

**From:** Bru, Carolyn GCPE:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 7, 2023 3:34 PM  
**To:** Machell, Aileen PREM:EX <[Aileen.Machell@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Aileen.Machell@gov.bc.ca)>; Marriott, Sarah GCPE:EX <[Sarah.Marriott@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Sarah.Marriott@gov.bc.ca)>; MacMillan, Karin HLTH:EX <[Karin.MacMillan@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Karin.MacMillan@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Cc:** Shewchuk, Chris GCPE:EX <[Chris.Shewchuk@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Chris.Shewchuk@gov.bc.ca)>; Wigmore, Matthew HLTH:EX <[Matthew.Wigmore@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Matthew.Wigmore@gov.bc.ca)>; Smith, George PREM:EX <[George.Smith@gov.bc.ca](mailto:George.Smith@gov.bc.ca)>; hlth Ministerial and Executive Assistants <[hlthmaea@Victoria1.gov.bc.ca](mailto:hlthmaea@Victoria1.gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** RE: FOR APPROVAL: NR and QA - Supporting health-care workers and patients at Surrey Memorial Hospital

Hi all,

Attached is the final NR, which should already be live.

Also attached is a KMQA for MLAs.

Many thanks,

**Caro**  
Cell: 250-893-9247  
[Carolyn.Bru@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Carolyn.Bru@gov.bc.ca)

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**From:** Machell, Aileen PREM:EX <[Aileen.Machell@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Aileen.Machell@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 7, 2023 11:43 AM  
**To:** Marriott, Sarah GCPE:EX <[Sarah.Marriott@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Sarah.Marriott@gov.bc.ca)>; Bru, Carolyn GCPE:EX <[Carolyn.Bru@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Carolyn.Bru@gov.bc.ca)>; MacMillan, Karin HLTH:EX <[Karin.MacMillan@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Karin.MacMillan@gov.bc.ca)>; Brown, Stephen R HLTH:EX <[Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Cc:** Shewchuk, Chris GCPE:EX <[Chris.Shewchuk@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Chris.Shewchuk@gov.bc.ca)>; Wigmore, Matthew HLTH:EX <[Matthew.Wigmore@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Matthew.Wigmore@gov.bc.ca)>; Smith, George PREM:EX <[George.Smith@gov.bc.ca](mailto:George.Smith@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** RE: FOR APPROVAL: NR and QA - Supporting health-care workers and patients at Surrey Memorial Hospital

Here are some additional edits from us. Thank you!

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**From:** Marriott, Sarah GCPE:EX <[Sarah.Marriott@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Sarah.Marriott@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 7, 2023 11:31 AM  
**To:** Bru, Carolyn GCPE:EX <[Carolyn.Bru@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Carolyn.Bru@gov.bc.ca)>; Machell, Aileen PREM:EX <[Aileen.Machell@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Aileen.Machell@gov.bc.ca)>; MacMillan, Karin HLTH:EX <[Karin.MacMillan@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Karin.MacMillan@gov.bc.ca)>; Brown, Stephen R HLTH:EX <[Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Cc:** Shewchuk, Chris GCPE:EX <[Chris.Shewchuk@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Chris.Shewchuk@gov.bc.ca)>; Wigmore, Matthew HLTH:EX <[Matthew.Wigmore@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Matthew.Wigmore@gov.bc.ca)>; Smith, George PREM:EX <[George.Smith@gov.bc.ca](mailto:George.Smith@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** RE: FOR APPROVAL: NR and QA - Supporting health-care workers and patients at Surrey Memorial Hospital

Thanks Caro – I have some very limited final tweaks. My first round of comments were very much addressed (many thanks) George is taking a fast look now and will get right back to you.

**From:** Bru, Carolyn GCPE:EX <Carolyn.Bru@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 7, 2023 11:13 AM  
**To:** Machell, Aileen PREM:EX <Aileen.Machell@gov.bc.ca>; MacMillan, Karin HLTH:EX <Karin.MacMillan@gov.bc.ca>; Brown, Stephen R HLTH:EX <Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca>  
**Cc:** Shewchuk, Chris GCPE:EX <Chris.Shewchuk@gov.bc.ca>; Wigmore, Matthew HLTH:EX <Matthew.Wigmore@gov.bc.ca>; Marriott, Sarah GCPE:EX <Sarah.Marriott@gov.bc.ca>; Smith, George PREM:EX <George.Smith@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** RE: FOR APPROVAL: NR and QA - Supporting health-care workers and patients at Surrey Memorial Hospital

Please use this version instead 😊

**Caro**  
Cell: 250-893-9247  
[Carolyn.Bru@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Carolyn.Bru@gov.bc.ca)

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**From:** Bru, Carolyn GCPE:EX  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 7, 2023 11:11 AM  
**To:** Machell, Aileen PREM:EX <Aileen.Machell@gov.bc.ca>; MacMillan, Karin HLTH:EX <Karin.MacMillan@gov.bc.ca>; Brown, Stephen R HLTH:EX <Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca>  
**Cc:** Shewchuk, Chris GCPE:EX <Chris.Shewchuk@gov.bc.ca>; Wigmore, Matthew HLTH:EX <Matthew.Wigmore@gov.bc.ca>; Marriott, Sarah GCPE:EX <Sarah.Marriott@gov.bc.ca>; Smith, George PREM:EX <George.Smith@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** RE: FOR APPROVAL: NR and QA - Supporting health-care workers and patients at Surrey Memorial Hospital

Hi all,

Revised version attached with edits from Fraser Health and DMO as well.

Many thanks,

**Caro**  
Cell: 250-893-9247  
[Carolyn.Bru@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Carolyn.Bru@gov.bc.ca)

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**From:** Machell, Aileen PREM:EX <Aileen.Machell@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 7, 2023 7:20 AM  
**To:** Bru, Carolyn GCPE:EX <Carolyn.Bru@gov.bc.ca>; MacMillan, Karin HLTH:EX <Karin.MacMillan@gov.bc.ca>; Brown, Stephen R HLTH:EX <Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca>  
**Cc:** Shewchuk, Chris GCPE:EX <Chris.Shewchuk@gov.bc.ca>; Wigmore, Matthew HLTH:EX <Matthew.Wigmore@gov.bc.ca>; Marriott, Sarah GCPE:EX <Sarah.Marriott@gov.bc.ca>; Smith, George PREM:EX <George.Smith@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** RE: FOR APPROVAL: NR and QA - Supporting health-care workers and patients at Surrey Memorial Hospital

Good morning Caro!

Please see recommended edits to the original draft NR from Sarah and me. I know Fraser Health was proposing edits too. Would you be able to merge our recommended edits into the latest version, and send us a clean copy when it's ready?

Adding Sarah and George here, too.

Let us know if there are any concerns.

Thanks!

Aileen

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**From:** Bru, Carolyn GCPE:EX <Carolyn.Bru@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 6, 2023 9:22 PM  
**To:** Machell, Aileen PREM:EX <Aileen.Machell@gov.bc.ca>; MacMillan, Karin HLTH:EX <Karin.MacMillan@gov.bc.ca>; Brown, Stephen R HLTH:EX <Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca>  
**Cc:** Shewchuk, Chris GCPE:EX <Chris.Shewchuk@gov.bc.ca>; Wigmore, Matthew HLTH:EX <Matthew.Wigmore@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** Re: FOR APPROVAL: NR and QA - Supporting health-care workers and patients at Surrey Memorial Hospital

s.13

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**From:** Machell, Aileen PREM:EX <Aileen.Machell@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 6, 2023 9:07 PM  
**To:** Bru, Carolyn GCPE:EX <Carolyn.Bru@gov.bc.ca>; MacMillan, Karin HLTH:EX <Karin.MacMillan@gov.bc.ca>; Brown, Stephen R HLTH:EX <Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca>  
**Cc:** Shewchuk, Chris GCPE:EX <Chris.Shewchuk@gov.bc.ca>; Wigmore, Matthew HLTH:EX <Matthew.Wigmore@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** Re: FOR APPROVAL: NR and QA - Supporting health-care workers and patients at Surrey Memorial Hospital

Media advisory looks good. We will have some recommended edits on the NR to you tomorrow morning. Thanks Caro and team!

