

For Immediate Release | Dec. 1, 2020

New 1-800 number expanded to improve access to community care

KELOWNA - Interior Health is making it easier for people in the Cariboo Chilcotin, Central Okanagan, and Kootenay Boundary regions to access and navigate home and community care and chronic disease management services.

The central number was launched as a pilot project in South Okanagan on Sept. 8, 2020. As of Dec. 1, it is expanded and will provide a single point of access for residents in these areas to connect to health-care services in their community seven days a week by calling **1-800-707-8550**.

People calling this number will reach a central intake office and will be connected to the appropriate services including:

- Care management services:
 - community nursing, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, dietitian, social work, speech language, and respiratory therapy
 - support in your home to assist your daily living needs, such as personal care, special exercises, medication assistance and in-home respite
 - adult day services (personal care services and therapeutic activities in a community setting)
 - eligibility assessment for funded assisted living and long-term care homes
- Chronic disease management
- Palliative care services:
 - community nursing
 - social work
 - hospice care
- Acquired brain injury services

It does not replace existing contact numbers, including the Interior Health crisis line (1-888-353-2273), acute or emergency services, or 911.

The phone line has been developed in response to feedback from clients and the public, to make it simpler for people to find and access the services they need.

The central phone service will continue to be implemented in additional regions in the New Year.

Similar improvements to access are being initiated for community mental health and substance use, where a new single phone line is also in development and is expected to launch this winter across Interior Health.

Quick Facts:

The communities considered within the Cariboo Chilcotin, Central Okanagan, and Kootenay Boundary regions are:

- **Kootenay Boundary:** Kootenay Lake (Kaslo, East Shore); Nelson; Trail; Salmo; Arrow Lakes (New Denver, Nakusp); Grand Forks; Kettle Valley (Midway); and Castlegar

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- **Cariboo/Chilcotin:** Williams Lake; 100 Mile House; Alexis Creek; Tatla Lake; Nimpo Lake; Kleena Kleene; Tatlayoko Lake; Hanceville; Big Creek; Gang Ranch; Riske Creek; McLeese Lake; Big Lake; Likely; Horsefly; Lac La Hache; Lone Butte; Inter Lakes; 70 Mile House; TsiDeIDel; Tl'esqox; Tl'etinqox; ?Esdliagh; Yunesit'in; Xeni Gwet'in; Stswecem'c Xgat'tem; Xat'sull; T'exelc; Esk'etmc; Tsq'Escen; and Ulkatcho
 - **Central Okanagan:** Peachland; West Kelowna; Kelowna; Rutland; and Lake Country