
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Health
Interior Health

New heart and surgical centre opens

KELOWNA – Provincial and community leaders today celebrated the opening of the new Interior Heart and Surgical Centre (IHSC) at Kelowna General Hospital.

“The Interior is now home to the only cardiac surgery program outside of Victoria and the Lower Mainland,” said Premier Christy Clark, MLA for Westside-Kelowna. “This means patients in the Interior in need of critical care now have the support they need closer to home and their families.”

IHSC opened its doors to patients at 5:45 a.m. on Monday, Sept. 28, 2015. The first baby was delivered at 8 a.m. and by the end of the day, 10 surgeries had been performed, including the first open-heart surgery.

“The centre is the culmination of a major redevelopment of Kelowna General Hospital, and will provide vital services closer to home for Interior residents,” said Health Minister Terry Lake. “The new facility also reflects our focus on providing patient-centred care with a full range of medical supports including a modern design, state-of-the art equipment and technologies for cardiac and surgical services.”

More than 350 surgeries have been completed and more than 20 babies delivered since the centre opened. The facility has capacity for 15 operating rooms, including two dedicated for cardiac surgery.

“The new Interior Heart and Surgical Centre is a true reflection of the power of community and I would like to recognize everyone involved in making this centre a reality– from Interior Health and the Central Okanagan Regional Hospital District to the Kelowna General Hospital Foundation and health care professionals,” said Kelowna-Mission MLA Steve Thomson. “Thanks to your commitment, this region is now home to a health care facility which will serve the needs of patients of this region, now and in the future.”

The centre also features a hybrid operating room, equipped with advanced medical imaging technology. This means patients won’t have to be moved from the OR to another area for imaging. It also allows surgeons to perform minimally invasive surgery, which is better for patients due to shorter recovery times and hospital stays.

“The centre will provide clinical space for up to 600 open-heart procedures per year,” said Norm Letnick, Kelowna-Lake Country MLA. “I know that both patients and health care professionals are welcoming this facility, one that will save lives.”

The Province provided \$296.3 million to the overall project and \$84.7 million was contributed by the Central Okanagan Regional Hospital District for a total of \$381 million. The IHSC facility

itself cost \$180 million.

“In addition to our funding partners, the Province and Interior Health, the Regional Hospital District has provided \$84.7-million towards the overall cost of the Interior Heart and Surgical Centre,” said Gail Given, Central Okanagan Regional Hospital District board chair. “The centre is a tremendous health care addition for residents of the Central Okanagan and beyond.”

Construction continues on the fourth floor where a new maternity unit is scheduled to open in spring 2016.

“On behalf of the board of directors, I want to thank our patients and their families, our staff and physicians, and our community neighbours who have demonstrated incredible patience throughout several years of non-stop construction,” said Interior Health board chair Erwin Malzer. “Now we can proudly stand together and celebrate the modern, teaching hospital Kelowna General Hospital is today. It is an astounding addition to providing patient care throughout Interior Health and in support of smaller communities.”

“I was on call on the second day the IHSC was open and had to perform two emergency surgeries that evening,” said Dr. Mike MacLeod, head of general surgery at KGH. “I was pleased to see how well the staff was adapting to their new surroundings, and I was proud to be in the new IHSC. The patients seemed reassured by the attentive staff, and the state of the art facility. Everything went so well!”

“Now my son, Trevor, and many like him needing a hybrid operating room and their families will no longer have to arrange long distance last minute travel,” said Darrell Porubanec, father of Trevor Porubanec who required life-saving surgery in a hybrid operating room. “We now have the third hybrid operating room in the province – the most advanced in the country – right here in the Interior Heart and Surgical Centre at KGH.”

The Ministry of Health has developed “Setting Priorities for the B.C. Health System”, an overarching strategy to guide the Province to create a more sustainable health system. As part of this, a series of policy papers, including one on surgical services, were created to help focus on improving timely access to appropriate surgical treatments and procedures.

To read the Ministry of Health’s strategic document, Setting Priorities for the BC Health System and the accompanying policy papers, please visit: <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/topic.page?id=EF73BCF3DE34484CB4DBA9E34092402C>

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