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**From:** Bru, Carolyn GCPE:EX <Carolyn.Bru@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 6, 2023 8:39:41 PM  
**To:** Machell, Aileen PREM:EX <Aileen.Machell@gov.bc.ca>; MacMillan, Karin HLTH:EX <Karin.MacMillan@gov.bc.ca>; Brown, Stephen R HLTH:EX <Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca>  
**Cc:** Shewchuk, Chris GCPE:EX <Chris.Shewchuk@gov.bc.ca>; Wigmore, Matthew HLTH:EX <Matthew.Wigmore@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** Re: FOR APPROVAL: NR and QA - Supporting health-care workers and patients at Surrey Memorial Hospital

I can definitely ask Fraser Health.<sup>s.13</sup>

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**From:** Machell, Aileen PREM:EX <[Aileen.Machell@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Aileen.Machell@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 6, 2023 8:32:40 PM  
**To:** Bru, Carolyn GCPE:EX <[Carolyn.Bru@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Carolyn.Bru@gov.bc.ca)>; MacMillan, Karin HLTH:EX <[Karin.MacMillan@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Karin.MacMillan@gov.bc.ca)>; Brown, Stephen R HLTH:EX <[Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Cc:** Shewchuk, Chris GCPE:EX <[Chris.Shewchuk@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Chris.Shewchuk@gov.bc.ca)>; Wigmore, Matthew HLTH:EX <[Matthew.Wigmore@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Matthew.Wigmore@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** Re: FOR APPROVAL: NR and QA - Supporting health-care workers and patients at Surrey Memorial Hospital

Are there any specialists or practitioners who might provide a quote for the NR?

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**From:** Bru, Carolyn GCPE:EX <[Carolyn.Bru@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Carolyn.Bru@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 6, 2023 8:22:11 PM  
**To:** Machell, Aileen PREM:EX <[Aileen.Machell@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Aileen.Machell@gov.bc.ca)>; MacMillan, Karin HLTH:EX <[Karin.MacMillan@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Karin.MacMillan@gov.bc.ca)>; Brown, Stephen R HLTH:EX <[Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Stephen.Brown@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Cc:** Shewchuk, Chris GCPE:EX <[Chris.Shewchuk@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Chris.Shewchuk@gov.bc.ca)>; Wigmore, Matthew HLTH:EX <[Matthew.Wigmore@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Matthew.Wigmore@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** FOR APPROVAL: NR and QA - Supporting health-care workers and patients at Surrey Memorial Hospital

Hi all,

Attached are the draft news release and speaking notes for the announcement tomorrow.

I've also attached the media advisory for MO approval please. We'll need to send it early tomorrow morning.

Stephen – I believe that Matthew shared the NR with you in a separate email. They are the same version.

The event tomorrow will be at 12:30 p.m. Please confirm whether Dr. Lee should speak. The event will be at:

Surrey Memorial Hospital  
Critical care tower lobby  
13750 96 Ave.  
Surrey

Media dial in:

From anywhere in B.C. and Canada, toll-free:<sup>s.15; s.17</sup>

Participant pass code:<sup>s.15; s.17</sup>

I will share the materials with Fraser Health for a look as well.

Many thanks,  
Caro



**Carolyn Bru**

she/her

Communications Director  
Government Communications & Public Engagement  
BC Ministry of Health  
Cell: 250-893-9247  
[Carolyn.Bru@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Carolyn.Bru@gov.bc.ca)

*I gratefully acknowledge that I live and work on the traditional unceded territory of the Lekwungen Peoples, specifically the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations.*

---

**From:** Wigmore, Matthew HLTH:EX <[Matthew.Wigmore@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Matthew.Wigmore@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 6, 2023 3:41:28 PM  
**To:** Bru, Carolyn GCPE:EX <[Carolyn.Bru@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Carolyn.Bru@gov.bc.ca)>; Shewchuk, Chris GCPE:EX <[Chris.Shewchuk@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Chris.Shewchuk@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** Tech Deck - Issues in Surrey.pptx

Hi Chris and Caro,

Please see the attached tech deck as well as a briefing document Steve is working on or Minister.

Steve wants these documents kept to just the HLTH GCPE shop right now, but we will give direction to share beyond once there's consensus with the Minister.

The tech deck will serve as the key document for the technical briefing.

We need an NR (according to Steve and Minister) which on the front end hits a compassionate and is clear that we're listening. See the "what we heard" section of the tech deck which will help with that and help demonstrate we recognize the demand on SMH.

Steve also wants very fulsome, beyond normal, backgrounder to accompany the NR which sets out the actions for short medium and long term. You'll see that spelled out clearly in the confidential document, but the tech deck is also based on that.

Feel free to give me a call at any point. Steve and Matthew (at least will try) will be in for 6am. We're thinking an 11:15 technical briefing with a 12:30 presentation.

Matthew

**Matthew Wigmore (he/him)**  
**Director, Stakeholder Engagement**  
Deputy Minister's Office, Ministry of Health  
C: 250-883-5563

*Grateful to live, work, and play within the traditional territories of the Lekwungen speaking people – also known as the Esquimalt and Songhees First Nations.*

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**From:** MacMillan, Karin HLTH:EX <Karin.MacMillan@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 2, 2023 9:07 AM  
**To:** Bru, Carolyn GCPE:EX <Carolyn.Bru@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** FW: SMH - KMs and IB for Today's Canuck's Place Announcement

Caro – Minister and PO need some Key messages and IB on the subject below by 10:15 this morning - before the Canuck's Place event. I gather Chris is in transit at this time.

Thanks Karin

---

**From:** MacMillan, Karin HLTH:EX  
**Sent:** Friday, June 2, 2023 8:32 AM  
**To:** Shewchuk, Chris GCPE:EX <Chris.Shewchuk@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** FW: SMH - KMs and IB for Today's Canuck's Place Announcement  
**Importance:** High

Chris – Below please find the comms recommendations from the PO related to SMH comms around the Canuck Place announcement today. Can you please prepare some key messages for the Minister around these points and an IB as PO has requested.

Thanks Karin

Thank you, Karin. Matt and I reviewed these with Shannon and think the following should be highlighted today (see further down). Let me know if that works. In addition, I think it would be helpful to have an information bulletin or something in writing that can also go out after the Minister speaks. George and issues may have some edit suggestions for communications around this.

Please connect with Don Bain and George Smith today if you can't reach me as I am travelling and will be unavailable for part of the day.

Points to highlight:

Additional resources approved by MoH to increase the number of ER physicians on shift (additional shifts) in emergency department.

Work ongoing to add capacity at Surrey UPCC – allowing more physicians to work at the UPCC full-time – could divert up to 100 patients away from ED to alleviate hospital pressure

Surgeons taking on MRP duties for exiting patients to help with patient monitoring/assessment in hospital.

Actions to get more Nurse Practitioners to care for ALC patients – mostly seniors - help to take pressure off hospitalists.

Increased internal medicine positions – major focus to build out internal medicine beds –by increase to a total of 200 beds to relieve pressure from hospitalists.

Enhance the EOC starting next week – more active executive management in terms of patient flow. Fraser Health has retained a former Executive Medical Director to oversee and assist, Dr. Dean Chittock as a special advisor to assist with physician engagement.

Ongoing: Minister Dix, Dr. Victoria Lee, Jim Sinclair - Actively canvassing and working with doctors to listen to concerns and identify solutions.

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Hi Naseem and Matthew,

Attached is the final news release going out ASAP.

Permalink: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/28953>

Thanks for everything!

**Caro**

Cell: 250-893-9247

[Carolyn.Bru@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Carolyn.Bru@gov.bc.ca)

## efforts to better support patients, health-care workers in Surrey

June 7, 2023

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### KEY MESSAGES:

- We know that B.C.'s public health-care system is strained.
- This is both a direct and indirect result of a number of circumstances, including multiple public health emergencies in recent years such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the toxic drug crisis and multiple extreme climate crises, which resulted in staffing challenges in our health-care system.
- We're also experiencing significant population growth in B.C., especially right here in Surrey which is growing at a rate of 9.7% annually. As more people are moving to Surrey, the population of Surrey is also changing and we're having people with different and more complex health needs.
- From June 1st to June 6th, Adrian Dix, Minister of Health, Stephen Brown, Deputy Minister of Health, Jim Sinclair, board chair of Fraser Health, and Dr. Victoria Lee, CEO of Fraser Health met with staff from various departments at SMH to listen to concerns and work on solutions.
- We've heard of the impact of dealing with chronic congestion and very high daily volumes at the hospital, significant over-capacity situations and caring for patients with more complex needs. This leads to the need for more sub-specialists, delays in discharging patients and staffing and recruitment challenges.
- Yet through it all, health-care workers at Surrey Memorial Hospital remain fully dedicated to their patients and show up everyday to give them the best possible care.
- Together with Fraser Health including doctors, nurses, allied health professionals, and staff from across Surrey Memorial and the region, we identified short-term, medium-term and long-term actions.
- These actions will make a real impact and address the most immediate challenges in health-care in Surrey while preparing for future demand.
- We know that other hospitals in the province are also struggling, and we will continue to work with health-care providers at SMH and around the province to ensure B.C.'s health system is the best it can be.

