
NEWS RELEASE

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KELOWNA AND VERNON HOSPITALS PROJECT MOVES AHEAD

KELOWNA – The Kelowna and Vernon Hospitals project reached another key milestone today with the release of the Request for Proposals (RFP) to design, build, finance and maintain the expansion of the Kelowna General Hospital (KGH) and the Vernon Jubilee Hospital (VJH).

“Today marks an exciting milestone for patient care in the Interior as we move forward with plans to modernize and expand Kelowna General Hospital and Vernon Jubilee Hospital,” said Health Minister George Abbott. “All across British Columbia, we are investing in world-class health facilities to ensure patients can access safe, high-quality health care.”

Three proponent teams responded to the Request for Qualifications that closed on June 4, 2007 and were shortlisted and have been invited to respond to the RFP. The teams are:

- Infusion Health;
- Okanagan Health Solutions; and
- Plenary Health.

Once submissions to the RFP are received and evaluated, a preferred proponent will be selected and offered the opportunity to finalize an agreement to undertake the hospital expansions in Kelowna and Vernon.

The expansions consist of:

- Vernon Jubilee Hospital Diagnostic and Treatment Building;
- Kelowna General Outpatient Hospital; and
- Kelowna General Hospital Emergency Department expansion.

“Okanagan residents can look forward to receiving the best patient care,” said Rick Thorpe, MLA for Okanagan-Westside. “Our government is committed to the future of the Interior and the planned expansion of the Kelowna Hospital will provide the medical attention that patients need, right here.”

“The Kelowna and Vernon Hospitals project is now one step closer to meeting the future patient care and capacity needs of the Okanagan and beyond,” said Okanagan-Vernon MLA Tom Christensen.

The VJH component will consolidate existing programs and allow future expansion. It will include outpatient care services, intensive care, cardiac care and maternity and pediatrics.

“These facilities in Vernon and Kelowna form the cornerstone for the expansion of patient care services in the Okanagan,” said Murray Ramsden, CEO of Interior Health. “It is the largest health-care announcement in Okanagan history and will contribute to significant enhancements to patient care. We look forward to the next phase of the project.”

Construction is expected to begin in 2008, after tendering is completed and costs are finalized, with completion targeted for 2010. All health services will be funded by the Province of B.C. through Interior Health, in keeping with the principles of the Canada Health Act.

Previous components of the Kelowna General Hospital redevelopment include the new \$5.3-million Adolescent Psychiatry Unit, which opened on the fifth floor of the Royal building in 2005, 248 net new residential care beds and assisted living units in the Central Okanagan since 2001 and a new \$8-million parkade on the southwest corner of the hospital, which opened in fall 2006. Also underway is the redesign of the neonatal unit at KGH to enhance facilities for newborns and their families, and construction on a new 24-bed Central Okanagan Hospice Centre on Ethel Street. On Sept. 24, 2007, Premier Gordon Campbell announced plans for the first ever cardiac centre in the Interior. The fifth site at KGH will increase capacity for heart services in B.C. and reduce trips to the Lower Mainland for patients who need advanced cardiac care services. It is expected to be operational by the end of 2012.

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