

Thank you to all who participated in our community information sessions about the future for health and care in the Cowichan Valley and the plan to replace Cowichan District Hospital (CDH). Our team enjoyed answering your questions and hearing your suggestions for ways we can create a better hospital and health care journey for people in Cowichan.

CDH is an integral part of the care hub in the valley, but there are many other resources that contribute to health and wellness. 80% of health care services and supports are delivered in the community.

As we develop the business plan for a new hospital, we're collaborating around a broader plan for Cowichan Valley health and care, to strengthen community-based services in ways that support people to achieve better health at all ages.

To share news and answer questions about the work underway, partners from the Cowichan District Hospital Foundation, Cowichan Valley Hospice Society, Cowichan Valley Regional Hospital District and Our Cowichan Communities Health Network joined Island Health staff at each of the four information sessions.

Events were held across the region to accommodate a variety of schedules:

- **Duncan: Fri, Nov 23** (26 attendees*)
Island Savings Centre, 4—6 pm
- **Shawnigan Lake: Tue, Nov 27** (6 attendees*)
Shawnigan Lake Community Centre, 5—7pm
- **Ladysmith: Wed, Nov 28** (15 attendees*)
Eagles Hall, 2—4pm
- **Cowichan Lake: Thurs, Nov 29** (16 attendees*)
Cowichan Lake Sports Arena, 1—3pm

**signed in*

The following is a summary of the feedback we received, sorted by area of interest:

CDH REPLACEMENT PROJECT: BUSINESS PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- **Hospital capacity** – Build hospital large enough to accommodate current and future population growth.
- **Engage front line staff in the planning and design process**, beyond just management/leadership.
- **Sustainable design** – Build energy efficient facility, able to withstand power outages and inclement weather.
- **Possibilities for the current CDH site** – Can other services be delivered at Gibbins Rd site once new hospital opens?
- **Include gathering spaces and space for spiritual health services** in new hospital.
- **Communication & engagement** – **Public:** Facebook, CVRD and Island Health websites, local papers, radio, email, church and PlaceSpeak in use. **Métis Nation** engagement requested. **Staff:** request visits to departments, brown bag lunches and bulletin boards on site. **Neighbours** near proposed new site want to know timelines.



Grateful for all the hospitality! The traveling team wrapped up a terrific week in Cowichan Lake.

IMPROVING INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S HEALTH

- **Métis engagement opportunities** requested

PRIMARY CARE & COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES

- **Attachment challenges/GP recruitment and retention challenges** - Difficulty finding a local primary care provider accepting new patients, challenging to renew prescriptions and manage chronic health concerns without access to consistent, local primary care provider.
- **Want local health centre with team-based care linked to specialized services**—Local access to a team of physicians, NPs, RNs, specialists, pharmacists and other care professionals working in a practice setting, available for urgent access, not just one's own GP, with centralized intake. Travel to Nanaimo and Victoria for specialized services noted as a significant barrier. (All communities)
 - **Nurse Practitioners** —Want more NPs. Want NPs included in health service planning.
 - **Primary Care Network** — Integrated network of care providers to improve care continuity.
 - **Specialists** — e.g. physiotherapists, ophthalmologists, urologists, cardiologists, MHSU, etc.
 - **Streamline specialist referrals & paperwork processes** —Can other care professionals coordinate referrals and paperwork besides GPs?
 - **Kaatza Health Centre (Cowichan Lake)** — Island Health services seem reduced; want restored.
- **Transportation challenges** — Difficulty accessing services from remote communities.
 - Lake Cowichan Seniors Community Foundation willing to drive specialists to/from community to bring services closer to patients.
- **Wellness, prevention and health literacy supports for all ages** — Want exercise classes, health education, falls prevention, strengthening and support for people to manage newly diagnosed or chronic conditions for health and social benefits. Consider partnering with local Recreation Centres for space and co-promotion.
- **Improve Home Support and discharge planning process from hospital** — Confusing, too many people involved, not enough flexibility or continuity, not enough notice. Need clearer instructions and support with medication management upon discharge. Would prefer maximum of 4 different HSW for better continuity.
- **Want Meals-on-Wheels** (Lake Cowichan)



MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE SERVICES

- **MHSU identified as a big/growing concern in the region with many needs.** Questions about what services are available locally. Attendees requested enhanced access to:
 - MHSU services for children, youth, families and aging adults in the Cowichan Valley
 - Housing
 - More MHSU services (Cowichan Lake)
 - Supervised consumption sites — Can this be available in health centres or doctors' offices?
 - PTSD supports (Duncan)
 - A barrier-free care journey - gaining access to MSHU services described as difficult and draining, particularly during times of crisis. Travelling while in crisis is especially challenging.

MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE SERVICES (CONT'D)

- **Stigma** – When asked, attendees report stigma/attitudes play a role in how people access MHSU services. Recommendations from community include:
 - Anti-stigma awareness/education around mental health
 - Stable housing as a key to effective mental health care
 - Making the process of accessing MHSU services simpler, less steps and fewer opportunities for people to walk away from care due to barriers or stigma, whether real or perceived.

ASSISTED LIVING, LONG TERM CARE, END-OF-LIFE SERVICES

- **Expand access to Long Term Care**
- **Improve navigation** of Long Term Care services, provide detailed explanation of long term care at intake.
- **Criteria for Assisted Living access** - seems limiting for some; opportunities to improve understanding of criteria and navigation of assisted living process.
- **Want more information about Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID):**
 - Will Cowichan Valley Hospice Society support MAID?
 - Will MAID be available at the proposed new hospice facility at Cairnsmore?
 - Will people be going to Hospice just to receive MAID?
- **Aging in Place** - Interest in a “retirement village” other opportunities/services that support aging in place.
- **Cairnsmore** - Respite care: want expanded services (e.g. more rehab, physio and other services to prevent/reduce functional decline and hospitalization); more housekeepers; opportunities to improve care experience for clients and families; TV too expensive, not enough channels.



NEXT STEPS

We will be analysing all of the feedback we received throughout our engagement with local staff and medical staff, health care providers, First Nation communities and other service organizations as we develop the business plan to replace CDH and create the overarching Cowichan Valley Health and Care Plan to strengthen community health services.

There is much work already underway to address many themes and barriers mentioned throughout our engagement with communities. As service enhancements are announced within the Cowichan Valley we will post them on our website, along with other project updates, as things progress.



Let's stay connected!

Check out www.islandhealth.ca/newcdh to view poster boards from the sessions, project updates and more. Share your thoughts and ask questions by email: newcdh@viha.ca.