

May 25, 2010

Ten beds to be opened at Stollery Children's Hospital

Changes at three Edmonton hospitals enhance care for children

EDMONTON - Alberta Health Services will open 10 beds at the Stollery Children's Hospital as part of a consolidation of inpatient pediatric beds at the facility.

The expanded capacity at the Stollery will allow Covenant Health to transfer eight pediatric beds (three at the Misericordia and five at the Grey Nuns) and focus its efforts where most of their care for children is needed – in busy child health clinics, emergency departments and intermediate care nurseries for newborns.

The changes will take effect by September 1, 2010.

"The Stollery was developed to serve as a specialized site with the expertise and programs to ensure children who require inpatient services get the best care available," says Dr. Susan Gilmour, Clinical Department Head for Child Health, Edmonton Zone, and Chair of the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Alberta.

"Adding these beds is another step in consolidating pediatric inpatient beds in the Edmonton area at the Stollery Children's Hospital."

The Stollery is the primary acute care centre for children in the Edmonton area. The opening of 10 beds will increase its bed capacity to 146. Alberta Health Services and Covenant Health will work together to ensure a smooth transition of services.

"For the vast majority of our families, there will be no change to the services they have come to depend on when their children are not well – whether it's an emergency in the middle of the night or an ongoing health issue they struggle with each day," says Greg Hadubiak, Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for the Grey Nuns and Misericordia Community Hospitals.

"By shifting our resources to where they are needed most, we will be able to enhance our services in our Intermediate Care Nurseries, our child health clinics, and emergency and outpatient services."

Children who require emergency care will still have access to health services at all of the hospitals in the Edmonton area, including the Covenant Health sites. Over the past year, 98 per cent of the children who came to the Grey Nuns and Misericordia Hospitals' Emergency Departments received care and returned home without admission.

Of the two per cent who needed to be admitted to hospital, half were transferred to the Stollery.

The additional capacity at the Stollery Children's Hospital was made possible with the opening of the Mazankowski Alberta Heart Institute in 2009.

Alberta Health Services is the provincial health authority responsible for planning and delivering health supports and services for more than 3.7 million adults and children living in Alberta. Its mission is to provide a patient-focused, quality health system that is accessible and sustainable for all Albertans.

Covenant Health is Canada's largest Catholic provider of health care, building on a 147-year tradition of compassionate care in Alberta. Covenant Health's team of 14,000 staff, physicians and volunteers serve Albertans with a range of acute care, continuing care, assisted living, rehabilitation and palliative care in 16 facilities in 11 communities across the province.

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