

Real-Time Virtual Support (RTVS) for First Nations and rural + remote communities

For the latest information, visit rccbc.ca/rtvs

The Collaborative Centre for Virtual Health was established last year with support from Leadership Council. This is jointly supported and led by First Nations Health Authority (FNHA), Providence Health, Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA), and the Rural Coordination Centre of BC. It is guided by a Partnership Pentagram Plus table including geographic health authorities, citizens, academia, rural providers, linked sectors and policy makers. Its work has been focused around virtual care, while combatting the barriers posed by geography, distance, and weather to address health equity in BC. This forms an “Innovation Accelerator” within the Provincial Digital Health Strategy. All of these initiatives are locally driven and will be implemented in partnership.

So where are we and what are we accelerating?

Virtual Care Platform Access: The Joint Standing Committee on Rural Issues (JSC) has generously supported the provisioning of a virtual care platform for every rural doctor and nurse practitioner serving rural patients in BC. The choice of platform is driven by rural doctors as the best fit at this point in time. We remain platform agnostic and have selected Zoom™ as one that can currently meet the needs of rural providers in connecting with patients, enlarging the healthcare team wrapped around patients and supporting emergency room (ER) services. Among other things, this helps to enable providers, who may not be able to be physically present, to carry some of the clinical workload for their teams. Accessing accounts for rural providers is available at <https://rccbc.ca/zoom/>.

HEiDi: The HealthLink BC Emergency iDoctor-in-assistance (HEiDi) service introduces a Virtual Physician to the provincial 8-1-1 nurses call flow. HEiDi’s immediate goal is to increase capacity and assist nurses with decision support to meet the needs of the COVID-19 crisis, which has substantially increased the number of calls and time spent on calls due to inherent complexities. 8-1-1 nurses can transfer calls that meet specified clinical criteria to a Medical Office Assistant (MOA) who in turn will arrange for a virtual visit or call with a HEiDi physician.

RUDi: Real-time virtual rural generalist/ER support. One might see this as a rural, virtual urgent primary care centre providing access to a physician who understands their context and supports the primary care and ER teams in rural communities. This includes partnering with FNHA to provide remote support for their First Nations communities. Visit rccbc.ca/rtvs/rudi to learn how to connect to RUDi.

ROSe: Virtual intensivist/critical care support 24/7 to rural ERs. Visit rccbc.ca/rtvs/rose for more info.

First Nations and Rural Virtual Doctor of the Day: FNHA, in partnership with RCCbc, are ensuring that primary health care is accessible to all First Nations citizens across the province. This service is available 7 days a week from 8:30 am – 4:30 pm. To book an appointment, clients call: **1-855-344-3800**. Each visit is triaged and scheduled by a response group of Medical Office Assistants (MOAs) and is hosted by Zoom.

This service is currently active in Island Health and Northern Health and will deploy in Interior Health, Fraser Health, and Vancouver Coastal Health shortly. For more information, contact RCCbc at info@rccbc.ca.

Rural Virtual Dermatology Service: If you require immediate support with dermatology, call **778-771-3376**, Monday to Friday from 9 am to 5 pm. Calls outside of these times should be directed to the on-call physician/dermatologist and/or your local ER. For more information, contact Dr. Nathan Teegee at info@rccbc.ca.

Virtual Locum Service: Working with [Locums for Rural BC](https://locumsforruralbc.ca) to offer a more flexible approach to locum support including linking locums with community. Communication from the program will be released soon. If you have any questions, email info@locumsruralbc.ca or leave a message at **1-877-357-4757** and a locum officer will get back to you.

