0035-000764
May 27, 2015

Ministry of Health
Fraser Health

Redevelopment of B.C.'s oldest hospital set to begin

NEW WESTMINSTER – A new mental health and substance use facility, outpatient clinics and better care for seniors are part of the first phase of redevelopment of Royal Columbian Hospital.

Health Minister Terry Lake today announced business plan approval for phase one of the redevelopment, with a \$249.8 million commitment from the Province and \$9.1 million from the Royal Columbian Hospital Foundation.

“Government wants to be sure we are moving in the right direction for the health care needs of those in the Lower Mainland and all British Columbians, especially for more vulnerable populations such as seniors and those with substance use and mental health concerns,” said Lake. “The redevelopment of Royal Columbian Hospital, as well as a new St. Paul’s, will allow us to make great strides in delivering patient-centred care well into the future.”

The first phase of redevelopment at Royal Columbian includes a 75-bed mental health and substance use facility, which will replace the aging 30-bed Sherbrooke Centre. The new development also includes Fraser Health’s first dedicated geriatric psychiatry unit, designed for elderly patients experiencing acute depression, anxiety or psychosis. There will also be eight added or expanded outpatient clinics to help patients transition to community mental health services and to community life.

Phase one also includes a new parkade and an energy centre to provide the power and utilities infrastructure required to support the current campus and future work. The helipad will also be relocated.

The total cost of phase one is budgeted at \$258.9 million.

As well, the Province has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the City of New Westminster on planning for future improved road, bike, and pedestrian access to better meet the hospital’s needs.

“This MOU signals our commitment to work together on a long-term goal that will improve the safety, accessibility and connectivity to and from the hospital, and through the city of New Westminster,” said Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Todd Stone.

The overall redevelopment project will be completed in three phases. Phase one begins with construction starting this fall for the helipad, and in 2016 for the mental health and substance use facility and energy centre. Phase one is scheduled to be complete in 2019. The redevelopment project will address growing service capacity needs, help to ease congestion and enhance the working environment for health professionals.

“The entire Fraser Health region will benefit from this investment in the first phase of Royal Columbian Hospital’s redevelopment,” said Karen Matty, Fraser health board chair. “This is an important day for Royal Columbian Hospital, and for the people of British Columbia.”

Phases two and three are expected to add new acute care beds, a new and larger emergency department, new operating suite, and upgrades to existing spaces. Final scope and schedule will be outlined in a separate business plan, expected in 2016.

“The individuals, businesses, community groups and foundations that give generously to Royal Columbian Hospital understand the importance of providing exceptional health care to the region,” said Royal Columbian Hospital Foundation president and CEO, Jeff Norris. “We’re grateful to the B.C. government and Fraser Health for the opportunity to work with our donors to support this significant project.”

“For generations, Royal Columbian Hospital has played a critical role in New Westminister by delivering high quality health care to our residents and serving as the city’s largest employer,” said Mayor Jonathan X. Coté. “The redevelopment plans announced today will generate significant economic and social benefits for our city by stimulating the creation of future business and medical opportunities, and creating demand for additional amenities in the area. We are very proud to have this outstanding facility in our community.”

Royal Columbian Hospital, first opened in 1862, is a vital referral centre and regional centre of excellence for trauma, critical care, cardiac care, maternity, neonatal intensive care and neurosurgery. As British Columbia’s oldest hospital, and one of its busiest, it provides expert care for the most seriously ill or injured and is one of two adult trauma centres in the Lower Mainland.

Media Contact:

Laura Heinze
Media Relations Manager
Ministry of Health
250 952-1887 (media line)

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: www.gov.bc.ca/connect