
BACKGROUND

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Ministry of Health

NEW OUTPATIENT HOSPITAL AND EXPANDED EMERGENCY DEPT.

Kelowna General Hospital (KGH) is the Central Okanagan's primary acute care health facility and one of two Interior Health tertiary referral hospitals in the region that offer high-level, specialty medical care.

In 2005/06, KGH provided 68,137 outpatient visits and 109,019 outpatient diagnostic procedures. These numbers are expected to continue to grow by nearly 50 per cent through 2024.

The KGH emergency department has serious problems with overcrowding, issues with patient flow and lack of space. Relocating outpatient services will make it possible to physically expand the emergency department, which will help address these concerns.

The new KGH outpatient hospital and expanded emergency department is a 16,600-square-metre (approximately 180,000-square-foot) facility to be located on the northeast corner of the KGH site. The project will modernize and quadruple the size of the emergency department from 7,000 to 30,000 square feet. The project will also consolidate outpatient services and programs currently dispersed throughout KGH into one facility, and expand the existing emergency department.

A new state-of-the-art emergency department will meet the most current standard of care for the delivery of emergency medicine and will ensure patients get the appropriate level of care in the most timely manner possible. Expansion and a total redesign will provide: a trauma area, minor treatment unit and crisis intervention centre.

Factors driving the need for a new outpatient hospital and expanded emergency department include:

- Increase capacity of outpatient services at KGH to support Kelowna and the surrounding area's health needs as projected for the next 20 years;
- Support the drive towards outpatient and surgical day care procedures and away from acute inpatient care;
- Develop outpatient services that are efficient and flexible, and that optimize utilization of space, staff and technical resources;
- Encourage outpatient services where appropriate because they may be less invasive, more efficient and can lead to improved patient outcomes;
- Free up space in KGH to accommodate emergency department expansion to relieve current and projected service delivery pressures;
- Address space pressures faced by support services, pharmacy and administration, as well as requirement for laboratory renovation/expansion by re-locating programs and services;
- Provide a rooftop helipad at the KGH site.

The KGH expansion project is at the core of the Central Okanagan Redevelopment initiative, which includes a wide range of acute, residential and community-based health services.

Timelines for the KGH and VJH projects are currently projected the procurement process taking place in 2007, construction is expected to start in 2008 with completion in 2010.

As part of the strategy to address existing and projected congestion at the KGH emergency department, Interior Health is planning to establish a Community Health Centre on the Westside.

Services planned for the Westside Community Health Centre include an outpatient care treatment clinic, laboratory services, day procedures, group rehabilitation, community health, public health, mental health and addictions, nurse practitioner, aboriginal health liaison, group elder services and a health resource centre.

Interior Health is currently negotiating for a nine acre property at the southeast corner of Butt and Elliott Roads in Westbank.

The property requires rezoning and exclusion from the Agricultural Land Reserve.

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