

For Immediate Release | April 27, 2018

## Doors open to innovative new wellness clinic in Kelowna

KELOWNA – Patients experiencing a mental health challenge will be able to see a team of specially trained clinicians at Interior Health’s (IH) newly opened Cedar Sage Health and Wellness clinic in downtown Kelowna.

“People living with mental health and substance use challenges need access to a support network in their own community,” said Minister of Mental Health and Addictions Judy Darcy. “With this new clinic in place, people in the Kelowna region will be able to connect with holistic mental health and substance use supports that will help them along their road to recovery and healing.”

This unique service, located in the IH Community Health & Services Centre (CHSC), is the result of a collaborative effort between IH, the Central Okanagan Division of Family Practice and local Aboriginal partners to fill a need for health care services combined with mental health supports under one roof.

“This new clinic is an excellent example of team-based care that places patients at the centre of the health services provided,” said Health Minister Adrian Dix. “At Cedar Sage, this approach means a patient facing mental health and substance use challenges can receive support from a variety of health-care providers and the team has strong collaboration to make sure their work best to meets the individual needs of the patients.”

At the clinic, an interdisciplinary team of mental health and substance use (MHSU) clinicians and physicians provide trauma-informed short-term, team-based care to higher functioning individuals experiencing a mental health illness.

“The clinic is designed for people living with mental health conditions or substance use who are facing new challenges and are struggling to cope,” said IH Board Chair Dr. Doug Cochrane. “The clinic’s goal is to support the client so that she/he can effectively address the challenge before it impairs their health.”

The clinic was named Cedar Sage after consultation with Aboriginal communities. Both cedar and sage are commonly used in smudging ceremonies and promote protection, clarification, blessings and healing. They are also used in Aboriginal medicine and other healing practices.

IH Aboriginal Health Corporate Director Brad Anderson said engaging Aboriginal voices in the development of the services and the design of the clinic space demonstrates IH’s ongoing commitment to reducing barriers for Aboriginal patients.

“Our Aboriginal partners were also involved in finding the right name for the clinic in an effort to encourage and help Aboriginal patients feel comfortable when accessing health services.”

NEWS RELEASE

---

At this time, the clinic is available to individuals who have a family physician with referrals being made by family physicians and nurse practitioners. As the clinic becomes fully operational, it will provide care for individuals without a family physician. At that time, patients will be able to refer themselves or be referred by their family or other community services.

“The development of the Cedar Sage Clinic shows what great accomplishments we can achieve with collaboration between stakeholders,” said Divisions of Family Practice Lead Dr. Michael Koss. “This clinic offers unique services that will greatly benefit the residents of the Central Okanagan.”

Cedar Sage will serve approximately 30 patients a day with assessment and care provided by a team that includes physicians, counsellors, social work, nursing and medical office assistants.

The clinic is located on the second floor of the CHSC and is currently open Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. with plans to extend hours into the evening and weekends.

*Interior Health is committed to promoting healthy lifestyles and providing a wide range of quality health-care services to more than 740,000 people living across B.C.'s vast interior. For more information, visit [www.interiorhealth.ca](http://www.interiorhealth.ca), follow us on Twitter [@Interior\\_Health](https://twitter.com/Interior_Health), or like us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/InteriorHealth](https://www.facebook.com/InteriorHealth).*

- 30 -