

October 25, 2023

Mayor Surinderpal Rathor
City of Williams Lake
450 Mart Street
Williams Lake, BC
V2G 1N3

sent via e-mail: rcoupe@williamslake.ca

Re: Cariboo Memorial Hospital Emergency Department

Dear Mayor Rathor:

Thank you for your letter dated Oct. 5 regarding the signage that was placed in the Cariboo Memorial Hospital (CMH) Emergency Department on Oct. 2. I would like to express my sincere apology for the confusion that resulted in inaccurate information being shared which did not reflect the availability of services in Williams Lake.

I understand the significant impact that this has had on the trust that people of Williams Lake, Williams Lake First Nation and all communities have in their local Emergency Department. I can confirm that Interior Health has completed a review of the circumstances and events that occurred that night that led to this unfortunate situation.

Under employment and privacy laws, we cannot share details specific to employees who were on shift that night or the people who came to the Emergency Department for care. It is our duty to always protect the confidentiality of patient care and personal information.

Our review found that, while there were some challenges staffing the Emergency Department, the staffing complement was stabilized and the process to activate our Service Disruption process was not required.

The review also found that the sign placed on the door did not accurately represent the status of the Emergency Department and the information shared to people who attended the Emergency Department did not meet Interior Health's standards of care.

While the closure was not approved, I can confirm that a number of individuals were transferred to 100 Mile House via BCEHS, RCMP or family members and we apologize for the inconvenience this may have caused. Interior Health's Patient Care Quality Office is now working with individuals impacted respectfully, fairly, and in a timely manner to address the concerns raised.

I agree that Cariboo Memorial is a critical facility for people in the region given the distances to alternate acute hospitals. We value the trust and support that the public places in our health-care services and as we have been working over many months to stabilize services at the hospital. We are committed to taking the necessary steps to prevent any service interruptions or confusion about local services from occurring in the future.

Specifically, as a result of this review, Interior Health will be working with staff to develop awareness and understanding of the process for Contingency and Service Disruption should it occur at CMH. In

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Interior Health would like to recognize and acknowledge the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the Dākelh Dené, Ktunaxa, Nlaka'pamux, Secwépemc, St'át'imc, Syilx, and Tšilhqot'in Nations where we live, learn, collaborate and work together.

addition, Interior Health will review our public notification process for service disruptions for opportunities for improvement and communicate how residents and partners can receive the latest information about the availability of services.

I want to thank you for your ongoing support of our efforts and of the physicians and staff providing care at Cariboo Memorial. Once again, apologize to the individuals who were inconvenienced by this matter. We are committed to taking all necessary steps to rebuild trust in the local Emergency Department.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Brown".

Susan Brown
President & CEO

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