
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2013HLTH0093-001347
Sept. 9, 2013

Ministry of Health
Interior Health

Families benefit from new residential care facility

KAMLOOPS – Health Minister Terry Lake, along with Buron Healthcare, Interior Health representatives, residents and community members gathered today to celebrate the grand opening of the region’s newest residential care facility.

“Our government is committed to providing seniors and their families with quality care close to home,” said Lake. “This new facility is great news for Kamloops families, building residential care capacity to meet demand now and in the future.”

Brocklehurst Gemstone Care Centre is a new three-storey facility with 125 publicly funded beds and five private-pay beds, providing a full range of services in a home-like environment. Interior Health contracts with Buron for the 125 beds and facilitates the assessment and referral process for admissions.

“Seniors in our community deserve top-notch care,” said Kamloops-South Thompson MLA Todd Stone. “Bright, modern facilities such as Gemstone help us continue to provide such care when independent living is no longer an option.”

Today’s residential care facilities combine the best elements of quality medical care with comfortable and welcoming surroundings. Residential facilities provide tailored care and support to individuals with complex care needs.

Brocklehurst Gemstone Care Centre is no exception. It is designed around the needs of specific resident populations, offering programs for physically frail seniors and for seniors in the mild-to-moderate stages of dementia. Key design features include the creation of a small, 10-bed neighbourhood to provide a more intimate setting and allow care providers to better respond to residents with specific needs. It is a flexible space and includes its own outdoor private courtyard and direct entrance, particularly beneficial for the special needs of certain client groups.

“We all know that our society is aging. While we believe home, with appropriate supports, is ultimately the best place to be, residential care plays an integral role in the continuum,” said Norman Embree, Interior Health board chair. “Our residential care facilities offer a range of health-care services in a comfortable setting.”

The building is designed to reflect Kamloops' natural environment, incorporating a combination of wood and stone. Like the centre's name, the inner neighbourhood colours and names take their inspiration from the area's mining industry, incorporating the natural tones found in copper, quartz, amber and jade.

"We are very proud of the home we have built – from the excellent calibre of staff who have joined us, to the finishing touches throughout the site, it has turned out beautifully," said Mary McDougall, president of Buron Healthcare. "I would like to thank the many people who contributed to building this success and also to those who will continue to work with us for many years ahead."

Construction began in May 2012, with the name announced in December after a naming contest within the community and consultation with a community-based panel of judges. The site began admitting residents on June 17, 2013, and admissions have continued through the summer.

Buron also operates beds, in partnership with Interior Health, at Haven Hill Retirement in Penticton and provides care services to seniors at Simon Fraser Lodge in Prince George.

With the opening of these new beds, Interior Health has met its 2010 commitment to create 527 new residential care beds to support seniors in the Interior. The 527 beds represent an annual investment of \$30 million, of which \$7.3 million funds the beds at Brocklehurst Gemstone Care Centre.

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