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Hospital temporarily moves intensive care, palliative units

Relocation will minimize noise, activity for vulnerable patients during construction

MEDICINE HAT – The intensive care and acute palliative care units at Medicine Hat Regional Hospital are being temporarily relocated to ensure vulnerable patients are not disturbed by construction noise and activity during their hospital stay.

Seven acute palliative care beds will move to the geriatric assessment/rehabilitation unit following minor renovations. Then the palliative care unit will be turned into the temporary home for the ICU following renovations to create single rooms, isolation rooms and central monitoring. Palliative care is expected to move Monday; the ICU in early April. Construction crews will then begin work on the north side of the hospital.

“This work is going to create additional noise and vibration,” says Sean Chilton, Senior Vice President for the South Zone of Alberta Health Services. “Our ICU and palliative care patients are vulnerable and we felt strongly we needed to minimize the impact of daily construction on them.”

This phase of the site’s redevelopment is expected to take six months. Once done, ICU and palliative care will return to their original areas within the hospital. There will be a temporary reduction of 10 beds at the hospital over the course of the construction project: three in palliative care and seven in geriatric assessment/rehabilitation. There will be no reduction in ICU beds.

“We do have to slightly reduce our acute palliative care space at the hospital but that impact will be offset by the availability of Carmel Hospice, where we have 10 community-based hospice beds for palliative or end-of-life care,” says Linda Iwasiw, AHS Vice President, Acute Care East.

AHS is also working with both Covenant Health and continuing care operators to identify available community support beds and continuing care spaces in the city and surrounding areas in the event they’re needed.

“The temporary relocation of the ICU and palliative care units may affect where patients receive care, not when they receive care,” says Iwasiw. “Patients will continue to receive high-quality care in a timely manner during our ongoing redevelopment.”

Signage will be in place to help patients and visitors find their way to the new temporary units.

Alberta Health Services is the provincial health authority responsible for planning and delivering health supports and services for more than four 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.

- 30 -

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