

A Step Closer

Update on the Summer 2008 Opening of BC Cancer Agency's Abbotsford Centre

State-of-the-art radiation therapy equipment to benefit local cancer patients

This fall, \$14 million in radiation therapy equipment arrived at the BC Cancer Agency's Abbotsford Centre, set to open in the summer of 2008.

Approximately 60% of people diagnosed with cancer receive radiation therapy at some point in the course of their treatment.

Radiation therapy uses high-energy beams to kill or shrink tumour cells and is often used in conjunction with other forms of treatment, like chemotherapy or surgery, to treat cancerous tumours.

"This is an exciting stage of the project. We've been planning for months for the delivery of these pieces of equipment," says Olwen Demidoff, Director of Clinical Operations, Radiation Therapy, for the Agency's Fraser Valley and Abbotsford Centres. "Now the hands-on work of preparing these machines for clinical use begins."

The BC Cancer Agency is the sole provider of radiation therapy to cancer patients, providing 163,000 radiation therapy treatments to more than 10,000 patients each year. As the population ages, so does the demand for cancer treatment and therapies, and the Abbotsford Centre will have some of the most advanced radiation therapy equipment available to treat patients.

In total, the Agency now has 28 linear accelerators located at its regional cancer centres in Vancouver, Surrey, Kelowna, Victoria and Abbotsford.



Olwen Demidoff, director of clinical operations, Radiation Therapy, and Dr. Ramani Ramaseshan, medical physics leader, for the Agency's Fraser Valley and Abbotsford Centres, were on-site as \$14 million in radiation therapy equipment was delivered to the Abbotsford Centre.

Public Forums

7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Thursday, March 27
Wednesday, April 23

Garden Park Towers
2825 Clearbrook Rd.
Abbotsford, BC

The BC Cancer Agency provides a comprehensive cancer control program for the people of B.C., including prevention, screening, early detection, research, education, care and treatment.

Our Mission:

- reduce the incidence of cancer;
- reduce the mortality from cancer; and
- improve the quality of life for those living with cancer

An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority, the BC Cancer Agency currently operates cancer centres in Vancouver, Surrey, Kelowna and Victoria. The Abbotsford Regional Hospital and Cancer Centre (ARHCC), a partnership with the Fraser Health Authority, is the Agency's fifth cancer centre. Construction for the new hospital cancer centre is well underway and is on schedule to open in Summer 2008.

BC Cancer Agency sends out call for volunteers for Abbotsford Centre

Wanda Norwood is among the first Fraser Valley residents on a waiting list to volunteer at the BC Cancer Agency's Abbotsford Centre. And, she's already got her "dream" volunteer assignment picked out: sitting and visiting with patients as they await their consultation with their oncologist or other cancer care provider.

"It is so incredibly rewarding to be able to help someone else," says Norwood, a breast cancer survivor, who also lost her husband of 32 years to cancer in 2004. "You have individuals that are absolutely petrified of coming in for their first visit, and if you can sit with them, answer questions, or just help take their mind off their appointment, you feel like you've been able to really help."

About 100 volunteers are needed to greet and escort patients to other areas of the hospital for diagnostic tests; to support "chemo-teach" sessions, which help demystify the chemotherapy treatment process to patients; and to help patients find resources at the cancer information centre.

Volunteers need to be available for a four-hour shift, at least once a week, Monday to Friday, and make a one-year commitment.

"I'm confident that it won't be difficult to find volunteers," says Lisa Kenyon, Volunteer Services Coordinator for the Abbotsford Centre. "The community has already been so incredibly supportive of the cancer centre. It's hard to find someone who hasn't been touched by cancer, and when you've had cancer or a family member who has had cancer, you want to give back in some way."

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Lisa at 604.930.4055, extension 4401 or e-mail her at lkenyon@bccancer.bc.ca

Fast Facts: BC Cancer Agency's New Abbotsford Centre

- Scheduled opening: Summer 2008
- Located in the new Abbotsford Regional Hospital and Cancer Centre
- Can serve up to 2,500 cancer patients yearly
- Construction and equipment cost for Abbotsford Regional Hospital and Cancer Centre: \$355 million
- Funded by: BC Ministry of Health
- Services provided:
 - Chemotherapy (12 chairs)
 - Radiation therapy (four linear accelerators with space for two more)
 - Clinical trials units, participating in national and international trials, funded by BC Cancer Foundation donors
 - Cancer prevention education
 - Patient and family services
 - Nutrition consulting
 - Rehabilitation support
 - Pain management
 - Hereditary Cancer Program



Wanda Norwood, a volunteer at the Fraser Valley Centre, will move out to the Abbotsford Centre when it opens later this year.



BC Cancer Agency

CARE + RESEARCH

An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority



For the latest BC Cancer Agency Abbotsford updates, visit www.bccancer.bc.ca