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Seniors to benefit from new health and wellness centre

SALMON ARM - A new Seniors Health and Wellness Centre opened this week in Salmon Arm. Interior Health and local physicians through the Shuswap North Okanagan Division of Family Practice have worked together to establish the centre which aims to support the health of seniors living with complex health needs.

“Our focus is on the whole person and their care goals,” explains Dr. Kate McCarroll, a family physician with expertise in caring for the elderly who spearheaded the project with the local Division of Family Practice. The division supports the centre by providing physical space, physician education, and coordination of the physician roster.

The care team at the centre includes a physician, registered nurses, dietitians, social workers, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, rehabilitation therapist, pharmacist and other health-care practitioners as needed.

“I’m excited to be part of a high-functioning team that is committed to helping seniors remain independent and live well. Connecting clients with appropriate support and information early on is an important part of this approach,” adds Dr. McCarroll.

In addition to comprehensive assessment and care planning, the health-care team will provide education and connection to community-based services, with the goal of helping seniors live independently for as long as possible.

Vivian Asham was the centre’s first client after being referred to the centre by her doctor. She was seen by several members of the team.

“It has been a very positive experience. It is nice that everyone is all in one place, I know the location well and I don’t have to leave town. After my appointment, the physiotherapist came right to my home and provided strengthening exercises. We feel like we are getting to know the team and everyone is friendly and helpful,” said Vivian.

Her daughter-in law Dawn Asham agrees. “It has been great to have access to a whole team that communicates well with each other,” she said.

“The new Seniors Health and Wellness Centre is a great example of team-based care helping seniors access specialized services in the Salmon Arm area. It is about better health - living better, not just longer - a key aspect of our seniors’ strategy. This wrap-around service will be a great benefit to seniors, their families and the community,” said Health Minister Adrian Dix.

The Seniors Health and Wellness Centre is currently located at Marine Plaza at 781 Marine Park Dr. NE Salmon Arm and is open one day per week. Referrals to the centre are accepted from family doctors and nurse practitioners for residents of the Shuswap and Enderby areas.

“Surrounding a patient with a team of experts improves access and health outcomes and provides a better care experience, not only for the patient but for the care-providers as well,” said Interior Health

Board Chair Dr. Douglas Cochrane. “This is key to our primary care strategy and we appreciate the ongoing collaboration with local physicians and the Division of Family Practice.”

The Salmon Arm Seniors Health and Wellness Centre supports the Government of B.C.’s primary health-care strategy, which is focused on delivering faster, team-based care to British Columbians in all parts of the province. As part of this, government is implementing primary care networks, including urgent primary care centres and community health centres to help coordinate care and improve access to services. Government is also addressing the shortage of primary care providers in the province by providing funding for up to 200 new general practitioners and 200 nurse practitioners to work in a renewed primary care system.

For information about seniors care within Interior Health, visit Adult and Seniors Health under Your Health at www.interiorhealth.ca. For information about the Divisions of Family Practice visit www.divisionsbc.ca.