

For Immediate Release | December 12, 2013

## Successful heart surgery program celebrates one year anniversary

A significant milestone has been achieved within the Interior Health Cardiac Surgery Program. This month the program marks its one year anniversary.

“Going through heart surgery is difficult enough without having the support of family and friends close by,” said Premier Christy Clark, MLA for Westside-Kelowna. “The availability of cardiac surgery in Kelowna has been a great benefit for patients from throughout the Interior, now able to receive expert care without having to travel far.”

The program’s first open heart surgery occurred on Dec. 3, 2012. Since then more than 500 surgeries have been performed on patients from every corner of the interior. Dr. Calvin Wan, one of the program’s three renowned surgeons, performed the 500<sup>th</sup> surgery on Nov. 25: An aortic valve replacement and coronary artery bypass surgery.

“These surgical services, in addition to the education and health promotion work occurring as part of this program, are among the finest in the province,” said Minister of Health Terry Lake. “The first year of this program has seen outstanding results and clinical outcomes.”

“As our population ages heart disease is an increasing concern,” said Steve Thomson, MLA Kelowna-Mission. “We know that the demand for these services is on the rise. Already in the interior close to 1,600 people received cardiac care through the Cardiac Surgery Program.”

Surgeries are currently taking place in two renovated operating rooms at Kelowna General Hospital while the Interior Heart and Surgical Centre (IHSC) building is under construction. The Interior Heart and Surgical Centre building will be the permanent home for this program. The building is planned to open in mid-2015.

The IHSC building will be the province’s fifth cardiac critical care centre. Cardiac surgery is performed at four other hospitals: Royal Columbian, Royal Jubilee, St. Paul’s and Vancouver General.

“Every year, 12,000 surgeries in 12 different specialties, including open heart surgery, will change and save lives of patients receiving care at the centre,” said Norm Letnick, MLA Kelowna-Lake Country and Chair of B.C.’s Committee on Health. “I want to thank those involved in developing and delivering the Cardiac Surgery Program for their hard work and expertise.”

“It’s important to realize this is not a Kelowna, or even an Okanagan, program,” said Interior Health Board Chair Norman Embree. “In the last year 60 patients from the Kootenay region received cardiac surgery here in the interior instead of having to travel to Vancouver. Sixty have come from Kamloops alone, and another 24 from communities in the Cariboo. The Cardiac Surgery Program truly is a regional service.”

“We are pleased to be part of efforts to deliver this calibre of care right here in the Central Okanagan,” said Robert Hobson, chair of the Central Okanagan Regional Hospital District, which is contributing \$70.7 million to the Interior Heart and Surgical Centre project.

NEWS RELEASE

Through its affiliation with the Southern Interior Medical Program, the Interior Heart and Surgical Centre will also support the training of future surgeons and physician, utilizing state-of-the-art equipment and advanced techniques.

To support patient care within the new Interior Heart and Surgical Centre building, the KGH Foundation has embarked on its largest fundraising initiative to date, the Be a Lifesaver Campaign. Its mission is to ensure the surgical centre opens fully outfitted with the critical equipment it needs to change and save lives. For information and to learn how you can “be a life saver” visit [www.bealifesaver.net](http://www.bealifesaver.net).

For more information about the Interior Heart and Surgical Centre visit [www.buildingpatientcare.ca](http://www.buildingpatientcare.ca).

**Where do open heart surgical patients come from?  
Regional breakdown December 2012 to Nov. 14 2013:**

100 Mile House	7	Lillooet	3
Armstrong/Spallumcheen	7	Merritt	7
Arrow Lakes	6	Nelson	10
Cariboo Chilcotin	13	North Thompson	1
Castlegar	9	Penticton	15
Central Okanagan (Kelowna, Lake Country)	138	Princeton	6
Cranbrook	2	Revelstoke	2
Creston	8	Salmon Arm	24
Enderby	7	South Cariboo	4
Fernie	1	South Okanagan (Osoyoos, Oliver)	15
Grand Forks	6	Summerland	7
Kamloops	60	Trail	10
Keremeos	10	Vernon	57
Kettle Valley	1	Windermere	2
Kimberley	1	Other BC Health Authorities	17
Kootenay Lake	3	Out of Province	4