## **Q1. What are you announcing today?**

- As more people move to Surrey, health services need to keep up with the significantly growing demand.
- To bolster SMH's function as a major hospital in the region, The Ministry of Health and Fraser Health will expanding Surrey Memorial Hospital.
- This is on top of specific actions, including planning work to improve and increase capacity for more inpatient and outpatient care, surgeries, and clinical programs, in addition to the new Surrey Hospital being built in Cloverdale.
- More details on this expansion at SMH will be identified through the fall 2023 annual capital planning process, which will build from a refreshed clinical service plan for the hospital and region.
- While this work is being done, the Province and Fraser Health will implement other solutions to benefit health-care workers and patients in the short and medium term. Immediate actions include:
  - Working with hospitalists to stabilize their physician workforce and sufficient service levels to ensure continued access to inpatient medicine services, while also working to build out their capacity and establish a new contract.
  - Increasing funding available for additional physician coverage, nursing and allied health services including opening a care and triage unit in the Emergency Department.
  - Utilizing nearby community health-care services to relieve patient demand at the Emergency Department, including additional resources to expand hours of Urgent and Primary Care Centres.
  - Introduce an interdisciplinary team for Child Youth Mental Health for emergency care and staffing for paediatric emergency department.
  - Increasing the number of internal medicine positions to support admitted patients and build out an internal medicine clinical teaching unit to support recruitment.
  - Increasing capacity in outpatient and community services to discharge patients safely 24/7.
  - Focusing on psychological and physical health and safety of staff by augmenting available counselling services on-site for medical and health-care staff and continuing with hiring of additional relational security officers.
  - Funding for additional workforce such as clinical associates, associate physicians and nurse practitioners.
  - Targeted international recruitment of medical and health-care staff.

- The Ministry of Health and Fraser Health are also actively engaging with medical staff and staff from the Family Birthing Unit at SMH to ensure that it continues to serve as the highest tier of services for maternity and women’s health care at the hospital. This will involve:
  - adding more support for the care teams;
  - expanding access to operating rooms; and
  - increasing the infrastructure for maternity, paediatrics, and women’s health in the longer term.
- In the medium term, the Ministry of Health will work closely with Fraser Health including medical staff, nurses and allied health professionals to refresh clinical service planning.
- The plan will determine how and where services should be delivered in the Surrey and the broader region. The plan for SMH will include:
  - Building more renal services within 18 months.
  - Building a second interventional radiology suite at Surrey Memorial Hospital which will enable stroke and cardiac specialty expansion.
  - Adding two Cardiac Catheterization Labs at Surrey Memorial Hospital
  - Adding net new MRI and CT and replacing existing CT with cardiac capabilities to increase access to diagnostic services.
  - Completing renovations of existing Operating Rooms to expand capacity.
  - Expanding critical health-care services such as outpatient, home health and home support services, clinical social work, physiotherapy, rehabilitation and respiratory therapy.
  - Expand the Urgent Care Response Centre and Gateway Mental Health services to 12 hours seven days a week
  - Renovation to the paediatric emergency waiting areas
  - Increased access to transitional beds for our vulnerable patient populations by purchasing new care spaces.
  - Building out innovative and digital services such as Hospital at Home, Digital Front Door and virtual specialty consult services.
  - Significantly increasing resident physician allocation at Fraser Health and including Surrey Memorial Hospital as their “home residency” sites
  - Enhancing Fraser Health’s successful in-house learning institute to close critical gaps on allied staff and nursing.

## **Q2. Why are you doing this?**

- We know that there are many concerns about capacity challenges at Surrey Memorial Hospital.
- The population of BC is overall getting larger, but there has been a significant growth in Surrey's population.
- Fraser Health services are having to meet the demands of this growth in Surrey across its regional hospitals and specifically at Surrey Memorial Hospital which has seen:
  - Increase growth in volume;
  - Increased complexity of disease in the patients they serve;
  - Increased social and financial issues for more vulnerable patient populations which are complex to address at same time as addressing health concerns and appropriate referral services (including living/housing options); and
  - Increased care for newcomers and providing additional health and social supports.
- This has led to patients and staff experiencing chronic issues as they deal with congestion and very high daily volumes across Surrey Memorial Hospital.
- That's why Adrian Dix, Minister of Health, Stephen Brown, Deputy Minister of Health, Jim Sinclair, board chair of Fraser Health, Dr. Victoria Lee, CEO of Fraser Health met with staff from various departments at SMH to listen to concerns and work on solutions.
- People in B.C. deserve to have access to quality health-care services when they need them, close to home. Investing in Surrey is helping to ensure that people living in the Lower Mainland have access to needed health services in their community.

## **Q3. What other actions are you taking to support Surrey?**

- Today's announcement builds on other actions we are taking to improve health services for people in Surrey such as:
  - opening more long-term care homes,
  - assessing the capacity of other hospitals across the Surrey region,

- Build out more capacity to take care of acquired brain injury patients and vulnerable populations in terms of both transitional and long-term care.
- Complete the new Surrey Hospital and Cancer Centre and the second medical school.
- Since 2017, we've made significant investments to benefit people living in Surrey, the surrounding regions and around the province to address these very issues.
- We invested over \$60 million in the Surrey Memorial Hospital since 2017 to support capital investments, including lab expansion and interventional radiology equipment upgrades.
- In additional, through Fraser Health we have funded:
  - 14 more in-patient medical beds;
  - Five more intensive care unit beds; and
  - Five more mental health and substance use beds.
- For example, in 2020, we opened a new Mental Health and Substance Use Urgent Care Response Centre at Surrey Memorial Hospital.
- It is an important part of our coordinated approach to help people struggling with mental health and substance use challenges in the region.
- We are upskilling pediatric nurses in the Surrey Memorial Hospital to be able to manage higher acuity pediatric patients...
- And we are continuing to seek out opportunities to best support the population in Surrey, however, our system doesn't operate exclusively within municipal boundaries.
- We are a network of hospitals, clinics, regional services, and providers who traverse municipal boundaries.

#### **Q4. What are the short term solutions for Surrey?**

- The Province and Fraser Health will work with medical and health-care staff to increase flow through hospital from Emergency Department (ED) to in-patient to discharge through:
  - Increasing and enhancing current Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) structure and existing bed management strategies to support flow.
  - Adjusting clinical services provided by hospitalists in line with their current service capacity while we work with them on recruitment challenges.



- Fraser Health is working with the hospitalists at SMH and across the region to establish their current clinical capacity to meet patient needs and their recruitment and retention challenges. Where there is a gap between hospitalist capacity and patient demand, short term stabilization plans are being developed this week, focussed on using General Internal Medicine Specialists, Clinical Associates and/or Family Physicians providing in-patient care, to supports the work done by Hospitalists.
  - The stabilization plans are intended to be short term supports while the Ministry of Health, Fraser Health and the Hospitalists work collaboratively together to develop a refreshed provincial contract framework over the next six months.
- Providing funding available for additional physician coverage and services to better support patient including opening an in-patient transition unit in the Emergency Department
- Utilizing nearby health care services to relieve patient demand at Emergency Department
  - Increase the capacity of nearby UPCCs to meet more lower acuity patients to take release pressure from ED. Work has already been undertaken to add capacity at Surrey UPCC – allowing more physicians to work at the UPCC full-time.
  - Effective and immediate triage for more frail older patients and mental health/substance use patients with immediate collaboration with home health services and mental health/addictions community services.
  - This could potentially provide care for up to 100 patients daily away from ED to alleviate hospital pressure.
- Increasing additional clinical capacity to support patient care and flow by building out critical health-care supports including, diagnostics, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, respiratory therapy and clinical social work, along with more effective and timely referrals to community services.
- Building out capacity of the Surrey Memorial Family Birth Unit, through several specific actions including:
  - Introduce a centralized registration system for patients throughout the Fraser Health Authority to gain a comprehensive understanding of patient demographics within the system.
  - Provide immediate funding for beds and staffing in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit pod to accommodate maternity and paediatric patients.
  - Implement a midwifery-led early patient discharge program to create bed space and improve longitudinal patient care upon hospital discharge.
  - Expand maternity resources, including specialty nursing roles such as Clinical Nurse Educators (CNEs), Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNSs), and charge nurses for maternity, to enhance nurse support, recruitment and retention.

