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Construction begins on top floors of VJH tower

VERNON – Work on the top two floors of Vernon Jubilee Hospital (VJH) has begun and Vernon-Monashee MLA Eric Foster joined Interior Health representatives, community members and hospital staff there today to help kick off construction.

“This project is special to me. Just two years ago we announced funding to begin detailed planning to add beds in Polson Tower,” said Foster. “We are excited to be here today as the new inpatient units begin to take shape, and proud to be following up on our commitment.”

As the ongoing consultation to finalize the design continues, contractors are on site to prepare for construction to start.

“The benefits to the community are great,” said Interior Health Board Chair Norman Embree. “This project will improve the environment for patients and working conditions for our nurses, physicians and support staff.”

Stuart Olson Dominion Construction Ltd., with Parkin Architects, was selected as the design builder from a shortlist of proponents that were qualified to respond to the Request for Proposals, which was released in September. The contract is for the final design and construction of two 30-bed inpatient units in the roughed-in shelled space on the sixth and seventh floors of the Polson Tower.

Of the 60 beds planned for the units, 14 will be new and the remaining 46 will be relocated from existing older units in the hospital.

The project cost of \$29.6 million is being shared between Interior Health, the North Okanagan Columbia Shuswap Regional Hospital District (NOCSRHD) and the Vernon Jubilee Hospital Foundation.

“It is great to see construction underway. This project will provide a modern inpatient ward with appropriate infection control and patient care areas without congested overflow, and will improve the ability to attract and retain staff,” said NOCSRHD Chair Rhona Martin.

The majority of the 60 beds will be in private rooms complete with their own washrooms. Units will be furnished with new equipment through the Vernon Jubilee Hospital Foundation’s ongoing Tower of Care campaign. It is anticipated that construction will be complete in late fall 2015.

“The Directors of VJH Foundation are proud to be partners in this very important project for the hospital and the residents of the North Okanagan. We are raising funds to support our financial commitment to this final phase of the Polson Tower project and we are pleased that construction will begin in the near future,” said Foundation President Elise Allan.

Vernon Jubilee Hospital is one of four regional hospitals within Interior Health’s network of health-care facilities. It serves approximately 86,000 residents in the areas of Vernon, Armstrong, Enderby, Spallumcheen, Salmon Arm, Revelstoke and Nakusp.

For more information about this and other major capital projects throughout Interior Health, visit www.buildingpatientcare.ca.

Interior Health is committed to promoting healthy lifestyles and providing a wide range of quality health-care services to more than 742,000 people living across B.C.'s vast interior. For more information, visit www.interiorhealth.ca.

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