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Interior Health CEO to retire fall 2018

Interior Health's Board Chair Doug Cochrane announced today that President & CEO Chris Mazurkewich has provided the Board of Directors with his letter of resignation, expressing his decision to retire at the end of October.

"Chris Mazurkewich has spent nearly three decades working to build a strong, sustainable health system in British Columbia," said Cochrane. "Under his leadership as CEO, Interior Health has implemented services that make health care more accessible in rural areas, services that support people living with mental illness, and services that meet the needs of our increasingly older population. I want to acknowledge specifically Chris's dedication to fostering relationships with Aboriginal leaders and communities across IH. The partnerships and innovations that are a result of his commitment are a model for all of us going forward."

"This summer, during B.C.'s worst-ever wildfire season, I had the opportunity to witness first hand Chris's on-the-ground leadership skills in making sure that patients and residents were reassured, safe, and received the care they needed," said Health Minister Adrian Dix. "We have been fortunate to benefit from Chris's oversight and strong direction in improving health care for residents throughout the Interior. I thank him for his years of service and wish him well as he transitions into retirement."

Some highlights during Mazurkewich's tenure as CEO at Interior Health include:

- Renewing Letters of Understanding with each of the seven First Nations in IH, as well as the Métis Nation, and the overarching Partnership Accord for the Interior Region;
- Partnering with the Divisions of Family Practice to make primary care services more accessible to patients, and to relieve congestion in emergency departments;
- Investing in mental health and substance use services, including adding 85 support recovery, withdrawal management, and adult residential treatment beds;
- Responding to the opioid overdose crisis, which was declared a public health emergency in British Columbia in 2016; in Interior Health, this included opening mobile supervised consumption sites in Kamloops and Kelowna in 2017;
- Coordinating with the Ministry of Health, other health authorities, and agencies to ensure safety and care to those affected by the wildfire emergency last year;
- Opening 199 residential care beds across Interior Health;
- Investing nearly \$330 million in upgraded and expanded hospital, health centre, and residential care facilities;
- Helping to advance important capital projects in communities such as Kamloops, Penticton, and Williams Lake;
- Recruiting an unprecedented number of specialists into the cardiac and general internal medicine programs at Royal Inland Hospital in Kamloops, and achieving approval to implement new specialty cardiac services at Kelowna General Hospital, making enhanced care closer to home for IH residents; and
- Hiring over 65 nurse practitioners to work in communities with family doctors and clinical, rehabilitation, and diagnostic professionals, improving access to care.

“It has been an honour to work in health care alongside the physicians and staff who provide care to our patients, clients, and residents,” said Mazurkewich. “Throughout my career, I have had the privilege of meeting countless individuals who make incredible contributions to the delivery of health care every day. I want to extend my gratitude to each of you – thank you.”

Mazurkewich was appointed President & CEO of Interior Health in October 2015. Prior to that he was Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer at Alberta Health Services for four years, overseeing the clinical operations of the Alberta health service delivery system, including over 100 hospital, residential, community care, and support service programs. From 2002-2009, Mazurkewich was Interior Health’s Chief Operating Officer, Strategic & Corporate Services.

The Board of Directors is proceeding with the recruitment of a new President & CEO. In the coming days, the Board will retain an executive recruiting firm to undertake an international search for the best possible candidates for the role. In the meantime, Mazurkewich will remain in his position as President & CEO until his departure in the fall.

Interior Health is committed to promoting healthy lifestyles and providing a wide range of quality health-care services to more than 742,000 people living across B.C.’s vast interior. For more information, visit www.interiorhealth.ca, follow us on Twitter [@Interior_Health](https://twitter.com/Interior_Health), or like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/interiorhealth.