- Regional/provincial planning in partnership with Perinatal Services BC (PSBC) to better position the FBU to meet current and future demand.
- Finish renovations of ORs to expand surgical capacity.
- Enhance patient care supports to provide physical, emotional, and cultural care in the context of high volume and wait-times. Increase the number of personal support workers and clinical social workers to better support patients and reduce pressure on existing health-care workers.
- Focus on psychological and physical safety of staff by:
  - Implementing the relational security staffing plan to enhance the safety of staff and adequate perimeter security.
  - Continuing focus on building out violence prevention training.
  - Implementing on-site access to counselling (same-day in-person and virtual drop-in and
  - Increasing “de-briefing” service for Fraser Health Staff after a traumatic incident

## **Q5. What are the medium and long term solutions for Surrey?**

### **Clinical Service planning**

- Fraser Health board and senior executive will be engaging more fully with the Surrey Fraser Health team, including doctors, nurses and allied health professionals, to create a refreshed plan that looks at the growth and specialty needs of the population, as well as how and where services should be located at SMH and across the region.
- This will be done over the coming five months and be brought to the Minister of Health for review and action through the annual fall 2023 capital and operating planning process.
- In the meantime, the Minister of Health directs immediate planning to start for:
  - Renal Services: increasing capacity to meet patient demand with more physical space through additional modular units for completion within 18 months.
  - Interventional Radiology (IR): increasing capacity IR capacity at Surrey. At the same time, increasing access through other sites.
  - Cath-lab and Cardiology services: The Province will be creating a plan for a cardiac cath-lab (two suites and ancillary space) for completion within 18 months.
  - Adding net new MRI and CT and replacing existing CT with cardiac capabilities to increase access to diagnostic services
  - Expand critical health care services and resources (occupational therapy, physiotherapy, respiratory therapy, mental health and substance use services, and clinical social worker services)
  - Developing additional transition beds for hard to serve populations.
  - Building out Hospital at Home services

## Maternity Care

- In partnership with provincial and regional colleagues, Fraser Health will be working to add providers to the teams for maternity care and determine the right size for the current and future unit. This will involve:
  - Expanding maternity resources, including specialty nursing clinical pharmacy, quality improvement initiatives, and data collection at Surrey.
  - Improving utilization and where necessary expand available OR time for gynaecology by optimizing existing OR time at Surrey Memorial Hospital, Jim Pattison Outpatient Care and Surgery Centre, and other Fraser South acute care sites to meet provincial wait time benchmarks.
  - Expanding infrastructure for maternity, paediatric, and women's health at Surrey.

## Hospital expansion

- Planning work to expand the existing Surrey Memorial Hospital by improving and increasing capacity for more inpatient and outpatient care, surgeries, and clinical programs, in addition to the new Surrey Hospital being built in Cloverdale.
- More details on this expansion at SMH will be identified through the fall 2023 annual capital planning process, which will build from a refreshed clinical service plan for the hospital and region.

## Q6. What are the timelines for all of these actions?

- Some of the immediate actions are already underway, while the others, and the medium term actions will take place over the next five to 18 months.
- Specifically, the following infrastructure actions are to be completed in the next 18 months:
  - Additional renal capacity
  - Another IR suite
  - Two new cath labs
  - Improving utilization and where necessary expanding available OR time for gynaecology by optimizing existing OR time at Surrey Memorial Hospital, Jim Pattison Outpatient Care and Surgery Centre, and other Fraser South acute care sites to meet provincial wait time benchmarks.
  - Expanding infrastructure for maternity, paediatric, and women's health at Surrey Memorial.
  - Net new cardiac MRI and CT to improve patient flow
  - Transitional beds to help people leave the hospital safely when they no longer need to be in the hospital, but require support for their day-to-day lives in the community.
  -

**Q7. How are we recruiting sufficient new staff to be able to provide additional services?**

The Health Human Resources Strategy launched by the government at the end of 2022 lays out specific goals based on the current and forecast population demand.

The Ministry will be working with Fraser Health on Health Human Resources planning at Surrey Memorial specifically. This will involve targeted recruitment, from the local to international level, for positions experiencing some of the highest vacancies and barriers to recruitment.

**Q8. Will this help resolve staffing shortages in Fraser Health hospitals emergency departments?**

- Fraser Health's emergency departments remain open and are accepting patients.
- People should not hesitate to go to the emergency department if they have emergent health concerns.
- While at the same time, people are encouraged to only go to the ED if their concerns are an emergency, and otherwise use more appropriate services like a UPCC, walk-in clinic, or 8-1-1.

**Q9. How will these actions improve services for patients?**

- A stronger, better-supported workforce will be better prepared to deliver high-quality health-care services to patients.
- As we recruit and train more health-care workers, patients in Surrey and around B.C. will be able to access the care they need faster, and close to home.
- Expanded facilities will allow our health-care workers to serve more patients within benchmark waiting times.

**Q10. How will you evaluate if Fraser Health is making progress on these goals?**

- The Ministry of Health will work closely with Fraser Health to monitor progress.
- We are going to work closely with Fraser Health to provide support and guidance, to ensure that the actions are carried out and we deliver results for people.

**Q11. Why did it take so long to take action? These problems have been going on for a long time.**

- We understand that Surrey Memorial has been experiencing challenges for some time.
- Though work has been ongoing to improve the delivery of health care and working conditions for health-care workers around the province, we know that more immediate action was needed to address the specific challenges at Surrey Memorial.
- We wanted to make sure that any solutions had the input and consultation of the staff at Surrey Memorial, to ensure that their voices and lived experiences were central to the path forward.
- Now that we have met with workers from Surrey Memorial, we have created a plan that will help alleviate some of the immediate pressures in the short term, and work to increase capacity and make more long-term changes for the future.

**Q12. What about other hospitals around the province? Are you going to take the same actions to help them?**

- We know that Surrey Memorial Hospital is not the only hospital in B.C. experiencing high patient volumes, staffing challenges, and increasing demand for services, including specialized services like cardiac and maternity care. While at the same time, Surrey Memorial is experience unique challenges that warrant this action, like the speedy growth of the population and its complexity in health-care needs.
- Over the summer, we will meet with other hospitals to develop specific plans to help them address their challenges, in the same way today's announcement tackles the challenges specific to Surrey Memorial and the wider region it serves.
- This process will start by identifying the hospitals most in need of interventions and actions to tackle the patient volumes.
- We will share more news in the coming months.

**Q13. What was discussed during the consultations?**

- During the meetings between June 1st and 6th, 2023, health-care providers raised several key concerns while also a strong professional and personal commitment to the community and patients, especially throughout the pandemic, but also as they are now dealing with significant increase in demand for services, staffing challenges and hospital space.

1. Patients and staff are dealing with chronic congestion and very high daily volumes across key areas of the hospital:
  - Waits have become longer than desirable in the emergency room, while waiting for a bed and to be discharged either home or to other sites or services. Staff are reporting growing levels of aggression, increased levels of stress and concerns about staff's ability to meet demand.
  - The hospitalist team is feeling stress faced with significant demands, capacity issues and challenges in recruitment.
  - Maternity care has experienced significant periods of demand exceeding their physical capacity creating high levels of stress for patients and providers.
  - Other areas of hospital services are also facing high demand and stress with the need for more capacity.
2. Increased complexity through the changing demographics and growing population in Surrey:
  - While there are very strong existing specialties services providing care, there is a need for increased capacity and additional specialty service including for:
    - Renal and renal dialysis.
    - Maternity care is operating at the highest accessed level, but there is a need for increased capacity.
    - Neurology (stroke care)
    - Surgeries from the existing OR infrastructure
    - New speciality services are needed, including:
      - Interventional radiology
      - Onsite cath-lab capacity for cardiac care
      - Cardiac MRI and CT to improve patient flow
  - Discharging patients when they no longer need hospital care. This is caused by challenges with:
    - Community-based mental health and substance-use services
    - Long-term care spaces
    - Services for patients with Acquired Brain Injury and cognitive challenges combined with behavioural and addiction challenges
    - Services for individuals in vulnerable living situations or experiencing homelessness.
3. Specific HHR challenges for Surrey include:
  - Need for additional residency program slots in Fraser Health
  - Nurse recruitment has been successful in many ways, but additional clinical support available to newer nurses is required.
  - Allied health staff dealing with a significant volume increase that are outstretching capacity.
  - The volumes, demand and capacity are making retention more challenging.



SPEAKING POINTS FOR

**Adrian Dix**

Minister of Health

**Supporting health-care workers and patients at  
Surrey Memorial Hospital**

Surrey Memorial Hospital  
Critical care tower lobby  
13750 96 Ave.  
Surrey

June 7, 2023  
12:30 p.m. – 1 p.m.

**12:30 p.m. (speech)**

**CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**



**Event Profile:**

Press conference providing an update on what Government is doing and will do to better support health-care workers and patients at Surrey Memorial Hospital

**Audience:**

Health-care workers at SMH, people living in Surrey, Fraser Health, media

**Event Details:**

Event will be in the lobby of the critical care tower. A parking spot will be available for Minister Dix.

