

June 2014

Spotlight

Hospital Board Urged to Plan

The West Kootenay-Boundary Regional Hospital District should develop a strategic plan in order to determine and address present and future acute health care need in the hospital district, a consultant told the Board at its June meeting.



Jim Gustafson addresses the WKBHRD Board

Consultant Jim Gustafson presented his report “Initiation of a Strategic Plan for the West Kootenay Boundary Regional Hospital District,” which was commissioned by the City of Castlegar. The municipality initiated the study out of concerns about the state of health care in the region, the aging population and its effect on the health care system, and the condition of acute care facilities in the WKBHRD.

Gustafson was dispatched to interview elected officials in the WKBHRD to uncover health care issues facing our communities. Some of what he learned surprised him. “Transportation to health facilities is the number one issue,” said Gustafson.

Based on what he gleaned from the interviews, and coupled with the information provided in the Province’s Facility Condition Index report, Gustafson arrived at the following recommendations, which he asked the Board to consider implementing:

- 1) Adopt a strategic plan
- 2) Establish a multi-year capital budget that addresses the health care needs of the WKBHRD
- 3) Prepare a financial plan that shows different scenarios for capital projects and subsequent property tax implications
- 4) Request Interior Health to initiate a planning study for the WKBHRD in 2015
- 5) Discuss the Board’s purpose and role.

“Local governments should be aware several years in advance of significant changes to regional hospital taxes required for financing of new projects,” stated Gustafson in

his presentation. “It’s like you’re going to renovate your house; you’d better have a budget in mind.”

The Board referred the report to staff to review and work with Interior Health to outline a long term planning process. Staff will also investigate the cost to hold a health board workshop on the strategic planning process. The information will be presented at the October Board meeting.

Chair Marguerite Rotvold told the Board: “Health care today isn’t going to be the same in 20 years but we have to be involved in planning for it.”

What’s up, Docs?

How to get and keep doctors is a challenge facing many rural communities. And it’s a dilemma that Dr. Peggy Yakimov of Interior Health tackles every day.

Yakimov is the Executive Medical Director of Physician Support and Practice Enhancement for Interior Health. She serves on several committees tasked with the issue of physician recruitment and retention.

“It’s our shared responsibility to recruit,” said Yakimov, saying that Interior Health is “moving towards collaborative efforts” to bring doctors to rural towns.

Yakimov shared the story of the Town of Princeton’s efforts to fill its doctor shortage. She said that by working together, Interior Health, elected officials and community members were able to fully staff their health facility within only a few months.



Dr. Peggy Yakimov attended the June 25 WKBHRD Board meeting and discussed Interior Health’s efforts to draw physicians to rural communities.

Efforts are underway in our region to train and retain rural physicians. The WKBHRD will see the start of a residency program in 2015 and Selkirk College has received an injection of \$1 million for a new pre-med cohort, the first of its kind in BC. Called Rural Pre-Medicine, the program is designed to teach students “what it means to be a rural health care provider.”

Spotlight

Doctor recruitment continued...

Interior Health also has a rigorous marketing strategy aimed at drawing physicians to our health facilities. Doctors who choose to practice in such locations receive financial incentives.

As Canada is not producing enough doctors to fill the demand, a large percentage of physicians employed by Interior Health are from foreign countries. Dr. Yakimov outlined the steps necessary for international medical graduates to practice in Canada—a process which can be costly and time consuming.

Yakimov pointed out that the WKBRHD had one of the highest physician recruitment rates in the Province over the past year. Communities in our region have welcomed several new physicians.

Keeping them can be challenging, however. Dr. Yakimov said one of the issues facing doctors in small towns is residents' tendency to see treat them as doctors 24/7. This can be taxing on doctors as they strive to achieve and maintain a work-life balance.

As Chair Rotvold stated, "after working hours, these doctors are our neighbours."



2014 BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

October 22	Castlegar Community Complex	6 p.m.
November 26	Castlegar Community Complex	6 p.m.

The public is welcome to attend Board meetings. Agendas & refreshments are available at meetings.



At the October meeting...

Interior Health staff Donna Lommer, Chief Financial Officer, and Norma Malanowich, Chief Project Officer & Corporate Director, Capital Planning & P3 Projects, will attend the October 22nd meeting to provide a service delivery model and analysis of health care needs in the regional hospital district.

Interior Health will also report on the sustainability study undertaken at Kootenay Boundary Regional Hospital in Trail.

Good Health Care News!

CT scanning services are now available 24/7 at Kootenay Lake Hospital in Nelson.

Did you Know...

- ❖ That nearly half of an individual's health care demands come in the last year of his or her life?
- ❖ That if you added up the square footage of all the health care facilities in the WKBRHD it would come to around 900,000 square feet?
- ❖ That in the next 10 years, hospitals will experience a doubling of their patient loads?

Saying Goodbye to IH

The June 25th meeting marked the end of an era for the WKBRHD as it was Interior Health staff member Ingrid



Hampf's last meeting before she retires.

Ingrid has been a regular fixture at WKBRHD meetings for the past five years, and as Chair Rotvold said, "has been instrumental in bringing the Board together as a positive and cohesive group."

Chair Rotvold presented a gift to Ingrid on behalf of the Board in recognition of her contribution to the WKBRHD and to celebrate her upcoming retirement.

Ingrid thanked the Board for the gift and reminded the group that "health care continues to be a huge challenge" as it is so dynamic. She said the question all health care providers and partners must ask is "how do we all work together to get quality health care for our citizens?" She suggested that creativity is key and talked about the potential of partnerships with health foundations.

"You have great healthcare and really good facilities," Ms. Hampf assured the Board. "You should be proud of the health care we have and I am proud of the work you do on behalf of your communities."