



November 16, 2007

Current Status of Riverview Hospital

We are pleased to clarify the current role of Riverview Hospital within the mental health care system.

The Riverview Hospital Redevelopment Project is a collaborative effort involving all six health authorities and the BC Ministry of Health. The ministry is providing \$138 million in capital funding to construct new facilities or to renovate existing facilities where appropriate. Once this new model of care is completely implemented, patients and families will be able to access specialized mental health services within each regional health authority, and Riverview Hospital (RVH) will close. At this time, it is expected this process may take up to three years.

The beds at RVH are being devolved in a “bed for bed” replacement initiative. As new beds are developed by the regional health authorities in communities around the province, patients are transferred to more home-like facilities, along with the financial resources for their care. As of November 16, 2007, a total of 389 RVH replacement beds have opened in the province.

RVH continues to admit and discharge patients who require tertiary acute assessment, treatment and stabilization; 446 patients during the fiscal year 2006/07. Currently the hospital operates 256 beds and provides a number of highly specialized programs that serve the entire province, such as the Psychiatric Intensive Care and Refractory Psychosis Units, for patients who meet the criteria for this type of care. (*RVH no longer accepts new patients from the regional health authorities who require long term residential care.)

The Ministry of Labour’s Accommodation and Real Estate Services owns and manages the Riverview campus, and works cooperatively with hospital representatives to manage risks on the site and ensure any new tenants are an appropriate fit with RVH’s vulnerable population. Riverview Hospital’s paramount concern is to provide high-quality patient care. This includes maintaining a safe environment that minimizes risks, such as access to illegal drugs.

In addition to the mental health beds operated by RVH, Fraser Health operates 44 newly constructed mental health beds on the Riverview campus. (Connolly and Cottonwood Lodges) and has plans to co-locate a third 20 bed facility, Cypress Lodge, with the others. Coast Mental Health Foundation also operates eight “cottages” on the site.

Government advises that any future redevelopment of the Riverview Lands will have to be undertaken in a number of steps that will include consultation with First Nations followed by community consultation, master planning and zoning bylaw amendment process. Such processes normally take 2-3 years before any construction could begin.

Prepared by the Communications team for BC Mental Health & Addiction Services