**Event Contact:**

Sasha Hayden – GCPE Events – 604 202 8613

## **INTRODUCTION**

- Hi everyone and thank you for being here today.
- First, I would like to take time to acknowledge the Coast Salish peoples, whose relationship with the land continues to this day.
- It is always a great privilege to be a guest on their territories.

**[Minister to acknowledge other audience members as appropriate]**

## **What We've Heard**

- I'm grateful to be here at Surrey Memorial Hospital today for today's announcement.
- We know that B.C.'s health-care system is strained.

- This is both a direct and indirect result of a number of circumstances, including multiple public health emergencies in recent years such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the toxic drug crisis and multiple extreme climate crises, which resulted in staffing challenges in our health-care system.
- We're also experiencing significant population growth in B.C., especially right here in Surrey.
- In fact, Surrey is growing at a rate of 9.7% annual.
- As more people are moving to Surrey, the population of Surrey is also changing and we're having people with different and more complex health needs.

- Throughout all of these challenges, our health-care workers have continued to provide quality care for their patients, but they need more support and patients need better access to care.
- I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all those who took the time to meet with and write to me to raise their concerns.
- What we've learned from you have been very insightful, inspiring and incredibly helpful in getting to some of the actions we'll be sharing today.
- We've heard of the impact of dealing with chronic congestion and very high daily volumes at the hospital, significant over capacity situations, caring for patients with more complex needs, which leads to the need for more sub-specialists, delays in

discharging patients and staffing and recruitment challenges.

- This is leaving patients and hospital staff struggling with chronic issues.
- Hospital workers are feeling burnt out and we've even heard of instances of patients showing aggressions because of the accumulated stress and frustrations.
- Yet through it all, health-care workers here at Surrey Memorial Hospital remain fully dedicated to their patients and show up everyday to give them the best possible care.
- These issues are real, and they need real, meaningful solutions.

- We know that other hospitals throughout the province are facing similar challenges with a growing population and staffing shortages...
- That is why we're also going to meet with these hospitals in the summer to find solutions that work for them, and they may include actions that we're taking here at Surrey Memorial.
- Although B.C.'s Health Human Resources Strategy is producing results, they are not fast enough, and we need to do more.
- Which brings us to today's announcement.

## **ANNOUNCEMENT**

- Together with Fraser Health including doctors, nurses, allied health professionals, and staff from

across Surrey Memorial and the region, we identified short-term, medium-term and long-term actions.

- In fact, what we're announcing today builds on consultations with staff at Surrey Memorial Hospital, with myself, Stephen Brown, Deputy Minister of Health, Jim Sinclair, Board Chair of Fraser Dr Victoria Lee, CEO of Fraser Health, Health, and staff from various hospital departments.
- To meet the growing demand for health services in Surrey and to bolster Surrey Memorial Hospital's function as a major hospital in the region, we will be expanding the existing Surrey Memorial by improving and increasing capacity for more in-

patient and out-patient care, surgeries, and clinical programs.

- More details on this expansion will be identified through the fall 2023 annual capital planning process, which builds from a refreshed clinical service plan for the hospital and region.
- In the meantime, the Minister of Health directs immediate planning to start for:
  - Renal Services: increasing capacity to meet patient demand with more physical space through additional modular units for completion within 18 months.
  - Interventional Radiology (IR): increasing capacity IR capacity at Surrey. At the same time, increasing access through other sites.



- Cath-lab and Cardiology services:. We will be creating a plan for a cardiac cath-lab (two suites and ancillary space) for completion within 18 months.
- Adding net new MRI and CT and replacing existing CT with cardiac capabilities to increase access to diagnostic services
- Expand critical health care services and resources (occupational therapy, physiotherapy, respiratory therapy, mental health and substance use services, and clinical social worker services)
- Developing additional transition beds for hard to serve populations.
- Building out Hospital at Home services

- While this work is being done, more immediate actions are already underway, including:
  - Working with hospitalists to stabilize their physician workforce to ensure continued access to inpatient medicine services, while also working to establish a new contract.
  - Increasing funding available for additional physician coverage, nursing and allied health services including opening a care and triage unit in the Emergency Department
  - Utilizing nearby community health-care services to relieve patient demand at Emergency Department, including additional resources to expand hours of Urgent and Primary Care Centres.

- Introducing an interdisciplinary team for Child Youth Mental Health for emergency care and staffing for paediatric emergency department.
- Increasing the number of internal medicine positions to support admitted patients and build out an internal medicine clinical teaching unit to support recruitment.
- Increasing capacity in outpatient and community services to discharge patients safely 24/7.
- Focusing on psychological and physical health and safety of staff by augmenting available counselling services on-site for medical and health-care staff and continuing with hiring of additional relational security officers.

- Funding for additional workforce such as clinical associates, associate physicians and nurse practitioners.
- Targeted international recruitment of medical and health-care staff.
- Other medium term solutions include:
  - Completing renovations of existing Operating Rooms to expand capacity.
  - Expand the Urgent Care Response Centre and Gateway Mental Health services to 12 hours seven days a week.
  - Renovation to the paediatric emergency waiting areas.

- Significantly increasing resident physician allocation at Fraser Health and including Surrey Memorial Hospital as their “home residency” sites
- Enhancing Fraser Health’s successful in-house learning institute to close critical gaps on allied staff and nursing.

## **BIG PICTURE**

- Today’s announcement builds on other actions we are taking to improve health services for people in Surrey such as:
  - opening more long-term care homes,
  - assessing the capacity of other hospitals across the Surrey region,

- Build out more capacity to take care of acquired brain injury patients and vulnerable populations in terms of both transitional and long-term care.
- Complete the new Surrey Hospital and Cancer Centre and the second medical school.
- Since 2017, we've made significant investments to benefit people living in Surrey, the surrounding regions and around the province to address these very issues.
- We invested over \$60 million in the Surrey Memorial Hospital since 2017 to support capital investments, including lab expansion and interventional radiology equipment upgrades.
- In addition, through Fraser Health we have funded:

- 14 more in-patient medical beds;
  - Five more intensive care unit beds; and
  - Five more mental health and substance use beds.
- For example, in 2020, we opened a new Mental Health and Substance Use Urgent Care Response Centre at Surrey Memorial Hospital.
  - It is an important part of our coordinated approach to help people struggling with mental health and substance use challenges in the region.
  - We are upskilling pediatric nurses in the Surrey Memorial Hospital to be able to manage higher acuity pediatric patients...

- And we are continuing to seek out opportunities to best support the population in Surrey, however, our system doesn't operate exclusively within municipal boundaries.
- We are a network of hospitals, clinics, regional services, and providers who traverse municipal boundaries.

## **CONCLUSION**

- Our work today does not stop here.
- We know that other hospitals in the province are also struggling, and we will continue to work with health-care providers at SMH and around the province to ensure B.C.'s health system is the best it can be.



- Thank you very much.

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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release  
2023HLTH0081-000894  
June 7, 2023

Ministry of Health

### **Collective efforts to better support patients, health-care workers in Surrey**

SURREY – The Province and Fraser Health are taking action to improve access to health care for people in Surrey by providing immediate assistance with further help available in the coming months and planning underway to expand the hospital.

From June 1-6, 2023, Adrian Dix, Minister of Health; Stephen Brown, deputy minister of health; Jim Sinclair, board chair of Fraser Health; and Dr. Victoria Lee, CEO of Fraser Health, met with staff from various departments at SMH to listen to concerns and work on solutions.

“I’m grateful for the many health-care workers at Surrey Memorial Hospital who have raised their concerns to me, including the hard-working people who have taken time out of their day over the past week to speak with me,” said Dix. “Along with Fraser Health, we are all working together on real, meaningful solutions to improve hospital flow and ensure health-care workers are fully supported in providing their patients with the best possible care. This includes a plan to expand the hospital to better meet the need of this growing community. We’re going to keep working with health-care providers in Surrey and across the province to strengthen the care people need.”

B.C.’s population is growing and changing, especially in Surrey. As more people move to Surrey, health services need to keep up with the significantly growing demand. To bolster SMH’s function as a tertiary hospital, the Province and Fraser Health are outlining specific actions, including planning work to expand the existing Surrey Memorial Hospital by improving and increasing capacity for more inpatient and outpatient care, surgeries and clinical programs, in addition to the new Surrey hospital being built in Cloverdale.

More details about this expansion at SMH will be identified through the fall 2023 annual capital planning process, which will build upon a refreshed clinical service plan for the hospital and region.

