

**For Immediate Release | September 28, 2023**

## **Interior Health opens temporary Primary Care Clinic in Lytton**

**LYTTON** – Patients in Lytton and area now have access to improved local health care services with the opening of a primary care clinic. The primary care clinic is located at 1535 St. Georges Road, right across from the Tl'kemtšin Health Centre. It is on Lytton First Nation (LFN) lands and Interior Health is leasing the space.

"The people living in Lytton and surrounding areas will now have access to health care in a modernized facility in their own community, as well as an Indigenous Patient Navigator who will provide direct patient and family support, including access to traditional ceremonies and healing practices," said Adrian Dix, Minister of Health. "Re-establishing health services and connecting patients to a primary care provider has been a high priority and one of many steps in rebuilding Lytton after the devastation by wildfires. I would like to recognize the hard work and dedication of the Interior Health and Lytton staff, health-care providers, and the Indigenous health partners and leaders in the community who have worked together to make this possible."

The clinic will be operated by Interior Health and will serve the community while planning and construction for a permanent health facility proceeds over the next few years.

The clinic offers physician visits, mental health and substance use services, home health and public health services, which have been prioritized to meet the needs of the community. It is open Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and services are supported by two physicians who see patients on a rotating basis and two registered nurses, who assess and co-ordinate care, along with support staff including an Aboriginal Patient Navigator position, which is in the recruitment process. The integration of additional health-care equipment and increased digital information sharing capacity will also support the expansion of health services over the next few months and years.

"We're very grateful to Lytton First Nation for making this possible and for working together with us to deliver health services in the area," said Susan Brown, Interior Health president and CEO. "We want to also thank them for opening space within the Tl'kemtšin Health Centre for more than a year between May 2022 and August 2023 so that Interior Health could re-establish primary care services in the community and plan for this new temporary clinic after the 2021 wildfire. We look forward to our continued relationship with community and health partners as this project evolves."

Planning for the final phase of this project, a permanent health facility to replace the St. Bartholomew's Health Centre, which was destroyed in the 2021 wildfire, is also underway and will be located within the Village of Lytton.

"The opening of the temporary building is a welcomed event. Now the members of the Nlaka'pamux communities along with the Village of Lytton and others can look forward to the service delivery and support that is critically important to all," said Debbie Abbott, executive director, Nlaka'pamux Nation Tribal Council.

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We recognize and acknowledge that we are collectively gathered on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the seven Interior Region First Nations. This region is also home to 15 Chartered Métis Communities. It is with humility that we continue to strengthen our relationships with First Nation, Métis, and Inuit peoples across the Interior.

**MEDIA, FOR INFORMATION:**

PHONE 1.844.469.7077 EMAIL [media@interiorhealth.ca](mailto:media@interiorhealth.ca)

Interior Health has been engaging with community and health-care partners on re-establishing health services for the past year to ensure that ideas, concerns and questions are addressed and integrated into decision making around future services in the community.

"Opening this temporary clinic is an important milestone in restoring medical services for all community members", said Lytton mayor Denise O'Connor. "We look forward to being involved in discussions to plan for construction of Lytton's permanent health-care facility."

Dr. Sushmita Shivkumar is one of the physicians supporting care in Lytton and has ties to the area, having worked in neighbouring Lillooet previous to her work in Lytton.

"There are strong community links between the two areas. When this opportunity arose to provide health care in Lytton and be involved with the rebuilding of essential services, it was an easy choice," said Dr. Shivkumar.

The Lytton health services area is located within the Nlaka'pamux Nation and includes six Indigenous communities: Lytton First Nation, Kanaka Bar Indian Band, Nicomen Indian Band, Siska First Nation, Skuppah Indian Band, and Cook's Ferry First Nation. Interior Health recognizes and acknowledges the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Nlaka'pamux Nation where this health services work is happening and is grateful for the ongoing conversations and partnerships with these communities.

[View the video](#) from the opening celebration.

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