



NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Health

B.C. expands access to integrated cancer care

VANCOUVER – Five new integrated cancer care centres, including a virtual one in Vancouver to serve rural and remote parts of British Columbia, will open as part of Healthy Families BC.

Expansion of InspireHealth, which has operated a Vancouver centre since 1997, will improve cancer care delivery and help patients learn about the many ways they can support their own health and recovery. Integrated cancer care combines nutrition, exercise, and stress management programs with standard cancer treatments to promote an overall healthier lifestyle, which is proven to lead to better patient outcomes and cancer survival rates.

The new InspireHealth centres are scheduled to open in Victoria, Kelowna, Abbotsford and Prince George in a phased approach beginning in September 2011. Full implementation is expected by September 2012.

There is growing evidence that integrated cancer care approaches support health and immune function and can significantly reduce the risk of cancer recurrence and increase survival.

Core health classes, dedicated to supporting health and healthful lifestyle changes such as healthy nutrition and cooking classes, exercise, meditation, yoga, shared learning groups and stress reduction classes will be offered at all integrated cancer care centres. InspireHealth is funded through a mix of physician salaries, patient-pay-fees and private donations.

Access to InspireHealth's physicians and nurse practitioners is free. InspireHealth has a number of other programs including core health classes, as well as a two-day LIFE Program that costs \$445 for the first year of membership and \$95 for annual renewals. The fee is waived for patients on Medical Service Plan Premium Assistance. In-house therapy practitioners –such as massage therapists, acupuncturists and naturopathic doctors – have patient-pay-fees.

The Ministry of Health is providing one-time, start-up funding totalling \$2.5 million for five new centres including a virtual one in Vancouver. Additional annual funding of \$2.5 million from the Provincial Health Services Authority will provide up to 12 additional medical doctors.

Expansion of integrated cancer centres in communities beyond Vancouver, especially the virtual centre to service rural and remote communities, supports the government's commitment to ensuring the provision of services, including access to health care, is looked at through a rural lens.

Greater access to integrated cancer care is part of Healthy Families BC, which supports British Columbians to manage their own health, reduce chronic disease and ensure that pregnancy and support programs target the province's most vulnerable families. Additionally, the strategy will continue to focus on healthy eating initiatives, including a public awareness campaign around sodium and sweetened beverage reduction as well as a provincial restaurant nutrition information program to help make the healthier choice the easier choice.

For more information on Healthy Families BC, please visit: www.healthyfamiliesbc.ca

Quotes:

Minister of Health Michael de Jong –

“Integrated cancer care is part of our commitment to support British Columbians make the healthier choice, the easier choice. Integrated cancer care provides cancer patients with access to improved physical, emotional and nutritional health as well as new opportunities for patients to engage with practitioners about natural therapy interventions and healthy lifestyles.”

Vancouver-Fairview MLA Dr. Margaret MacDiarmid –

“Receiving a cancer diagnosis can be overwhelming, but there is hope and support for British Columbians living with cancer. As part of Healthy Families BC, InspireHealth is expanding its unique cancer care delivery services in communities across the province.”

Dr. Hal Gunn, co-founder and CEO of InspireHealth –

“An integrated approach to cancer care supports the mind, body, spirit and immune system. There is growing evidence that the widespread adoption of InspireHealth's integrated approach to care will result in a significant reduction in cancer deaths, cancer recurrences, and related health-care costs.”

Lynda Cranston, president and CEO, Provincial Health Services Authority –

“The expansion of InspireHealth is directly complementary to the work of the BC Cancer Agency, a part of the Provincial Health Services Authority, and its regional cancer centres located throughout the province. Our focus is on cancer control and treatment, but we also seek to improve the quality of life of people living with cancer and InspireHealth is a welcome partner in that work.”

Cancer patient Carol Sicoli –

“Being diagnosed with cancer is a humbling and life-changing experience that goes beyond just your body. Learning about InspireHealth and its integrated approach to cancer care enables people to find a sense of calm amidst a storm of emotions whereby true healing of the mind, body, and spirit can unfold. Attending the two-day LIFE Program is like breathing in fresh air to sustain life and gives you the power to actively engage in a wellness journey with perseverance and joy.”

Quick Facts:

- The BC Cancer Agency estimates that about one in three British Columbians will develop some form of cancer in their lifetime.
- More than 23,000 British Columbians are projected to be diagnosed with cancer in 2011.
- Cancer diagnoses are expected to grow to more than 30,000 by 2021, an increase of about 30 per cent.
- Just over 9,500 British Columbians will die from cancer in 2011 compared to 15,500 in 2021, an increase of 63 per cent.
- An estimated 50 per cent of all cancers are preventable.
- The most common cancers for women in British Columbia are breast, lung and colorectal.
- The most common cancers for men in British Columbia are prostate, lung and colorectal.
- Despite the increase, British Columbia has some of the most favourable cancer outcomes in North America. According to the Canadian Cancer Society’s 2010 Canadian Cancer Statistics report, B.C. men and women have the lowest overall mortality rate and incidence rate for all cancers in Canada.

Learn More:

Visit InspireHealth at: www.inspirehealth.ca

Visit Healthy Families BC at: www.healthyfamiliesbc.ca

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