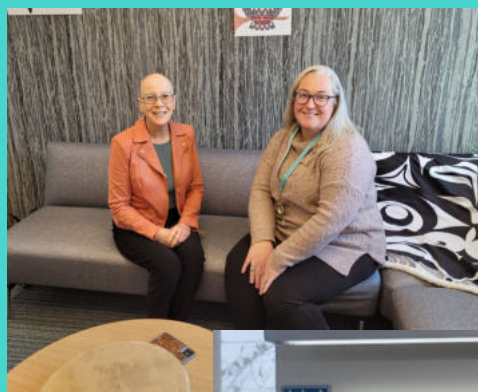




HEALTH UPDATE - FROM YOUR MLA

It has been wonderful to be home from the Legislature and to be able to welcome Ministers to our beautiful slice of paradise. Minister of Citizen Services, Lisa Beare, was in Campbell River to announce funding for rural and remote connectivity as well as the naming of our neighbour MLA Michele Babchuk as the Premier's special advisor on Connectivity.



Minister Beare visited the local Services BC office and the Courtenay & District Museum, which included fossil hunting with the ever-popular crowd-pleaser, Pat Trask.

Minister of Municipal Affairs, Anne Kang, is also responsible for libraries. Cumberland Branch of VIRL had the good fortune of being selected as the place to announce an infusion of \$45 million to libraries across BC. She also got a tour of the Courtenay Branch where she also met our local library trustees and some incredible VIRL staff. Her favourite moment? Checking out the micro-fiche, which is still available for use!

This week, I'd like to focus on health news. Our hope for good health starts as a reflection of our life's circumstances - whether it is our family's income, access to healthcare, employment, childcare, education, housing, food, transportation, a clean and sustainable environment, our sense of inclusion, and all the other social determinants of health. Looking through this lens, I hope the value of addressing those social determinants of health shines through, as we work to build a stronger BC for everyone.

First Nations-led primary care Centre

The Sts'ailes Community Care Campus (SCCC) will serve people between Agassiz and Mission. What makes this primary care centre unique is that it will provide a fully integrated blend of contemporary medical services and person-first, culturally appropriate health and wellness services to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous community members alike. Social inclusion and being able to seek medical care that connects to your way of seeing the world, is a big step to promoting physical health.

B.C. gains momentum in signing on doctors to new payment model

This government has worked at collaborating with doctors in order to create better conditions for attracting and keeping family doctors. Since the new payment model was introduced, more and more doctors are signing on. Earlier in March the total rose to 2,041 doctors, including the new recruits, who have now signed on to the longitudinal family physician (LFP) model. The new model supports doctors working with complex care patients, reviewing lab results, and consulting with medical professionals. By creating better conditions, we are able to attract more family doctors, which increases everyone's access to the health care system.



\$440 million for 10-year cancer care action plan

Almost everyone has been impacted by cancer in some way. We're investing in cancer care to better prevent, detect and treat cancer. \$170 million will be going to the BC Cancer Foundation to support cancer research and help bring the skilled care providers and treatments to BC. The plan includes immediate actions including as providing funding for people who have to travel from more rural or remote communities to receive cancer care. Building more cancer centres to reduce travel is also in the plan.



Mental Health Support

A new provincial 3-year grant allows the Canadian Mental Health Association of BC to expand BC's Hub for Workplace Mental Health. This popular program helps: 1) better understand the importance of psychological safety in the workplace; 2) identify and remove barriers to employment; and 3) build skills that support the success of all employees, including those with mental illnesses and addictions. This government funding shows a dedication to making the workplace more accessible for those living with mental health and/or substance abuse problems. The interactive module helps accommodate and includes them in the workforce, which, in turn, contributes positively to their mental health.

New program developed in CV helps saves lives

A program to alert emergency care for potential overdoses, has been developed and tested here in the Comox Valley. Motion detectors were installed in public washrooms known as places to use drugs. This has allowed Island Health to know if motions cease, which may indicate a life threatening situation. "We are just being naïve if we think (drug use) is not happening (in washrooms)," Island Health board chair Leah Hollins said, "why not make it... safer for people?" By acknowledging these high use locations, it's a way of bringing life-saving health care to those who are often the most stigmatize and excluded from society, those suffering from addiction. The program developed here in the Comox Valley, will soon be adopted by other communities and help save lives across the province.

Spring Booster

Vaccination access for COVID 19 in BC has always taken into account need-based vulnerabilities. This is true again this spring booster season as people in long-term care, people who are immune compromised, and people 80+ or indigenous and 70+, will be the first to receive their booster. If you are in one of these categories, you will be receiving an invitation.

COVID-19 Day of Observance

As we know there were many instances of how COVID-19 exposed social inequalities. On March 11th we acknowledged National Day of Observance for people affected by COVID-19. We remember those who died or have on-going health issues as a result of COVID-19. It was also a time to honour our health-care and front-line workers who have put in their all to helping the BC public to get the medical support they needed these last three years.

Long Term care in BC

Culture matters. As we age it's important we be able to live in a familiar and safe environment. On the Lower Mainland, people will be benefiting from improved long-term care and community services as Providence Health Care prepares for a new long-term care home - St. Vincent's Heather. Minister Dix noted that: "This includes culturally safe living spaces and services for Indigenous Elders, such as a sacred space for smudging ceremonies, with access to traditional medicine gardens for spiritual ceremonies." Providing culturally specific services that is inclusive, is another way of increasing health outcomes.



**Adding more
long-term care
in BC**

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Would you like to lend your voice on important topics in BC? There are many topics on which the government of BC would like to hear from you. Take some time to lend your voice: [Click here](#)

CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES

Is someone in your life, your workplace, or your church celebrating a Milestone birthday or anniversary? Make sure to put in a request for a letter from your MLA. [Requests are made online here.](#)

Get in touch

As always, if you have any questions or concerns about any provincial issue, please don't hesitate to reach out. We are here to help you. My office can be reached at 250.703.2410 or Ronna-Rae.Leonard.MLA@leg.bc.ca Our Office hours are Monday to Thursday 10am-4pm. If the door is locked, simply knock or call 250.703.2410 to get our attention. Fridays are by appointment only.

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