




BC Children's Hospital, an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority, provides expert care for the province's most seriously ill or injured children, including newborns and adolescents. BC Children's is an academic health centre affiliated with the University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University, and the Child & Family Research Institute. For more information, please visit www.bcchildrens.ca.

The Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA) plans, manages and evaluates selected specialty and province-wide health care services across BC, working with the five geographic health authorities to deliver province-wide solutions that improve the health of British Columbians. For more information, please visit www.phsa.ca.

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MEDIA RELEASE

September 3, 2009
For immediate release

Pediatric OR renovations enable children and youth in B.C. to get safer surgeries

Vancouver, B.C. – Children needing surgical procedures at BC Children's Hospital, an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA), will benefit from the completion of a \$3.5-million renovation project to create surgical suites with the latest surgical and communication technologies.

"Patients at BC Children's who need surgery have always been in the best of care with the highly specialized and experienced surgical staff and physicians," said Vancouver Fairview MLA Margaret MacDiarmid on behalf of Health Services Minister Kevin Falcon. "The technology in the new suites greatly enhances the safety level for these children, enabling BC Children's to continue to provide safe surgical procedures until a new acute and critical care building is completed."

The suites are equipped with SMART (Surgical, Minimal Access, Radiologic-Telemetric) technology, including state-of-the-art laparoscopic equipment, high-definition flat-panel screens, and a voice-activated system. They are more versatile and can accommodate larger surgical teams and the advanced equipment they use.

In 2008, children at BC Children's Hospital underwent 8,277 surgical procedures, ranging from relatively simple orthopedic day surgeries to life-saving neurosurgeries and open-heart operations.

"These renovations were undertaken in order to improve the functionality and safety within the Surgical Suites," said Lynda Cranston, President and CEO, PHSA. "Creation of additional space, replacement of 10- to 15-year-old equipment, and installation of ceiling-mounted equipment now enable physicians, nurses, patients, and family members to move in and out of the room easily, minimizing the stress and strain of surgery on children and for their families and caregivers."

The Ministry of Health Services provided \$500,000 to renovate the dental operating room, which is used for restorative and surgical treatments under general anesthesia to meet the oral health care needs of pediatric patients who require the unique tertiary and specialized surgical care that is only available at BC Children's. With the new technology in place, the dental operating suite is now a fully functional OR for other types of surgery.

In addition, Mining for Miracles, comprising members of B.C.'s mining community, contributed \$3 million through BC Children's Hospital Foundation to fund the conversion of four smaller operating rooms into two large operating suites — a minimally invasive surgery (MIS) suite and a navigational suite.

"With the support we have received from the provincial government, the PHSA, and the mining industry, we were able to upgrade our surgical space to enhance patient care," said Larry Gold, President, BC Children's Hospital and Sunny Hill Health Centre for Children. "The operating rooms remained open throughout the renovations, except for three planned closures during routine periods of non-urgent surgical reductions. We are grateful for the planning efforts of project and program leaders, the cooperation of staff and physicians, and especially the patience and understanding of families during this process."

Benefits of minimally invasive surgery include reduced risk of infection, less bleeding, smaller scars, reduced pain and trauma, decreased length of stay in hospital after procedure, and decreased recovery time. The navigational suite, used for orthopedic surgery, enables the use of imaging technologies to track surgical instruments in relation to a patient's anatomy. It provides a data-rich, visual surgical environment that helps reduce procedure invasiveness, risk, and operative times.


"The new technology enhances our ability to treat B.C.'s kids by using minimally invasive techniques," said Dr. Geoffrey Blair, Chief of Surgery, BC Children's Hospital. "That means that we can operate with greater precision, and children can recover faster with less discomfort and return home sooner."

With completion of the new acute care centre for children and women several years away, the existing BC Children's Hospital must continue to upgrade its space and infrastructure to provide the best possible patient care.

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BACKGROUND

Pediatric Surgical Suites Renovation Project

September 3, 2009

BC Children's Hospital recently completed the phased renovation of the Operating Rooms (OR), including creation of ORs with SMART (Surgical, Minimal Access, Radiologic-Telemetric) technology.

These operating suites are equipped with the latest surgical and communication technologies, including state-of-the-art laparoscopic equipment, high-definition flat-panel screens and a voice-activated system. They are more versatile and can accommodate larger surgical teams and the advanced equipment they use, thus enhancing the ability of surgical staff to treat BC's kids with minimally invasive techniques that mean less waiting, less pain, and faster recoveries.

The project also included upgrading the air handling system, originally put in place over 25 years ago. The new system utilizes technology not available when BC Children's opened and improves air quality in the entire operating room suite and adjacent post anesthetic care unit. Air is HEPA filtered which prevents the spread of airborne bacterial and viral organisms, and staff will have more control over temperature and humidity as required for procedures. The new unit also has back-up fans to minimize the impact if the main fans fail.

