

For Immediate Release | April 29, 2019

Low risk deliveries resume in Williams Lake on April 30

WILLIAMS LAKE – Interior Health is pleased to announce that maternity services at Cariboo Memorial Hospital (CMH) for low-risk deliveries will resume on Tuesday, April 30.

Low risk deliveries include babies who have reached full term (37+ weeks) for expectant mothers with pregnancies that have had no or minimal complications. CMH will also be able to perform planned and emergency C-sections as required.

Expectant mothers and babies at higher risk of complications during their deliveries will continue to be directed to Kamloops or the community of their choice at this time. The safety of expectant mothers and their babies will be the top priority in all decisions related to the most appropriate delivery site in each case.

Expectant mothers should consult with their physicians regarding whether they can plan for deliveries at CMH or whether they still need to relocate.

There is still a potential for temporary interruptions to local maternity services in the months ahead. Contingency plans to support expectant mothers remain in place if service is temporarily unavailable at CMH.

Maternity services were temporarily suspended at CMH at the end of February due to an unexpected critical shortage of maternity nurses. Interior Health recognizes this change has affected expectant mothers and families in the region over the last few months and we appreciate everyone's patience and understanding as we work diligently to restore full maternity services in Williams Lake.

In addition to the recent hiring of two new maternity nurses for CMH in April, one new maternity nurse will be hired in May and additional CMH nurses are currently being trained in full-scope maternity care and are expected to be ready to support Cariboo area patients in July. In addition, maternity nurses from other areas of Interior Health and outside Interior Health are coming to Williams Lake to support local patients. Interior Health is confident full maternity services will resume at CMH at that time.

We would like to thank CMH staff and physicians for their flexibility and dedication during this challenging period and to our maternity nurses for their support of CMH patients in the months ahead.

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PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT