
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Health
North Okanagan Columbia Shuswap Regional Hospital District

RFQ released to complete two floors at Polson Tower

VERNON – A Request for Qualifications (RFQ) was released today as an important step toward the completion of the top two floors of the Polson Tower that will build 60 inpatient beds.

“We’re moving forward on our commitment to improving capacity at Vernon Jubilee Hospital with the release of the RFQ,” said Minister of Health Margaret MacDiarmid. “Less than a month ago, we announced plans to add 60 beds to Polson Tower, and today we’re well on our way to making that happen.”

The RFQ is the important first step in the process to select a qualified team to design and complete the two floors, which were originally set aside with future patient needs in mind.

On Feb. 7, 2013, government unveiled floor plans for 60 beds at Polson Tower. This follows an earlier announcement in April 2012, when government announced detailed planning would commence to add beds in Polson Tower and complete the two unfinished floors. Funding consisting of \$29.6 million to complete the two floors will be shared between the Province, the North Okanagan Columbia Shuswap Regional Hospital District (NOCSRDH) and the Vernon Jubilee Hospital Foundation.

Of the 60 beds, 14 will be new and the remaining 46 will be relocated from elsewhere in the hospital. The beds will be used primarily for single-patient rooms. Previously, they were located in four-bed and double-occupancy wards. The total number of beds at the Vernon Jubilee Hospital will increase from 140 regular and eight temporary beds (148 total) to 162 beds.

“We’re seeing our top priorities become a reality with today’s announcement. Together, we’re making great steps towards building capacity and increasing bed numbers at Vernon Jubilee Hospital,” said Vernon-Monashee MLA Eric Foster.

The RFQ is a competitive selection process that invites teams to indicate their interest and qualifications to design and complete the two floors at Polson Tower. Respondent teams shortlisted during the RFQ process, which ends on April 23, 2013, will be invited to respond to a Request for Proposals (RFP). Interior Health expects to choose a preferred proponent and begin construction by late 2013. It is anticipated the two floors will open in summer 2015.

“We’re seeing great progress with Polson Tower,” said Norman Embree, Interior Health board chair. “I’m proud we are moving forward and will be able to offer beds to families in our community who need them most.”

“We have always been future focused, and I’m pleased we are reaching our goals of providing high-level hospital care and services to our community,” said NOCSRDH chair Rhona Martin.

Completed as part of the Kelowna / Vernon Hospitals Project, the Polson Tower includes an expanded emergency, maternity and pediatrics department, ambulatory care, surgical services, intensive care, and medical device reprocessing. The Polson Tower was also recently awarded a LEED Gold certification and is the first building in Vernon to achieve this.

The Polson Tower was officially opened for patients in October 2011. The \$180-million Polson Tower added 16,815 square metres (181,000 square feet) of space to the Vernon Jubilee Hospital site.

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