

NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Health

PROVINCE OPENS NEW MENTAL HEALTH BUILDING FOR CHILDREN

VANCOUVER – Children living with mental health challenges in British Columbia will have access to a wide range of services under one roof with the opening of a new \$19-million mental health building at BC Children's and BC Women's Hospitals, announced Health Minister George Abbott at today's official opening.

“This facility will serve children and adolescents with serious mental health challenges from across the province,” said Abbott. “It means they will be able to easily access services such as emergency care, long-term psychiatric care, outreach and an eating disorders program.

The new facility is located in the former Shaughnessy Hospital site, which was decommissioned in 1992. The four-storey building sat vacant prior to its transformation. The building has been completely renovated internally, while its external heritage facade is preserved.

The range of mental health assessment and treatment services for patients and families that PHSA presently offers has been consolidated within the new space. The new facility will also include a women's reproductive mental health program.

A total of \$13 million for the new building is provided by the provincial government through the Provincial Health Services Authority. An additional \$6 million came from BC Children's Hospital Foundation donors.

“We place the same degree of importance on mental health care as we do on physical health care,” said Wynne Powell, PHSA Board Chair. “We are proud to be able to offer this improved environment to support patients, families, healthcare providers and mental health researchers.”

The BC Children's Hospital Foundation's \$6-million contribution to the building comprises donations from dozens of donors, including major gifts from the Kelty Patrick Dennehy Foundation, Auxiliary to BC Children's Hospital, Canucks for Kids Fund, Paul and Mary Goh, Great-West Life, London Life and Canada Life, Daniel and Wendy Jarvis, Jake and Judy Kerr, Hank and Janice Ketcham and Djavad Mowafaghian.

“Our donors demonstrated tremendous compassion and courage in supporting this project,” said Sue Carruthers, president and CEO of the BC Children's Hospital Foundation. “They want to see the stigma associated with mental illness eliminated and they want our kids to have the healthy futures they deserve.”

The Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA) plans, manages and evaluates selected specialty and provincewide health care services across B.C., working with the five geographic health authorities to deliver provincewide solutions that improve the health of British Columbians.

BC Children's Hospital Foundation works with communities to raise funds for essentials such as medical equipment, research into childhood diseases and a range of child health education and training programs. Activities include major gift fundraising, planned giving and a variety of annual programs, such as events, radiothons and telethons.

"Investing in new mental health facilities and services throughout the province is part of the province's Pacific Leadership Agenda to help renew and improve our health care system," said Abbott. "British Columbia's health-care system will benefit from more investments like this over the next three years as part of our government's \$2.3-billion health sector capital plan."

The innovative project was a joint venture between the architectural firms of Henriquez Partners and the IBI Group. Designed to silver LEED standards (Leadership, Energy & Environmental Design), the resulting mental health building is energy efficient and meets all current life safety building codes, while providing a welcoming, comfortable environment for treatment.

For more information on the Conversation on Health, please visit www.BCConversationonHealth.ca online or call the 1-866-884-2055 toll-free line.

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