



Pictured: RN Marissa Pachulok welcoming Jaylene Kemp, the first patient of the new Elk Valley Maternity Clinic at Elk Valley Hospital in Fernie.

Elk Valley Maternity Clinic

Collaborative, sustainable maternity care for families across the Elk Valley

The Elk Valley Maternity Clinic (EVMC) brings together maternity providers in Fernie, Sparwood, and Elkford to offer local families coordinated, patient-centred, team-based care from early pregnancy through delivery and up to six weeks postpartum. **This work is still in its early stages, with the team actively developing systems, relationships, and processes as the model takes shape.**

The EVMC is staffed by multidisciplinary team, including family physicians, a midwife, PCN perinatal nurse, and allied health professionals. Providers rotate clinic shifts and on-call duties across all three community clinic locations. This approach helps patients build relationships with the full care team while benefiting from their combined expertise.

The EVMC centralizes care, creates predictable on-call coverage, strengthens communication between providers, and ensures every family has access to care. Elk Valley Maternity Clinic is anticipated to serve 140 -180 maternity and postpartum families per year.

How it Started

For years, maternity care in the Elk Valley has relied on individual family physicians and a single midwife working independently—an approach that, over time, has led to service gaps, provider burnout, and challenges in sustaining consistent, equitable care for local families. Now, with the essential support of regional and provincial partners, local providers are laying the groundwork for a new shared model of care—one that strengthens collaboration, builds team capacity, and ensures high-quality care close to home.



Physician Leads:

Dr. Kimberley Allan,
Dr. Adriana Meija-French

Midwife Lead: Taina Turcasso
Physicians Involved: Dr. Shelley Forrest, Dr. Lori Gadsden, Dr. Joel Stimson, Dr. Lisa Tessler, Dr. Virginia Robinson, Dr. Deena Case
Project Lead: Jacqueline Arling
Program Manager: Jacqui van Zyl
Executive Director: Megan Purcell



News Coverage on Clinic Launch

Project Areas

Team Building and Relationships – Bringing together physicians, midwives, nurses, and allied health to create a resilient, cohesive maternity team.

Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) – Embedding regular evaluation, data-driven reflection, and process improvement into clinic operations.

Shared Vision, Mission, and Values – Defining guiding principles that reflect the team's commitment to equitable, high-quality maternity care.

Standardized Workflows – Creating clear, consistent processes for prenatal, delivery, and postpartum care, with predictable call schedules and shared tools.

System Integration – Building a connected network with Public Health, East Kootenay Primary Care Network, and regional partners to support families from pregnancy through early parenthood.

Project Goals

By November 2027, the Elk Valley Maternity Project will:

- Establish a sustainable, team-based maternity care model serving Fernie, Sparwood, Elkford, and surrounding rural communities.
- Ensure 95% of low-risk births are supported through standardized, evidence-based procedures.
- Strengthen team resilience and communication across providers.
- Improve continuity of care and patient experiences.
- Foster collaborative learning and continuous quality improvement.

Anticipated Impact

- Improved patient and provider experiences.
- Coordinated and sustainable maternity care system.
- Strengthened collaboration between local and regional providers.
- Standardized, high-quality care across the Elk Valley.
- Reduced provider burnout and improved retention.
- Enhanced access and equity for rural families.

Partners

Partners: Elk Valley Family Physicians and Midwife, Interior Health, Ktunaxa Nation, Shared Care, EKPCN and East Kootenay Division of Family Practice.

