

For Immediate Release | June 17, 2011

## VJH starts 100-day countdown to opening of Polson Tower

Vernon-Monashee MLA Eric Foster and other dignitaries joined physicians, staff, volunteers and community members at Vernon Jubilee Hospital (VJH) today to unveil a special clock that will count down the final 100 days until the new Polson Tower opens.

“Today is a very special milestone in the evolution in patient care in the North Okanagan,” said Foster. “In just 100 days we will welcome the first patients into this state-of-the-art new tower. Those patients and the many more that will come after them will receive the same excellent care they have come to expect from our health care professionals in a vastly improved health care setting.”

Construction on the \$180 million Polson Tower began November 17, 2008. It will open for patients at 6 a.m. on Sunday, September 25, 2011.

The tower forms the cornerstone of the expansion of patient care services in the North Okanagan, and will support Interior Health in meeting demand projections and setting the stage for excellence in affordable, public health care service delivery.

“We are another step closer towards offering brand-new health care facilities to North Okanagan residents,” said Norman Embree, Interior Health Board Chair. “I am looking forward to the opening of this tower in just a few short months. This building will help to ensure continuing and improving high quality patient care at Vernon Jubilee Hospital for years to come.”

The Polson Tower will add a total of 231,000 square feet of space to the VJH site. A further 50,000 square feet of clinical space will be freed up in the existing West Wing of VJH. The tower will consolidate and modernize a series of programs and services to improve health service delivery, including expanded Emergency and Ambulatory Care departments, new Intensive Care and Coronary Care units, new larger Operating Rooms and a new Women’s and Children’s Health Services department.

“This tower will provide an exceptional level of patient care and support,” said Rhona Martin, Chair of the North Okanagan Columbia Shuswap Regional Hospital District, which contributed \$67.4 million to the project. “The Polson Tower will provide space to meet the patient care needs of North Okanagan residents now and well into the future.”

The tower was built using the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) whole building approach to sustainability and will be LEED Gold certified. It was designed from a patient-focused perspective, with extensive input from clinical staff, and will offer an enhanced environment for healing, with particular acknowledgement of the needs of the elderly, who are both patients and visitors.

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