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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release  
2017HLTH0074-001006  
April 3, 2017

Ministry of Health

### **New funding to help create team-based primary care services throughout B.C.**

KAMLOOPS – Today, Health Minister Terry Lake announced \$90 million in new funding over three years to bring integrated team-based primary care services to more communities throughout British Columbia.

“This funding will help create teams of primary care providers in communities throughout B.C.,” said Lake, while celebrating the completion of Interior Health’s Primary and Community Care Services and the Seniors Health and Wellness Centre at Northhills Centre, set to open April 10, 2017. “We are hard at work to shift away from a disease-centred and provider-focused health-care system toward one that is centred on the patient, with greater emphasis on care in the community rather than in hospital. This new site – along with the recently opened services at the North Shore Health Science Centre – is a great example of our new approach.”

A range of services to support seniors in Kamloops will be based out of the Northhills location. They include a home health program that incorporates community nursing, community allied health, and a community bathing program; a lab collection centre; and a primary care clinic where nurse practitioners will care for patients age 65 and older from the Kamloops primary care waitlist. In addition, Interior Health partnered with the Thompson Region Division of Family Practice to open a Seniors Health and Wellness Centre, where patients can be referred by their family doctor, nurse practitioner, or specialist.

The team is expected to include family physicians with a special interest in geriatrics, a geriatrician, mental health clinician, physiotherapist, occupational therapist, registered dietitian, rehabilitation assistant, speech and language pathologist, pharmacist, registered nurse, social worker, respiratory therapist, and medical office assistant.

“I’m excited to see integrated services being provided to our seniors at this new site,” said Kamloops-South Thompson MLA Todd Stone. “I look forward to bringing more health-care professionals to our community and seeing how this new patient-centred model of care will benefit patients in Kamloops and beyond.”

The new centre is the latest component in the four-point action plan to enhance primary care in Kamloops announced in October 2016. The plan includes setting up practice-ready primary care clinics, adding licenced practical nurses, registered nurses and nurse practitioners to existing doctors’ offices and establishing specialized services for vulnerable patients, as well as ongoing recruitment of physicians and nurse practitioners. The ministry aims to advance such new primary and community care service delivery models in other areas of the province.

“We create the best care environment for our patients when we bring together teams of health-care professionals who work collaboratively with each other,” said John O’Fee, Interior

Health board chair. “I’m grateful to everyone who has worked so hard to create these new primary and community care services in Kamloops. We are also pleased to be partnering with the Thompson Region Division of Family Practice in creating a Seniors Health and Wellness Centre.”

“It’s exciting to see the vision for the centre come to life,” says Dr. Chip Bantock, family physician and division board chair. “Thanks to a strong partnership that has involved family doctors every step of the way, we now have a team of health professionals who are coming together around our elderly patients to help them manage difficult health issues, and ultimately, enjoy a better quality of life.”

“We welcome new funding for primary care,” said Dr. Alan Ruddiman, president of Doctors of BC. “We look forward to working with government to both plan for and fully prepare a comprehensive range of primary care services within B.C. that integrates with doctors’ offices. We are particularly interested in how inter-professional teams can help physicians deliver more timely and better quality patient care.”

“This funding which expands team-based primary care provision is an important and exciting trend toward innovative and responsive models of care,” said Kathleen Fyvie, president, British Columbia Nurse Practitioner Association. “Nurse Practitioners are proud to play a key role in increasing access to comprehensive health care for British Columbians. We will continue to work with the ministry to support the growth of collaborative practice settings throughout the province.”

Teams and networks of primary care providers are at the centre of the new model for primary and community care services being established across the province, with strong connections to redesigned services provided by health authorities. The \$90 million in new funding is targeted to support the expansion of this kind of team-based primary care across the province, such as the establishment of nurses and nurse practitioners in primary care practices.

As a result of this new funding, the ministry will also continue to develop new comprehensive options for funding team-based primary care services throughout the province.

Targeted investments to support the implementation of the ministry’s strategic priorities are made possible with a \$4.2 billion budget lift in the ministry’s budget over the next three years. In addition, the federal government and Province announced a 10-year funding agreement on Feb. 17, 2017, totalling \$1.4 billion in new investments – including \$786 million for home care and \$655 million for mental-health initiatives – which will support further enhancements to primary and community care throughout B.C., in alignment with the ministry’s strategic priorities.

#### **Learn More:**

See the Ministry of Health’s strategic priorities at: [www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/health-priorities/setting-priorities-for-bc-health](http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/health-priorities/setting-priorities-for-bc-health)

Learn more about the new Interior Health Primary and Community Care Services site at: <https://www.interiorhealth.ca/AboutUs/MediaCentre/NewsReleases/Documents/North%20Kamloops%20%E2%80%93%20Primary%20and%20Community%20Care.pdf>

A backgrounder follows.

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## BACKGROUND

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### **New model of primary and community care being introduced throughout British Columbia**

Primary care is typically the first and main point of contact a patient has within the health-care system – usually care from a family doctor or nurse practitioner, who also co-ordinates any other specialized care that the patient may need.

Teams and networks of primary care providers are at the centre of the new model for primary and community care services being established around the province – including family doctors, nurse practitioners, nurses and medical office assistants. These teams have strong connections to services provided by health authorities, which include redesigning and new specialized community care services for vulnerable patients – including the frail elderly, those with complex health needs, and those dealing with mental illness or substance-use issues.

The \$90 million in new funding is targeted to support the expansion of this kind of team-based primary and community care throughout the province, such as the establishment of nurses and nurse practitioners in primary care clinics. Working with existing doctors' offices – or groups of doctors' offices – the nursing positions will allow doctors to care for more patients, as well as provide better supports. Other health professionals in the community, such as pharmacists, occupational therapists and social workers, will also be connected with doctors' offices to help to provide more comprehensive, integrated care for patients.

As a result of this added funding, the ministry will also continue to develop new comprehensive options for funding new team-based primary care services throughout the province.

Through this new integrated approach to primary care, patients receive continuous, co-ordinated care over time and across settings – and are supported to proactively maintain their health and quality of life. This can help patients retain their independence longer, improve their quality of life, help them avoid admissions to hospital because of health issues and avoid premature entry into residential care.

Early-adopter communities, like Kamloops, will be home to new primary care teams, networks and specialized community care services over time, developed in partnership between the Ministry of Health, Doctors of BC, health authorities, Divisions of Family Practice, and local doctors, nursing and allied health-care providers. The model will be tailored to individual community needs and strengths.

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