

For Immediate Release | February 27, 2019

Maternity services at CMH temporarily suspended

WILLIAMS LAKE – Due to an unexpected and critical shortage of maternity nurses, Cariboo Memorial Hospital (CMH) has regretfully decided to temporarily suspend inpatient obstetrical services.

This decision was made for the safety of expectant mothers and their babies while Interior Health secures staffing for this service.

Interior Health and physicians in Williams Lake and 100 Mile House are working together to notify all expectant mothers individually of this change in care and to support them in making arrangements for a stay in another community, such as Kamloops or Prince George, where they can safely deliver their babies.

Interior Health is exploring all options to reinstate this service in Williams Lake as quickly as possible and will keep local communities updated on any changes.

Maternity nurses at CMH provide labour, delivery, post-delivery care and nursery coverage.

Currently, seven nurses are being trained in full-scope maternity care to support CMH. Two nurses will complete their education in June and the other five in December of 2019.

As well, Interior Health is recruiting for these specialized nurses nationally and internationally.

We apologize for the disruption in the lives of these families. A number of unforeseen circumstances contributed to this unexpected shortfall of these specially trained nurses at CMH.

Note: See FAQ for Cariboo-Chilcotin Expectant Mothers on page 2.

-30-

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](https://twitter.com/Interior_Health), or like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/InteriorHealth.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT



Interior Health
Every person matters

Frequently Asked Questions **— For Expectant Mothers from Cariboo-Chilcotin —**

These questions will support pregnant women from the Williams Lake and 100 Mile House area, including the Chilcotin region who are scheduled to deliver their babies at Cariboo Memorial Hospital. Maternity services have been temporarily suspended at CMH and expectant moms are being asked to come to Kamloops either at 36 or 38-week gestation, depending on physician advice.

1. What if I go into labour before I leave home?

If you feel that labour has started, please go to the Cariboo Memorial Hospital or the 100 Mile Hospital Emergency Department to be assessed by a doctor and nurses. They will determine if it is safe to transport you to Kamloops or if you will need to have your baby and then be transferred to Kamloops. The safest thing for you and your baby is to relocate to Kamloops before you go into labour. Your physician will advise when you should go

2. Where do I go when I get to the Royal Inland Hospital (RIH)?

If you are having your baby at RIH, please enter the hospital and take the main building elevator to the 3rd floor and enter the Labour and Delivery Unit. You do not have to be admitted through the Emergency Department.

3. Who do I contact if I have questions when I get to Kamloops?

- If you self identify as First Nations and would like to meet the Aboriginal Patient Navigator, please call either 250-319-5420 or 250-318-0697.
- If you want to speak to a Labour and Delivery Nurse at RIH, please call 250-314-2635.
- If you need to see a doctor outside of a prearranged visit, please go to the Labour and Delivery unit at RIH.
- If you have any further questions, please call the RIH Perinatal Social Worker at 778-220-5183.
- If you have questions before you leave Williams Lake, please call the APN at 250-267-1677 or the social worker at 250-267-2925.

4. What financial support is available to me?

The cost of travel (e.g. food, fuel, accommodation) should not be a barrier or prevent you from receiving services, and Interior Health does not want you to suffer undue hardship due to this unexpected service interruption. There is support available where financial hardship is a concern. Each situation is assessed on an individual basis as part of your care planning.

All questions related to where to submit receipts, how long it will take to process receipts, whether support is available in advance of travel, etc., will be assessed based on your individual

needs and situation.

5. I am concerned about the cost of travel and accommodation. Who should I contact at Interior Health to discuss my individual situation?

- **Williams Lake and Area:** Lisa Ryll at lisa.ryll@interiorhealth.ca or 250-302-3201; Charlene Smythe at charlene.smythe@interiorhealth.ca
- **100 Mile House and Area:** Allison Filewich at Allison.Filewich@interiorhealth.ca or 250-395-7618