The ORs remained open throughout the renovations, except for three planned closures during routine weekend and regular summer reductions in scheduled non-urgent and non-emergency surgeries. There was no impact on planned surgeries.

The renovations included creation of a Minimally Invasive Surgery (MIS) suite, creation of a Navigational suite, and expansion of the Dental OR.

Two ORs that were too small for use as modern ORs given current requirements were renovated to create the first larger OR, the MIS suite used primarily for minimally invasive surgery. The benefits of minimally invasive surgery include reduced risk of infection, less bleeding, smaller scars, reduced pain and trauma, decreased length of stay in hospital after procedure, and decreased recovery time. This room is utilized by multiple services, including General Surgery, Urology, and Ears, Nose and Throat.

Another two small ORs were renovated to create the second large OR, the Navigational suite which enables the use of imaging technologies within the OR to track surgical instruments in relation to a patient's anatomy, track the anatomy, and quantify soft-tissue balancing during a surgical procedure. The navigation technology includes high resolution monitors that can be brought up to the surgical field to aid surgeons in visualizing both the pre-operative and intra-operative imaging as well as a flouro-CT unit coupled with a navigation system that allows surgeons to check the position of the implants in three dimensions and, if required, use real time navigation to place the instruments. The Navigation suite provides a data-rich, visual surgical environment that helps reduce procedure invasiveness, risk, and operative times while improving patients outcomes and recovery. This room is utilized by Orthopedic Surgery for complex cases (back reconstruction, long bone tumor reconstruction, and severe trauma).

The Dental OR provides restorative and surgical treatments under general anesthesia to meet the oral health care needs of pediatric patients who require the unique tertiary and specialized surgical care that is only available at BC Children's. This includes the delivery of minor oral surgery, oral/maxillofacial surgery, and emergency oral health care services. Renovations to the Dental OR included expansion, enabling it to be a fully functional OR.

These renovations were undertaken in order to improve the functionality and safety within the Surgical Suites. The OR space is more than 25 years old and was often cramped and unable to accommodate the large equipment and bigger surgical teams required for today's more complex surgeries. The technologies in the new suites replace 10- to 15-year-old equipment and greatly enhance the safety level for children undergoing surgery. In addition, more space and ceiling-mounted equipment enable physicians, nurses, patients, and family members move in and out of the room easily, minimizing the stress and strain of surgery on children and for their families and caregivers.

BC Children's serves the province as a whole for children and youth who require specialized surgery for life-threatening injury and illness as well as surgical procedures to improve their quality of life. Specialized pediatric surgery is performed in areas such as dentistry, ear/nose/throat, general surgery, ophthalmology, orthopedics, plastic surgery, and urology. BC Children's performs open-heart and other cardiac surgery and is one of two pediatric centres in the Western Canadian Children's Heart Network (comprised of BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba; Stollery Children's Hospital in Edmonton is the other pediatric centre). BC Children's also performs kidney transplants by Western Canada's most comprehensive renal team.

As BC Children's Hospital is an academic health sciences centre and responsible for training and educating health care providers from every discipline, these renovations also improve its capacity to train and educate surgical care providers. The high-tech communication capabilities enable internationally recognized surgeons at BC Children's Hospital to continue to contribute to the advancement of pediatric surgery in BC and around the world.

Surgery Program

In 2008, children at BC Children's Hospital underwent 8,277 surgical procedures, ranging from relatively simple orthopedic day surgeries to life-saving neurosurgeries and open-heart operations.

The Surgery Program provides diagnostic and treatment services for infants and children from 14 weeks gestation to 17 years of age. The program includes Surgical Suites, a surgical inpatient unit (including burn patients under the age of six), and ambulatory clinics, including: Cleft Palate and Craniofacial, Dental, Orthopedics, Ophthalmology, Otolaryngology, General Surgery, Gynecology, Plastic Surgery, Pre-admission, and Urology.

Surgical Suites provides care for children requiring surgery, including the Surgical Day Unit, Operating Rooms, Post-Anesthetic Care Unit, and the Procedural Sedation Unit. This care is provided within a family-centred environment. All staff are specialists in the perioperative treatment and care for children throughout BC. Patients are referred from the Yukon, as well as from the provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba.

The multidisciplinary team of surgeons, anesthesiologists, social workers, psychologists, nurses, support staff, dietitians, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, and child life specialists provide the optimal treatment of surgical conditions in children by increasing available resources and reducing waiting times and continue to improve upon the provision of family-centered care in the perioperative environment.

The program provides training and knowledge sharing locally, nationally, and internationally, providing elective rotations in pediatric surgery to surgical trainees from universities across Canada and the world.

Design and Construction

The architect was Stantec (www.stantec.com), and the building contractor was PCL Constructors Inc. (www.pcl.com).

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