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New perinatal unit added to Interior Heart and Surgical Centre

KELOWNA – Expectant mothers in the Interior will benefit from an enhanced care environment as a perinatal unit is being added to the Interior Heart and Surgical Centre, currently under construction at Kelowna General Hospital.

“This new unit will provide moms and new babies the privacy and dignity to enjoy one of life’s greatest moments with their families and loved ones,” said Premier Christy Clark, MLA for Westside-Kelowna.

The perinatal unit will replace the hospital’s existing labour and delivery unit, currently housed in the Strathcona Building. The new unit will feature expanded space, single-patient post-partum rooms and an upgraded neonatal intensive care unit. In addition, the unit will be in close proximity to the hospital’s new operating rooms, which are also designated for relocation to the centre.

“Providing the best possible care is a priority for government and this is why we are moving forward with this project at the Interior Heart and Surgical Centre,” said Health Minister Terry Lake. “Construction of this new perinatal unit will not only support obstetrical staff, but also families in this growing region.”

The unit will add approximately \$14 million to the project cost and will be funded by the Central Okanagan Regional Hospital District. This will increase the total project cost to \$381 million, with \$296 million provided by the provincial government and \$85 million by the regional hospital district.

“Each year, more than 1,500 babies are born at Kelowna General Hospital,” said Norm Letnick, MLA Kelowna-Lake Country and Chair of B.C.’s Committee on Health. “Once complete, this perinatal unit will help provide excellent care to ensure this region’s youngest residents get the best start in life.”

“The Interior Heart and Surgical Centre will improve health care for people in the region and today’s announcement of the new perinatal unit is great news for both health professionals as well as patients,” said Steve Thomson, MLA Kelowna-Mission.

Construction of the Interior Heart and Surgical Centre building will be complete in 2015. Further renovations to other parts of Kelowna General Hospital to support the IHSC project will be complete in 2017.

“The opportunity to ensure a new perinatal unit could be included in this project means expectant moms and their babies will continue to receive excellent care for years to come,” said Robert Hobson, Chair of the Central Okanagan Regional Hospital District. “We are happy to have been able to contribute to this important addition to the IHSC project.”

“On behalf of health professionals working at KGH, I want to thank the Regional Hospital District for its commitment to this project, and the provincial government for supporting the decision to modernize the perinatal unit at the Interior Heart and Surgical Centre, as it will make a difference,” said Interior Health Board Chair Norman Embree.

The Interior Heart and Surgical Centre will benefit patients by providing the highest level of medical care ever seen in the Interior through an integrated critical care facility supported by a full range of clinical supports closer to where people live.