For Immediate Release | March 3, 2017

**Interior Health Primary Care Services set to open**

KAMLOOPS – Today, Health Minister Terry Lake and MLA Kamloops-South Thompson Todd Stone were joined by representatives from Interior Health to open the new Interior Health Primary Care Services clinic on the first floor of the North Shore Health Science Centre (NSHSC) at #103-376 Tranquille Rd.

“We are hard at work to shift away from a disease-centred and provider-focused health-care system towards one that is centred on the patient,” said Lake. “This new clinic is a great example of team-based care, and it will help to ensure that Kamloops residents receive high-quality health care on the North Shore.”

Six nurse practitioners (NPs) will take on patients of all ages from the waitlist administered by HealthLinkBC. Five NPs will begin work immediately, with the sixth starting in early April. Recruitment is also underway for family doctors. A primary care nurse, an office manager and medical office assistants will also be located at the clinic.

Lorraine Lines, a nurse practitioner who will be working at the clinic, finds it rewarding to team up with patients to improve their health.

“When people are sick, they are often at their most vulnerable and I am very excited to be a part of an initiative that promises to have a positive impact on these patients by improving their access to health care,” Lines said. “Working in a clinic with other NP colleagues is a progressive way to offer primary care to a community. I enjoy meeting people where they are at and working with them to create the best plan for better health.”

Primary care is the day-to-day health care given by a family doctor or NP. The physician or NP is generally the patient’s first contact and main point of continuing care within a health-care system. They coordinate other specialist care that the patient may need.

“I’m excited to welcome the team of nurse practitioners to this new clinic,” said Stone. “I look forward to even more health-care professionals coming to our community in the months ahead, and watching how this new patient-centred model of care will benefit patients in Kamloops.”

A primary care practitioner may provide:

- Illness prevention and health promotion information
- Appropriate interventions for occasional illness and injury
- Primary reproductive care
- Early detection with ongoing treatment of chronic illness
- Care for the majority of illnesses (with referral to specialists as needed)
- Education and supports for self-care

“The opening of this clinic represents a great day for Kamloops residents who have been seeking a constant provider for their primary care needs. These highly trained nurse practitioners will help ease the pressure for those people without a family doctor or nurse practitioner,” said Interior Health Board Chair John O’Fee. “I want to thank all the people who have worked so diligently to open this clinic.”

www.interiorhealth.ca
This is the second new IH health-care site to open as part of the four-point action plan to enhance patient access to primary care in Kamloops announced by Health Minister Lake in October 2016. The second floor of the NSHSC opened February 6th, providing specialized, team-based care for people living with complex health challenges such as lung disease, heart disease, diabetes, or mental health and/or substance use problems. The new clinic completes the renovations to the NSHSC.

“For the last month, as NPs, we have had the privilege of working with patients and a great team of professionals on the second floor,” Lines said. “We are very excited about continuing those relationships and welcoming new patients into this brand new space on the first floor.”

The IH Primary Care Services capital renovation project on the first floor of the NSHSC is anticipated to cost approximately $1.3 million, funded by Interior Health.

**Update on Future Primary and Community Care Services**

As part of the four-point action plan, a second Interior Health Primary and Community Care Services site for older adults over the age of 65, including a Seniors Health and Wellness Centre, is slated to open at Northills Centre in April.

*Interior Health is committed to promoting healthy lifestyles and providing a wide range of quality health-care services to more than 740,000 people living across B.C.’s vast interior. For more information, visit www.interiorhealth.ca, follow us on Twitter @Interior_Health, or like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/InteriorHealth.*

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Backgrounder

Interior Health Primary Care Services
North Shore Health Science Centre – First Floor
103-376 Tranquille Rd.
Kamloops, B.C. V2B 3G6

Hours of Operation:
Monday to Friday – 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Saturday – 8 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.
Sunday – closed

Contact:
Office: 250-312-3288

Note: This site is not a walk-in clinic. Patients on the HealthLinkBC 8-1-1 primary care waitlist will be contacted to be attached to nurse practitioners and, in future, to family doctors at this site.

Kamloops Primary Care Waitlist Managed by HealthLinkBC:
Kamloops residents who are looking for a family doctor or nurse practitioner should continue to call HealthLinkBC at 8-1-1 to be placed on a waitlist. In addition, HealthLinkBC will connect callers from Kamloops who are older adults, have complex medical needs, or have moderate to severe mental-health and substance-use concerns to the appropriate Interior Health primary and community care services site. If a caller is experiencing symptoms, they can also speak to a HealthLinkBC nurse who will be able to provide health information and advise them on appropriate next steps for addressing their health concern. Patients on the waitlist will be connected to a family doctor or nurse practitioner as they become available. The waitlist will continue to operate for as long as needed.

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