
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2020HLTH0274-001686
Sept. 8, 2020

Ministry of Health
Interior Health

Urgent and primary care centre coming soon to West Kelowna

WEST KELOWNA – More people in West Kelowna and surrounding communities will have increased access to better, improved health care, with a new urgent and primary care centre (UPCC) opening in November 2020 at 2484 Main St.

“The new West Kelowna UPCC will offer people comprehensive, team-based health care, closer to home,” said Adrian Dix, Minister of Health. “With the support of local physicians, our primary care strategy is leveraging community collaboration to strengthen primary care services throughout the province. In West Kelowna, it means improved access to same-day primary care for more than an estimated 41,000 people living in the region.”

The West Kelowna UPCC is a collaboration led by Interior Health and includes the Westbank First Nation, the City of West Kelowna and the District of Peachland.

It is anticipated that the health-care team will include general practitioners, nurse practitioners, registered nurses, social workers, physiotherapists and medical office assistants. Once fully staffed, the centre will provide care for more than 27,000 patient visits annually. Patients will be seen by the team of health-care providers and will be able to self-refer to the UPCC for care.

The West Kelowna UPCC will deliver urgent and primary care services to people who need to see a health-care provider, but do not require a trip to the emergency department. Basic laboratory tests will also be available.

Importantly, the centre will also work to connect patients without a family doctor to a physician or nurse practitioner for ongoing primary care – either at the centre or in the community. Attachment will be provided by collaboration with the Central Okanagan Division of Family Practice.

The centre will also support attachment for patients over the next few years to a regular primary care provider, either at the centre or in the community.

When the centre begins seeing patients this fall, its hours of operation will be from 11:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.

This is the 19th UPCC that has been announced under the government’s primary care strategy, 17 of which are open. Of those, five centres are in the Interior Health region, including in Vernon, Kamloops, Kelowna, Castlegar and West Kelowna.

Quotes:

Dr. Doug Cochrane, board chair, Interior Health –

“The new urgent and primary care centre will have a significant impact for patients and families by increasing access to local health services for area residents. The team-based approach to care means people living in West Kelowna and on Westbank First Nation land will have added support for their immediate and long-term health needs. This centre will also work with vulnerable populations, providing primary care services to people where they live.”

Chief Christopher Derickson, Westbank First Nation –

“The UPCC continues to remain an important fixture in supporting the various medical needs of our Members and residents. The new facility will support an enhanced provision of service to our community, which has been underserved to date, and will continue to support reconciliation within the region. During these challenging times, it will further provide a greater level of care to all British Columbians who face challenges in our society, and we are happy to see this step taken.”

Dr. Kathleen Ross, president, Doctors of BC –

“We look forward to the integration of the West Kelowna UPCC in hopes it will strengthen primary care in the community and ensure people there have access to the health-care services they need, while also supporting long-term relationships between patients and their family doctor.”

Michael Sandler, executive director, Nurses and Nurse Practitioners of BC –

“Nurses and Nurse Practitioners of BC are pleased to see that the knowledge, skills and expertise of the entire health-care team will be utilized to improve access to health care for all British Columbians through urgent and primary care clinics. We believe that this approach will be pivotal in ensuring B.C. families can access health-care services, and we are excited to see the opening of another urgent and primary care clinic in B.C.”

Learn More:

To learn more about the Province’s primary health-care strategy, visit: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2018PREM0034-001010>

To learn more about the Province’s strategy to increase the number of nurse practitioners, visit: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2018HLTH0034-000995>

To learn more about the Province’s strategy to recruit and retain more family medicine graduates, visit: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2018HLTH0052-001043>

A backgrounder follows.

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BACKGROUND

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West Kelowna Urgent and Primary Care Centre

- The West Kelowna Urgent and Primary Care Centre (UPCC) will be located at 2484 Main St. in West Kelowna.
- It will feature improved access to care through extended weekend and evening hours.
- The centre will be open seven days a week, 365 days per year, regardless of holidays.
- People can self-refer for their urgent and primary care needs. Patients can also be referred by community service providers, other health-care professionals and agencies.
- People can also schedule appointments. During busy periods, appointments will be prioritized based on urgency.
- Patients requiring laboratory testing beyond the simple specimen collection will be provided with requisitions for lab tests to be completed at nearby laboratories.
- The population in the West Kelowna Community Health Service Area is 41,482, of which 6,020 are considered unattached.
- In 2019-20, more than 3,322 people – representing approximately 24.8% visits at the emergency department by West Kelowna residents – were triaged as non-emergency at the Kelowna General Hospital. Many of these non-urgent conditions could have been managed in a primary care setting, such as an urgent and primary care centre.
- Total capital costs for the UPCC are estimated to be \$3.1 million.
- The UPCC is 635 square metres (6,837 square feet) and will include a reception, waiting area, exam rooms, counselling rooms, office spaces and a multipurpose room.
- UPCCs are part of a comprehensive provincial strategy to transform B.C.'s health system by bringing together and co-ordinating with health-care providers, services and programs to make it easier for people to access care, receive followup care and connect to other services they may need.

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