President & CEO
REPORT TO THE BOARD
March 2016

Improving Access, Enhancing Quality

Since my last report in December, significant milestones have been reached for several capital investments across Interior Health. Not only do these investments increase access for our patients, clients, and residents; but the quality of care is enhanced through modern, world-class equipment and services to support the world-class care provided by staff and medical staff.

At the end of December, T. A. Rendek and Associates was announced as the successful contractor for the renovation projects at Henry Durand Manor residential care facility in Golden and the Creston Valley Hospital and Health Centre emergency department. The residential care renovations include a larger, updated common space for gatherings and activities for residents and their guests; and improved access to the secure outside garden area. Renovations to the emergency department in Creston include a new triage and registration area for patients, central nursing station, and a fast-track area for minor treatment. Both projects are anticipated to be completed in the summer of 2016 and are made possible through generous community donations.

In mid-January, Ellis Don Infrastructure was announced as the preferred proponent for building a new Patient Care Tower and parkade at Penticton Regional Hospital. Interior Health is currently working to conclude a performance-based contract with the preferred proponent by Spring 2016, with construction activities beginning soon after. The project will include a parkade and a new patient care tower, which will include an ambulatory care centre, surgical services, 84 medical/surgical inpatient beds in single patient rooms, a new medical device reprocessing unit, and space for the UBC Faculty of Medicine program. The total budget for the project is $325 million and the project is expected to be complete by 2019. Costs are shared by the Provincial Government, Okanagan-Similkameen Regional Hospital District, and South Okanagan Similkameen Medical Foundation, with generous contributions from auxiliaries in the South Okanagan. It is expected that the project will create more than 1,910 jobs for workers over the life of the project.

On January 31st, the 6th and 7th floors of the Polson Tower at Vernon Jubilee Hospital opened. 60 acute care beds were added at the time of the opening. 14 beds are new with the remaining 46 relocated from elsewhere in the hospital. In addition to the increased capacity from the new beds, the relocation of existing beds results in single patient rooms replacing multi-patient rooms. Not only are patients and their loved ones benefitting from enhanced privacy, single patient rooms are more effective for infection control purposes. In addition to the beds, the floors offer two new rehabilitation activity rooms, and two negative pressure rooms to treat patients requiring increased levels of isolation. The funding required to support the construction was nearly $30 million, a shared cost between the Ministry of Health, the North Okanagan Columbia Shuswap Regional Hospital District, and the Vernon Jubilee Hospital Foundation, including generous support from hospital auxiliaries.

In mid-February, the new Intensive Care Unit at East Kootenay Regional Hospital opened. The unit's capacity increased by 50 per cent; from four beds to six. The expansion helps relieve pressure on the unit, reducing the need to transfer critically ill patients to other facilities, frequently in Alberta as they are the next closest critical care unit. Quality care is further improved through better patient and care provider flow, additional space to provide care, and enhanced patient privacy. The project also included a major electrical upgrade to the hospital. The upgrade improved the power supply for the entire hospital, optimizing electrical system performance, and allowing capacity to expand for future power needs. The total $20 million project was funded through the Ministry of Health, Kootenay East Regional Hospital District, and the East Kootenay Foundation for Health, including a significant donation from the Cranbrook Health Care Auxiliary.

Integrated Services

Preparing For the Health-care Needs of Refugees

2016 marked a new beginning for Syrian refugees arriving in the BC Central and Southern Interior. By Spring of this year, it is anticipated that up to 400 Syrian refugees will arrive in our communities. Normally, Interior Health would expect to welcome 250 refugees from all countries during the same time period. To support the health-care needs of these individuals and families, Interior Health has worked closely with primary care centres, physicians, and other health-care providers, community agencies, and local governments to ensure that the necessary supports are in place upon arrival of the immigrants. From immunization to access to medications to mental health services, Interior Health staff are working with other providers to ensure that our newest residents have access to the care they require in order to make the transition to our country and communities.

