
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Health

KAMLOOPS-AREA RESIDENTS PROVIDE INNOVATIVE HEALTH IDEAS

KAMLOOPS – One hundred residents from the Thompson Cariboo Shuswap area provided many innovative, thoughtful ideas on how to make B.C.’s public health care system sustainable, during the first Conversation on Health regional public forum held this Saturday, said Health Minister George Abbott.

“This weekend’s discussions provided us with invaluable information, as well as greater insight into what people in the area value about their public health system, and where they see the pressures today and in the future,” said Minister Abbott. “All participants’ input, in their own words, will be posted shortly to the Conversation website. I hope British Columbians will read the online discussions and provide their own thoughts and ideas to the Conversation based on what they read.”

In addition to the public forum, a series of meetings were held on Friday, Feb. 2 with health organizations’ representatives, patients and health professionals.

At all the meetings being held, participants are asked to suggest the topics they think are most important for discussion, and then explore solutions for those topics. Participants identified a number of broad themes this weekend, including an emphasis on strong community health supports, and greater emphasis on prevention of illness. Solutions also included restructuring nurse training so that nurses can enter the workforce more quickly, establishing more community primary care centres, and investing in more e-health systems to connect hospitals, clinics, and pharmacies.

“The Conversation on Health ensures everyone has a chance to make their voice heard by telling us what they think is important for our public health system,” said Mary Polak, Parliamentary Secretary for the Conversation on Health and MLA for Langley. “We look forward to hearing people’s input at the other meetings taking place across B.C. through to July. We also strongly encourage people to send us their ideas and suggestions by email, letter, toll-free phone line and on the web.”

Input gathered through Conversation meetings, emails, letters, phone calls and web dialogue, as well as written submissions from individuals, health professional unions, associations and other interested groups, will become part of the record for the Conversation on Health. All input will be summarized in a report to be presented to the Province in fall 2007. This report will help government determine what legislation, programs and services are needed to protect and improve health care for the future.

There are six ways to join the Conversation on Health:

- Registering for one of the upcoming regional public forums or health professional meetings that have not reached their registration deadlines (meeting dates and deadlines can be found on the website)
- Toll-free phone line – 1-866-884-2055, Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (translation services available in 130 languages)
- Regular mail – Conversation on Health, 5-3, 1515 Blanshard St., Victoria, B.C. V8W 3C8
- Email – ConversationonHealth@Victoria1.gov.bc.ca
- Web site – www.BCConversationonHealth.ca
- Contacting a local MLA.

To date almost 65,000 British Columbians have visited the Conversation website, called the toll-free line, or sent written submissions, and over 5,700 British Columbians have registered for a regional public forum, health professional session, or patient meeting.

Visit the Conversation on Health web site at www.BCConversationonHealth.ca

Media contact: Marisa Adair
Director of Communications
Ministry of Health
250 920-8500

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