While this work is being done, the Province and Fraser Health will implement other solutions to benefit health-care workers and patients in the short and medium term.

Immediate actions include:

- working with hospitalists to stabilize their physician workforce and sufficient service levels to ensure continued access to inpatient medicine services, while also working to build out their capacity and establish a new contract;
- increasing funding available for additional physician coverage, nursing and allied-health services, including opening a care and triage unit in the emergency department;
- utilizing nearby community health-care services to relieve patient demand at the emergency department, including additional resources to expand hours of urgent and

- primary-care centres;
- introducing an interdisciplinary team for child and youth mental health for emergency care and staffing for the pediatric emergency department;
- increasing the number of internal medicine positions to support admitted patients and build out an internal medicine clinical teaching unit to support recruitment;
- increasing capacity in outpatient and community services to discharge patients safely 24 hours, seven days a week;
- focusing on psychological and physical health and safety of staff by augmenting available counselling services on site and continuing to hire additional relational security officers;
- funding for additional workforce, such as clinical associates, associate physicians and nurse practitioners; and
- targeted international recruitment of medical and health-care staff.

The Ministry of Health and Fraser Health are also actively engaging with medical staff and staff from the Family Birthing Unit at SMH to ensure that it continues to serve as the highest tier of services for maternity and women's health care at the hospital. This will involve adding more support for the care teams, expanding access to operating rooms and increasing the infrastructure for maternity, pediatrics and women's health in the longer term.

In the medium term, the Ministry of Health will work closely with Fraser Health, including medical staff, nurses and allied health professionals, to refresh clinical service planning. The plan will determine how and where services should be delivered in Surrey and the broader region. The plan for SMH will include:

- expanding renal services within 18 months;
- building a second interventional radiology suite at Surrey Memorial Hospital, which will enable stroke and cardiac specialty expansion;
- adding two cardiac catheterization labs at Surrey Memorial Hospital;
- adding new MRI and CT and replacing existing CT with cardiac capabilities to increase access to diagnostic services;
- completing renovations of existing operating rooms to expand capacity;
- expanding critical health-care services such as outpatient, home health and home support services, clinical social work, physiotherapy, rehabilitation and respiratory therapy;
- expanding the Urgent Care Response Centre and Gateway Mental Health services to 12 hours, seven days a week;
- renovation to the pediatric emergency waiting areas;
- increased access to transitional beds for vulnerable patient populations by purchasing new care spaces;
- building out innovative and digital services such as Hospital at Home, Digital Front Door and virtual specialty consultation services;
- significantly increasing resident physician allocation at Fraser Health and including Surrey Memorial Hospital as their home residency sites; and
- enhancing Fraser Health's successful in-house learning institute to close critical gaps in allied staff and nursing.

The Province and Fraser Health will continue working with SMH and staff to find solutions that will support providing quality care to patients in Surrey.

Four backgrounders follow.

**Contact:**

Ministry of Health  
Communications  
250 952-1887 (media line)

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## BACKGROUNDER 1

For Immediate Release  
2023HLTH0081-000894  
June 7, 2023

Ministry of Health

### **Quick facts about Surrey**

The population of B.C. is overall getting larger, but there has been a significant growth in the population of Surrey:

- Growth in population:
  - Surrey has been growing at a rate of 9.7% annually.
  - It is estimated that approximately 1,000 new residents are moving to Surrey each month.
  - Based on recent growth rates, the estimated population of Surrey is thought to be more than 600,000.
- With growth, Surrey also faces other challenges linked to growth in the number of homeless people and the drug toxicity crisis.

Fraser Health services are having to meet the demands of this growth in Surrey across its regional hospitals and specifically at Surrey Memorial Hospital which has seen:

- increased growth in volume;
- increased complexity of disease in the patients they serve;
- increased social and financial issues for more vulnerable patient populations, which are complex to address at the same time as addressing health concerns and appropriate referral services (including living/housing options); and
- increased care for newcomers and providing additional health and social supports.

### **Contact:**

Ministry of Health  
Communications  
250 952-1887 (media line)

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## BACKGROUND 2

For Immediate Release

2023HLTH0081-000894

June 7, 2023

Ministry of Health

### **Summary of issues raised by health-care workers at Surrey Memorial Hospital**

During the meetings between June 1 and 6, 2023, health-care providers raised several key concerns while also expressing a strong professional and personal commitment to the community and patients, especially throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. They are also dealing with a significant increase in demand for services, staffing challenges and hospital space.

1. Patients and staff are dealing with chronic congestion and very high daily volumes across key areas of the hospital:

- Waits have become longer than desirable in the emergency room, while waiting for a bed and to be discharged either home or to other sites or services. Staff are reporting growing levels of aggression, increased levels of stress and concerns about staff's ability to meet demand.
- The hospitalist team is feeling stress faced with significant demands, capacity issues and challenges in recruitment.
- Maternity care has experienced significant periods of demand exceeding physical capacity and creating high levels of stress for patients and providers.
- Other areas of hospital services are also facing high demand and stress with the need for more capacity.

2. Increased complexity through the changing demographics and growing population in Surrey:

- While there are very strong existing specialties services providing care, there is a need for increased capacity and additional specialty service including:
  - renal and renal dialysis;
  - maternity care is operating at the highest accessed level, but there is a need for increased capacity;
  - neurology (stroke care);
  - surgeries from the existing operating room infrastructure edits; and
  - new speciality services are needed, including: interventional radiology, on-site catheterization lab capacity for cardiac care, cardiac MRI and CT to improve patient flow.
- Discharging patients when they no longer need hospital care. This is caused by challenges with:
  - community-based mental-health and substance-use services;
  - long-term care spaces;
  - services for patients with an acquired brain injury and cognitive challenges combined with behavioural and addiction challenges; and
  - services for individuals in vulnerable living situations or experiencing homelessness.

3. Specific health and human resources challenges for Surrey include:

- need for additional residency program slots in Fraser Health;
- nurse recruitment has been successful in many ways, but additional clinical support available to newer nurses is required;
- allied health staff dealing with a significant volume increase that are outstretching capacity; and
- volumes, demand and capacity are making retention more challenging.

**Contact:**

Ministry of Health  
Communications  
250 952-1887 (media line)

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## BACKGROUND 3

For Immediate Release  
2023HLTH0081-000894  
June 7, 2023

Ministry of Health

### **Summary of short-term actions**

The Province and Fraser Health will work with medical and health-care staff to increase flow through hospital from emergency department (ED) to in-patient to discharge through:

- Building and enhancing current Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) structure and existing bed management strategies to support flow.
- Adjusting clinical services provided by hospitalists in line with their current service capacity while we work with them on recruitment challenges.
  - Fraser Health is working with the hospitalists at SMH and across the region to establish their current clinical capacity to meet patient needs and their recruitment and retention challenges. Where there is a gap between hospitalist capacity and patient demand, short-term stabilization plans are being developed in early June 2023 focused on using general internal medicine specialists, clinical associates and/or family physicians providing in-patient care, to support the work done by hospitalists.
  - The stabilization plans are intended to be short-term supports while the Ministry of Health, Fraser Health and the hospitalists work collaboratively to develop a refreshed provincial contract framework over the next six months.
- Providing funding available for additional physician coverage and services to better support patients, including opening an in-patient transition unit in the ED.
- Utilizing nearby health-care services to relieve patient demand at the ED.
  - Increase the capacity of nearby urgent and primary care centres (UPCC) to meet lower acuity patients to take release pressure from ED.
  - Work has already been undertaken to add capacity at Surrey UPCC allowing more physicians to work at the UPCC full-time.
  - This could potentially provide care for up to 100 patients daily away from ED to alleviate hospital pressure.
  - Effective and immediate triage for more frail older patients and mental health and substance use patients with immediate collaboration with home-health services and mental health and addictions community services.
- Increasing additional clinical capacity to support patient care and flow by building out critical health-care supports, including, diagnostics, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, respiratory therapy and clinical social work, along with more effective and timely referrals to community services.

Building out capacity of the Surrey Memorial Family Birth Unit, through several specific actions including:

- introducing a centralized registration system for patients throughout Fraser Health to



- gain a comprehensive understanding of patient demographics within the system;
- providing immediate funding for beds and staffing in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit to accommodate maternity and pediatric patients;
- implementing a midwifery-led early patient discharge program to create bed space and improve longitudinal patient care upon hospital discharge;
- expand maternity resources, including specialty nursing roles such as clinical nurse educators (CNEs), clinical nurse specialists (CNSs) and charge nurses for maternity to enhance nurse support, recruitment and retention;
- regional and provincial planning in partnership with Perinatal Services BC (PSBC) to better position the Family Birthing Unit to meet current and future demand;
- finish renovations of operating rooms to expand surgical capacity;
- enhance patient care supports to provide physical, emotional and cultural care in the context of high volume and wait-times.
- increase the number of personal support workers and clinical social workers to better support patients and reduce pressure on existing health-care workers;
- focus on psychological and physical safety of staff by:
  - implementing the relational security staffing plan to enhance the safety of staff and adequate perimeter security;
  - continuing focus on building out violence prevention training;
  - implementing on-site access to counselling (same-day in-person and virtual drop-in); and
  - increasing debriefing service for Fraser Health staff after a traumatic incident.