Online STI Testing Service Expands in BC

Residents of Kamloops and Nelson are now able to participate in an expanding pilot project providing the first online service in Canada offering easy, confidential testing for sexually transmitted infections, HIV, and hepatitis c. The project, led by the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC), in collaboration with Interior Health, provides a confidential, low-barrier, convenient testing alternative to visiting a doctor or nurse in person. Clients visit the GetCheckedOnline website, create an account, answer a sexual history questionnaire, and print a laboratory requisition for testing. Users then go to a participating LifeLabs location in their community to give specimens, and are notified by email when results are ready. If the results are negative, the client can review them online. If there is a positive or inconclusive result, the client will be contacted by a BCCDC nurse to arrange appropriate treatment.

New Space for Students and Resident Doctors at Nelson Hospital

UBC medical students and resident physicians now have their own dedicated study and training space at Kootenay Lake Hospital (KLH) in Nelson. The new learning areas are primarily used by third year students with the Trail Integrated Community Clerkship program, and resident physicians from the Kootenay Boundary Family Practice Residency program who complete training at the hospital. The new space on the fourth floor of the hospital provides a clinical skills room, study stations, and a lounge area purpose-built for their specific needs.

2015/16 Budget

IH is targeting to end the fiscal year in a balanced position.

A long-term direction for us, and for health care across the province, is to be more efficient and more sustainable. By becoming more efficient, we find savings that can be reinvested to support a greater focus on prevention and integrated community care in order to decrease the growth in demand on acute and residential care.

Key Performance Measures

Performance measures are used across IH to benchmark our performance against internally and externally set targets. It allows IH to measure how we are doing against past performance, as well as to how we are doing in comparison with like organizations. The measures are reported out to the Board of Directors, through the Health Authority's Service Plan, and to the Ministry of Health for accountability purposes, as well as to organizations like the Provincial Infection Control Network.

Caution should always be used in comparing data across different institutions or organizations, as localized factors not present at other locations may influence outcomes. Caution should also be used when comparing snapshot data of a specific timeframe, such as one reporting period, against annualized data.

Pain Assessment on Admission to Residential Care
Chronic and other types of pain are not uncommon among residents in care facilities. Although disorders that can cause chronic pain to become more common with increasing age, pain itself is not a normal part of aging. Consistently recognizing and treating pain in the facility setting, including chronic non-cancer pain among residents with non-terminal illnesses, is an important element of quality care.

Interior Health's target is that 95% of residential care clients have a pain assessment upon admission to a residential care facility. As of the last reporting period, 99% of all residential care clients had a pain assessment upon admission.

Human Resources
Difficult to fill position vacancy rates are important indicators of the employment market and are related to overtime costs incurred.

IH's targets for vacancy rates for nursing and paramedical professionals continue to remain less than 2% - 0.23% and 0.59% respectively.

Engagement

In early December Board Chair Erwin Malzer and I visited Royal Inland Hospital in Kamloops, the Chase Health Centre, Shuswap Lake General Hospital in Salmon Arm, and Vernon Jubilee Hospital. During the visits we had the opportunity to meet with our staff and medical staff to understand both the opportunities and challenges of delivering health care in rural settings, and to tour the sites to better understand capital opportunities for the future. During our visit in Vernon, we also had the opportunity to meet with Vernon-Monashee MLA Eric Foster.

UBC-Okanagan is an important Interior Health partner in improving health outcomes for the residents of the Central and Southern Interior of BC. We are working collaboratively on

research strategies related to rural health care, among other items. In mid-December, and again in early February, I met with senior leaders from UBC-Okanagan to discuss our shared priorities.

On December 9th, I met with Kelowna-Lake Country MLA Norm Letnick and Kelowna-Mission MLA Steve Thomson in order to hear their constituents' perspectives on opportunities for health service improvement in the Central Okanagan. We discussed the importance of continuing to enhance primary care and access to surgical services.

Hospital Foundations are a critical partner in the capital upgrading of our hospitals and other facilities, and for the construction of new buildings. In late December I had the opportunity to meet with the Board Chair and CEO of the Kelowna General Hospital Foundation, learned about the success of their current fundraising initiative for the new perinatal unit at Kelowna General Hospital, as well as their ideas for upcoming fundraising initiatives.

