

MEDIA RELEASE

City of Williams Lake



For Immediate Release

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450 Mart Street
Williams Lake, BC
V2G 1N3

City of Williams Lake Welcomes Two New Healthcare Landing Coordinators

The City of Williams Lake is working to address the physician shortage in the Central and South Cariboo with the hiring of two contract staff members to support new medical professionals arriving in the community.

Funded by the Cariboo Chilcotin Regional Hospital Board (CCRHD), the City's Economic Development Office will be overseeing activities on behalf of the City of Williams Lake and District of 100 Mile House and supporting community integration for medical professionals coming to the Central/South Cariboo Region.

"Thanks to financial support from the CCRHD, we will be able to ensure that our communities are able to provide the incentives that are unfortunately becoming the norm for recruiting medical professionals to our communities," says Beth Veenkamp, Manager of Economic Development.

"Provisions for accommodation and travel are part of the incentives used to attract locums to communities, and we hope that with the launch of this new initiative we will be in a better position to effectively compete with other similar sized rural communities to attract these finite resources to our region."

In addition to support for housing and travel, the City will also be working on increasing retention for new professionals that do come to the area.

"We will have a strong focus going forward on ensuring that when we have arrivals, they have a good experience by helping to connect them with their peers and the community, as well as providing support to their families through employment opportunities and childcare and school registration."

The City has hired two long-time residents of Williams Lake to undertake these important roles: Melissa LaPointe and Jeannie Rudyk.

They will be tasked with covering both communities of Williams Lake and 100 Mile House to support the medical community with a better welcoming and landing experience. Given that it is the same health authority, the decision was made to create one program that would provide seamless support.

"Council realizes that the physician shortage in our region is extremely urgent, and we are pleased to be able to offer our support to the community of 100 Mile House as well," says Mayor Walt Cobb. "I think this program rolling out really shows the commitment from us to be a part of the solution in addressing our physician shortage."

The new Healthcare Landing Coordinators began their positions on September 1, 2022 and will be working closely with other agencies such as the Central Interior Rural Division of Family Practice, First Nations Health Authority, Interior Health, and private clinics.

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