



## SOUTH OKANAGAN SIMILKAMEEN PRIMARY CARE NETWORK

MINISTRY OF HEALTH - UPDATE  
APRIL 16, 2019

On Friday, April 12, the South Okanagan Similkameen Division of Family Practice, Interior Health and the Penticton Indian Band were joined by Health Minister Adrian Dix to announce the South Okanagan Similkameen Primary Care Network (PCN). This will bring additional primary care resources to the community and allow for the planning of a team-based primary-care clinic. This marks the third community to launch their PCN since the first networks were announced in February.

The South Okanagan Similkameen PCN will improve access to care for residents of Summerland, Penticton and Okanagan Falls and will become fully operational over the next three years. Over that time, up to 22 new health care providers will be recruited and the PCN will expand to include Oliver, Osoyoos, Keremeos, Princeton and surrounding FN communities. The new practitioners recruited will include six new general practitioners, five new nurse practitioners and 11 additional health-care professionals ranging from a registered nurse, social workers, a pharmacist and physiotherapists.

Once fully operational, these additional resources will be integrated into the new team-based primary care clinic in Penticton, the two existing primary care clinics in

Summerland and Penticton, the Snxastwilxtn Centre and the Martin St. Outreach Centre. The new and existing health-care practitioners will work together with existing primary care professionals delivering team-based care.

The new clinic in Penticton is anticipated to open in 2020 and will provide extended hours of service and help address some of the attachment needs in the community.

The South Okanagan Similkameen PCN is an important step connecting patients with everyday day health care services they need. Over time, as the PCN moves forward with development and staffing, there will be a process for patients to indicate that they are looking for a physician or nurse practitioner.

We would like to thank our partners in the South Okanagan Similkameen for their commitment to improving care. This is the first PCN announced in the province outside of the Lower Mainland, and all the clinics in the region are participating in the PCN – thank you to everyone who has worked together to make it a reality.

### More Information

To learn more about the South Okanagan Similkameen PCN, visit [BC Gov News](#).

## Key Messages

- PCNs will add much needed resources to communities and bring health-care providers together to make sure all a patient's primary care needs are met – and will become the backbone of team-based care in B.C.
- Each PCN is developed with local partners and provides a platform to organize teams of providers together to streamline referrals, increase patient attachment to regular providers and better support the unique primary care needs of an entire community. PCNs include new and existing health-care teams who work to meet their local health needs.
- Over time, PCNs will be established in all regions of British Columbia, as part of the Province's Primary Care Strategy.

## Frequently Asked Questions

**What is a Primary Care Network?** A Primary Care Network is a local partnership of teams of health care providers that include health authorities, Division of Family Practice physicians, nurse practitioners, First Nations and other community health providers. Networks provide the platform to organize teams of providers together to streamline referrals, increase patient attachment to regular primary care providers and better support the unique needs of the entire community – they are one of the ways that we are working to enable true team-based care.

**How many clinics are participating in the South Okanagan Similkameen PCN?** The South Okanagan Similkameen PCN has 20 primary care clinics in Summerland, Penticton and Okanagan Falls participating in the PCN and 50 general practitioners – this is 100 percent of the clinics in the region. Over the next three years, it will expand to include clinics and practitioners in the surrounding communities. The networks will partner new and existing health-care professionals with the health authority and community organizations as part of networked, team-based approach to providing care.

**How can people access primary care networks?** A website will be established for the networks to provide information to patients, including which clinics are part of the network, services provided and hours of operations, as well as how to access services and become attached to a practice. Each network will actively communicate with its community as it grows its services so that people living in the community know how and where to access the health services they need.

*“By linking primary-care providers in networks, we will help put the patient at the centre of their own care and reduce the workload and stress that providers face.”*

*– Adrian Dix, Minister of Health*