On February 2nd, I met with representatives of the Central Okanagan Division of Family Practice. This organization includes physicians from Kelowna, Lake Country, Peachland, and West Kelowna. The Division's priority is to identify areas to improve care for its patients across its membership, and with organizations including Interior Health. As the BC health system becomes more integrated, it is imperative that health authorities and family physicians continue to strengthen the relationship between primary and community care.

British Columbia is well known as a national and global leader in the prevention and treatment of HIV and AIDS. In early February, I visited our STOP HIV team in Kelowna to learn about the work they are undertaking in the Central Okanagan to increase testing rates, engage with individuals living the diagnosis, and enhance treatment.

On February 24th, I met with the Board of Directors for the South Okanagan Similkameen Medical Foundation. During our meeting I shared Interior Health's strategic direction with the attendees, discussed progress on development of the Patient Care Tower at Penticton Regional Hospital, which will begin construction this Spring, and thanked the Foundation for their generous $20 million contribution to the construction project.

Recognition

Interior Health Named as a BC Top Employer

For the fourth year in a row, Interior Health has been named as one of British Columbia's top employers; a designation recognizing employers within the province who lead their industries in providing exception workplaces. In addition to providing a culture of achievement, collaboration, and teamwork, IH was recognized for offering competitive benefits, and helping employees balance work and personal life through programs and other supports.

Interior Health Long Term Service Awards Ceremony

Each year, special recognition is given to Interior Health employees and members of the medical staff who provided care to residents of the Central and Southern Interior for 25, 30, 35, 40, and even 45 years of service. Each year recognition ceremonies are held across the health authority to recognize these outstanding care providers. In 2015, there were 1,903 employees who achieved one of these significant milestones.

Annual Have-A-Heart Radiothon in Kelowna

On February 11th, the Kelowna General Hospital (KGH) Foundation held its 13th annual Have-A-Heart radiothon at Orchard Park Shopping Centre in Kelowna, with AM 1150. The $106,000 raised at this year's radiothon will support the Foundation's Giving Giggles campaign, supporting expectant mothers and newborn babies at KGH's new Perinatal Unit. The new unit will provide an enhanced patient and family-centred environment for the 1,600 babies born every year, including for those as young as 30 weeks. In its 12 years, the annual 12-hour live broadcast has raised over $1 million to provide the best care possible for sick kids in the Central Okanagan.

Foundations' Partnership Aids Multiple Health Sites, Programs

Six communities will benefit from an incredible financial donation by the Mr. & Mrs. P.A. Woodward's Foundation to the East Kootenay Foundation for Health's annual Starlite Campaign. Through the two Foundations, six arterial brachial index (ABI) machines are now on site at health units in Cranbrook, Kimberley, and Golden; and available through Home Support programs in Creston, Fernie, and Sparwood. ABI machines measure the ratio of the blood pressure in the lower legs to the blood pressure in the arms. The readings help detect blocked arteries, which if left untreated, can lead to heart attack, stroke, poor circulation, and leg pain.

Ridgewood Lodge Care Volunteer Receives Award

Former Interior Health staff member turned volunteer Bernadette Kelleher received Global Okanagan's "Local Hero" award this past month for her contributions to the Princeton community. Bernadette volunteers daily at Ridgewood Lodge Care Centre, where she spends one-on-one time with residents, serves food, and feeds those who can no longer feed themselves. She also volunteers at the local Legion branch and was named their most recent *Legionnaire of the Year.*

KBRH Health Foundation Exceeds Urology Campaign Goal

Congratulations to the Kootenay Boundary Regional Hospital (KBRH) Health Foundation exceeding the goal to raise $400,000 for the Urology Campaign. The two-year campaign raised over $490,000 for the Urology Department at Kootenay Boundary Regional Hospital in Trail. Funds will support new equipment purchases to allow for expansion of surgical services at KBRH in the areas of: urology oncology (kidney, prostate, and bladder cancer), renal stone disease, benign prostate disease, and men's health.

Chris Mazurkewich
President & CEO