**Contact:**

Ministry of Health  
Communications  
250 952-1887 (media line)

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## BACKGROUND 4

For Immediate Release  
2023HLTH0081-000894  
June 7, 2023

Ministry of Health

### **Summary of medium-term actions**

#### **Clinical service planning**

Fraser Health board and senior executive will be engaging fully with the Surrey Fraser Health team, including doctors, nurses and allied-health professionals, to create a refreshed plan that looks at the growth and specialty needs of the population, as well as how and where services should be located at SMH and across the region.

This will be done over the coming five months and be brought to the Ministry of Health for review and action through the annual fall 2023 capital and operating planning process.

In the meantime, the Ministry of Health directs immediate planning to start for:

- Renal services: Increasing capacity to meet patient demand with more physical space through additional modular units for completion within 18 months.
- Interventional Radiology (IR): Increasing capacity at SMH, while increasing access through other sites.
- Catheterization lab and cardiology services: The Province will be creating a plan for a cardiac catheterization lab (two suites and ancillary space) for completion within 18 months.
- Adding net new MRI and CT and replacing existing CT with cardiac capabilities to increase access to diagnostic services.
- Expand critical health-care services and resources (occupational therapy, physiotherapy, respiratory therapy, mental-health and substance-use services, and clinical social worker services).
- Developing additional transition beds for hard to serve populations.
- Building out Hospital at Home services.

#### **Maternity care**

In partnership with provincial and regional colleagues, Fraser Health will be working to add providers to the teams for maternity care and determine the right size for the current and future unit. This will involve:

- expanding maternity resources, including specialty nursing clinical pharmacy, quality improvement initiatives, and data collection at SMH;
- improving utilization and, where necessary, expand available operating room time for gynecology by optimizing existing operating room time at Surrey Memorial Hospital, Jim Pattison Outpatient Care and Surgery Centre, and other Fraser South acute care sites to meet provincial wait-time benchmarks; and
- expanding infrastructure for maternity, pediatric and women's health at SMH.

**Contact:**

Ministry of Health  
Communications  
250 952-1887 (media line)

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# Taking Action in Surrey

## Technical Briefing:

What we heard and what we're doing in the short, medium and long term in Surrey and the Fraser South region

June 6, 2023

# Overview: What We Heard

- The population of BC is overall getting larger, but there has been a significant growth in Surrey's population.
- Fraser Health services are having to meet the demands of this growth in Surrey across its regional hospitals and specifically at Surrey Memorial Hospital.
- This has led to patients and staff experiencing chronic issues as they deal with congestion and very high daily volumes across Surrey Memorial Hospital.

# What We Heard: Growth in Population

- Growth in Population:
  - While Vancouver grew by approximately 5% per year since 2016, Surrey has been growing at a rate of 9.7%
  - It is estimated that approximately 1000 new people are moving to Surrey each month.
  - Based on recent growth rates the estimated current population of Surrey is thought to be over 1.2M people.
  - By 2030, the suburban city of Surrey is estimated to overtake Vancouver as the most populated city in the lower mainland and BC.
- Newcomers and diversity of population
- Surrey is seeing newcomers sometimes with chronic diseases that they did or may not have had opportunity to have treated in their home country or where they came from.
- With growth, Surrey also faces other challenges linked to growth in the number of homeless people and drug use.

# What We Heard: Demands at Surrey Memorial (SMH)

- Fraser Health services are having to meet the demands of this growth in Surrey across its regional hospitals and specifically at Surrey Memorial Hospital which has seen:
  - Increase growth in volume
  - Increased complexity of disease in the patients they serve
  - Increased social and financial issues for more vulnerable patient populations which are complex to address at same time as addressing health concerns and appropriate referral services (including living/housing options); and
  - Increased care for newcomers and providing additional health and social supports.

# What We Heard: Congestion & High Volume at SMH (overview)

1. Patients and staff are dealing with chronic congestion and very high daily volumes across key areas of the hospital.
2. Significant over capacity situations
3. Increased complexity
4. More complex patients means we need more additional subspecialist
5. Delays discharging patients when they no longer needing hospital care
6. Specific HHR challenges surrounding Surrey
7. Patient's frustration sometimes comes out as threats against staff and the changing demographic in the community leads to increased experiences of or witnessing of violent acts, and this has an effect on staff.



# What We Heard: Congestion & High Volume at SMH (1/6)

1. Patients and staff are dealing with chronic congestion and very high daily volumes across key areas of the hospital:

- For patients, this means:
  - Waits have become longer than desirable in the ER, while waiting for a bed and even to be discharged either home or to other sites or services.
  - This has led to understandable frustration, increasing levels of aggressions, and instances of violence.
  - Maternity care has experienced significant periods of demand exceeding their physical capacity and creating high levels of stress for patients.
  - Other key clinical services such as Occupational Therapy, Physio-therapy, Respiratory Therapy and Renal Care are all facing significant demand.
- For physicians and staff, this means:
  - Significant levels of stress and professional concern about their capacity to meet demand.
  - Strong professional and personal commitment to the community and patients.
  - They went above and beyond during COVID, but are now dealing with a sustained significant increase in demand for services, that is exacerbated by health human resource challenges and limitation of hospital space.

# What We Heard: Congestion & High Volume at SMH (2/6)

## 2. Significant over capacity situations

- This is caused by:
  - Sustained increased volumes of patients in the ED
  - Staffing challenges for the hospitalist program at SMH
- This has resulted in:
  - Admitted patients remaining in the ED for long hours and in some instances multiple days before being admitted to an inpatient bed.
  - Sustained increased pressure on the ED to manage long multiple hour waits to be seen by a physician and nurse for non-urgent care patients.

# What We Heard: Congestion & High Volume at SMH (3/6)

## 3. Increased complexity

- This is caused by:
  - Changing and growing population in Surrey requires
  - Royal Columbian Hospital has been a focus of growth in clinical services
- Therefore, we need:
  - Increased focus at Surrey Memorial Hospital across the continuum of services offered by physicians, nurses, and allied health professionals
  - Additional subspecialists physicians (next slide)

# What We Heard: Congestion & High Volume at SMH (4/6)

## 4. More complex patients means we need more additional subspecialists

- There are very strong existing specialties services providing care:
  - **Renal and Renal Dialysis** are doing a great job but simply not enough capacity to meet growth in demand.
  - **Maternity** has been correctly assessed to be at Tier 6, but there is a need for increased access to timely Obs/Gyn services.
  - **Thoracic Surgery** is strong, but beds access is often reduced to accommodate medical patients (need to check that as that was an assumption from comments)
  - **Neuro (stroke care) services** – need to expand capacity to meet population growth.
  - Continuing to build out **surgical capacity** from the existing OR infrastructure.
- There are other services (specialties) that are not yet at SMH but need to be to provide specialty and subspecialty services:
  - **Interventional radiology** is a “core” service that subspeciality and specialty care rely on
  - **On site Cath-lab capacity**
  - Increased access to **Cardiac MRI** to improve flow
  - **CT machine in Jim Pattison Outpatient Care Centre**

# What We Heard: Congestion & High Volume at SMH (5/6)

## 5. Delays discharging patients when they no longer needing hospital care

- This is caused by:
  - Lack of home health care capacity
  - Lack of community-based mental health and substance-use service capacity
  - Lack of long-term space availability
  - Special considerations linked to patients with Acquired Brain Injury and cognitive challenges combined with behavioural and addiction challenges
  - Staffing challenges for the hospitalist program at SMH
  - Individuals in vulnerable living situations or experiencing homelessness.

# What We Heard: Congestion & High Volume at SMH (6/6)

## 6. Specific HHR challenges surrounding Surrey

- Despite being large, there are fewer residency program slots available in FHA compared to Vancouver.
- Nurse recruitment has been successful in many ways but the experience-base and clinical support available to newer nurses is limited while they are caring for patients with greater medical and social complexity.
- Allied health staff dealing with a significant volume increase that is outstretching capacity.
- In the face of significant and sustained demand the staff are reporting experiencing professional and personal stress , burnout.
- These challenges are, of course, all making retention more difficult.

