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## Ribbon cut to officially open VJH Polson Tower

Health Minister Michael de Jong, Vernon-Monashee MLA Eric Foster, physicians and staff officially opened the Polson Tower at Vernon Jubilee Hospital (VJH) on October 13, 2011.

“The Polson Tower is helping to build better patient care in the North Okanagan,” said de Jong. “This state-of-the-art facility is part of our continued investment in the health-care needs of Interior residents.”

The \$180-million Polson Tower has added 16,815 square metres (181,000 square feet) of space to the VJH site. More space has allowed for the expansion of operating rooms and the emergency department.

“I have followed this project since the beginning and am pleased to see the completion of the Polson Tower,” said Foster. “Even with this new space, we will continue to monitor capacity levels here at Vernon Jubilee Hospital. This investment will greatly benefit North Okanagan families for years to come.”

Highlights of the new tower include:

- The creation of new intensive care and coronary units.
- New maternity/paediatrics ward with direct links to operating rooms.
- New and more efficient central sterilization services.
- Expanded ambulatory care and outpatient clinics.
- New ambulance space.
- Full integration with the existing hospital.

The expanded and modernized facilities at Vernon Jubilee Hospital provide a better environment for patients and staff. A series of programs and services have also been modernized and consolidated to improve patient care. Vacated space within VJH will leave room for other programs and services.

“With larger spaces, improved efficiencies, and the latest technology, this new tower will enable our physicians and staff to provide the excellent care for which they are known in a much improved environment,” said Interior Health Board Chair Norman Embree.

The Polson Tower is part of the Kelowna and Vernon Hospitals Project, which is all about building better care for Interior residents. Construction of a new UBC medical school building and the Centennial Patient Care Tower at Kelowna General Hospital are all part of this \$432-million project.

“With growing excitement, we have watched this building rise out of the ground for three years now,” said Rhona Martin, chair of the North Okanagan Columbia Shuswap Regional Hospital District, which provided \$67.4 million to the project. “Today is an historic day for the residents of this area, and we should celebrate the accomplishment of improved patient care for the whole region.”

From the groundbreaking in November 2008 to patient occupancy in September 2011, the successful project was completed on time and on budget. The Polson Tower was built as a public-private partnership with Infusion Health, who will continue with building maintenance over the life of the contract.

Built to LEED Gold standards, the seven-storey Polson Tower was designed from a patient-focused perspective, with extensive input from clinical staff. The new tower offers an enhanced environment for healing with a focus on the elderly, who are both patients and visitors.

The Polson Tower is named after Samuel Polson, who in 1908 donated the land on which the current hospital resides.