7. Patient's frustration sometimes comes out as threats against staff and the changing demographic in the community leads to increased experiences of or witnessing of violent acts, and this has an effect on staff.

# Overview: What We're Doing

1. Recognition

2. Short Term

3. Medium Term

4. Long Term

# What We're Doing: Recognition

Everyone, from people in community to government, needs to recognize the significant and specific demand and stress being currently faced by Surrey Memorial Hospital (SMH) against the backdrop of similar challenges at other large hospitals across the province.

That this is very real, and that action is needed to reduce that stress and better meet the demand in the short, medium and long term at SMH.

At Surrey Memorial specifically:

1. Hospitalist, general internal medicine, maternity care and OBGYN surgeons, nurses, and other health care workers at have all stepped up to help.
  - Each of these groups need different kinds of support to better meet the volume of demand. We will work with each to shape and implement actions.
2. We need to recognize the need to expand the number of the health care providers in several areas.
3. Hone in on our retention, recruitment (including trainees), and redesign to ensure more balanced workloads for staff.
4. Establish an effective process to facilitate dialogue between physician leadership, Fraser Health Executive, and the Ministry of Health that results in action.



# What We're Doing: Short Term Action (1/5)

1. Increase flow through hospital ED to In-Patient to Discharge:
  - Build and enhance current Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) to move patients throughout the hospital more quickly and efficiently.
    - Enhance and build out current on-site clinical management capacity to provide day, evening, and weekend support to SMH ED and In-Patient departments.
    - Implement a site-based plan for dealing with ED congestion linked to responsive patient diversion, transfer, and discharge action
    - Increase effective linkage between site level clinical management and FHA Executive and through to Ministry of Health to ensure awareness of critical capacity issues and rapid response and decision making to support appropriate patient care and flow in real time.

# What We're Doing: Short Term Action (2/5)

2. Work with hospitalist group to ensure clinical services are accurately based on current capacity in face of capacity and recruitment challenges.

- Actions:
  - Actively support hospitalist group to close gap through increased community family doctor in-patient support and expand out most-responsible provider (MRP) accountabilities to other specialists across SMH.
  - A stabilization framework has been tabled with hospitalists for consideration with commitment to work on a refreshed provincial contract framework to be developed with hospitalists over the coming six months.
  - Recognize that surgeons are already taking on MRP duties for exiting patients to help with patient monitoring/assessment in hospital.
  - Recruit more Nurse Practitioners to care for patients who could be discharged – mostly seniors - help to take pressure off hospitalists.
  - Continue increasing internal medicine positions
  - Clinical associates to take additional shifts (incremental benefit) – work in progress.

# What We're Doing: Short Term Action (3/5)

3. Increase ED capacity to deal with surges including extra ED physicians and NP capacity to over see admitted ED patients along with nursing and care-aide supports to meet the immediate physical and emotional needs of patients awaiting admission to an in-patient bed.

- Additional resources approved by MoH to increase the number of ER physicians on shift (additional FTE per shift) in emergency department.
- Fee-Code adjustments to provide additional compensation for doctors to recognize work in reassessments of patients.

4. Utilize nearby health care services to relieve patient demand at Emergency Department

- Increase the capacity of nearby UPCCs to meet more lower acuity patients to take release pressure from ED. Work has already been undertaken to add capacity at Surrey UPCC – allowing more physicians to work at the UPCC full-time
- Effective and immediate triage for more frail older patients and mental health/substance use patients with immediate collaboration with home health services and mental health/addictions community services.
- Could divert up to 100+ patients away from ED to alleviate hospital pressure.
- Reallocation of core physician residents for Fraser Health, including ED.

# What We're Doing: Short Term Action (4/5)

5. Add MRI to build out diagnostic imaging capacity with a specific focus on ensuring cardiac MRI to reduce length of stay of cardiac patients. Add a CT scanner at Jim Pattison Outpatient Care Centre (JPOCC)

6. Increase discharge capacity to 24/7 linked to increasing access to medical and critical health care supports in diagnostics, OT/PT, clinical SW along with more effective and timely linkages to community services.

- Build on work already underway to strengthen adult psychiatric services.
- Build out more capacity for hard to serve populations for patients with complex behavioral and addiction issues.

# What We're Doing: Short Term Action (5/5)

7. Complete renovations of Operating Rooms to expand capacity.

8. Enhanced patient “person” care to provide physical, emotional, and cultural care of patients in context of high volume and wait-times but also focus on psychological and physical health and safety of staff:

- Increase number of personal support workers and clinical social workers in high volume areas of SMH to better support patients and health care workers
- Implement the relational security staffing plan to enhance the safety of staff and adequate perimeter security.
- Implement on-site access to counselling and de-briefing services available to health care staff.
- “De-briefing” services available to health care staff.

# What We're Doing: Medium Term Action

## Clinical Service Planning:

- The needs of Surrey and the needs of Fraser Health are clearly changing, and we need to act.
- Fraser Health Board and Senior Executive team will continue engage more fully with Surrey Fraser Health team including:
  - Doctors
  - Nurses
  - Allied health.
- Engagement will be used to create a refreshed plan that looks not only at the growth and specialty needs of the population, but also how and where services should be located.
- Not every hospital in the Surrey/Delta area can or needs to have every service, but we recognize that there is a need for refreshed clinical services planning that reflects the community, specialty and subspecialty needs.
- This will be done over the coming five months and be brought to the Minister for review and action moving into 2024/25.

# What We're Doing: Medium Term Action

Specifically, the Minister directs immediate planning to commence for:

1. Renal and Renal Dialysis Services
  - a) Increased to meet patient demand, in partnership with BC Renal, with additional physical capacity
2. Interventional Radiology
  - a) Build IR capacity at Surrey.
  - b) While we do that, we need to increase access through other sites and support and add, if necessary, providers working at those sites.
3. Cardiology Services (including Cardiac Catheterization (“cath”) Lab)
  - a) Royal Columbian has been a great strength for interventional cardiology services in Fraser Health
  - b) The additional of “stand alone” cath labs in Surrey can complement what already exists and is being further developed already at Royal Columbian.
  - c) We, in conjunction with Cardiac Services BC, will start now to create a business case for cardiac cath lab at SMH
4. Increasing access to diagnostics and critical auxiliary health care services (OT, PT, RT, mental health and substance use services, clinical SW)
5. Access to additional transitional beds to help move hard to serve populations who are ready to be discharged
6. Building out Hospital at Home services

# What We're Doing: Medium Term Action (Maternity 1/2)

1. Expand tertiary maternity resources, including:
  1. Specialty nursing
  2. Clinical pharmacy
  3. Quality improvement initiatives including Data Collection
2. Expand available operating room (OR) time for gynecology to meet provincial wait time benchmarks without negatively impacting other surgical divisions.
3. Expand available OR time for gynecology by optimizing existing OR time at Surrey Memorial Hospital, Jim Pattison Outpatient Care and Surgery Centre (JPOCSC), Delta Hospital.
4. Expand infrastructure for maternity and women's health at Surrey



# What We're Doing: Medium Term Action (Maternity 2/2)

Additional short and medium-term activities:

- Provide immediate funding for beds and staffing in the unused Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) pod to accommodate maternity patients.
- Redistribute appropriate patients to adjacent Fraser Health sites.
- Introduce a centralized intake system for patients throughout the health authority to gain a comprehensive understanding of patient demographics within the system.
- Continue utilizing double occupancy rooms, ensuring safety and hygienic standards are maintained.
- Implement a midwifery-led early patient discharge program to create bed space and improve longitudinal patient care upon hospital discharge.
- Expand tertiary maternity resources, including:
  - Specialty nursing roles such as Clinical Nurse Educators (CNEs)
  - Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNSs), and charge nurses, to strengthen tertiary care services and enhance nurse recruitment and retention.
- Regional/provincial planning in partnership with Perinatal Services BC (PSBC)

# What We're Doing: Medium Term Action (HHR)

Implementation of **Surrey HHR Strategy** focused on retention, recruitment, redesign, and training:

1. Develop physiotherapy regulations for licencing of internationally trained physiotherapists
2. Competitive compensation for physiotherapists and respiratory therapists
3. Increase and build out physician residency positions.

# What We're Doing: Long-term Action

1. Build and operationalize New Surrey Hospital
2. Expand Surrey Memorial Hospital
  1. This includes a refreshed clinical service plan (including additional in-patient care capacity)
  2. Capital planning process for expansion
  3. Review capacity of other hospital sites across South Fraser region.
3. Increase long-term care capacity for frail seniors
4. Increase capacity (long-term care and transitional beds) for acute brain injury patients and vulnerable populations.