
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Health Services
BC Children's Hospital

MULTI-ORGAN TRANSPLANT CLINIC HELPS KIDS AND PARENTS

VANCOUVER – A new multi-organ transplant clinic at BC Children's Hospital, an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA), is providing access to very specialized access for around 120 B.C. children – and their families – who have had an organ transplant.

“Following a successful organ transplant, these kids still face a number of serious health challenges, including a suppressed immune system,” said Health Services Minister George Abbott. “The new clinic offers the best practice model of integrated care that will improve the quality of life for patients and their family. The new clinic will not only care for patients' medical needs but also for their emotional well-being.”

The clinic provides a new setting and opportunity for more comprehensive care by a specialized, multi-disciplinary team of health professionals for children in British Columbia who have received a solid organ transplant and their families.

“Children who have had a transplant still face a number of issues. It's incredibly important to have a clinic like the one at BC Children's to provide on-going care,” said Carmen Carriere, mother of Brynn McKenna, a seven-year-old heart transplant patient. “I am very pleased that we have a multi-disciplinary team that we can trust to not only look after Brynn's immediate needs but to also provide her with expert advice in the future so she can make her own decisions about her care.”

Operated on an outpatient basis, the clinic addresses the most urgent needs and ongoing management of patients who have had a kidney, heart, liver or bowel transplant. The multi-organ transplant clinic was made possible through \$288,000 in annual funding from the Ministry of Health Services through the PHSA and BC Transplant. In addition to being followed by their specialized transplant physician the clinic will also provide patients with access to expanded nursing, pharmacist, social work, dietitian and psychology support.

According to PHSA board chair Wynne Powell, “Previously, patients' appointments would be on different days and in different locations throughout the Oak Street campus. By providing co-ordinated, interdisciplinary care in one visit and location patients will get the care they need in fewer visits to the hospital.”

BC Children's mainly performs pediatric kidney transplant operations (nine in 2008), and is part of a national network of children's hospitals that provide solid organ transplants. Pediatric specialists assess, consult and offer pre-operative care for patients regardless of the type of transplant they require and follow them post-operatively in the multi-organ transplant clinic following their transplant.

More than 120 pediatric transplant patients will now receive care in the new clinic. Post-operative pediatric transplant patients account for more than 500 outpatient clinic visits to BC Children's each year.

"Previously, care for these patients was provided in a dispersed manner at the hospital with kidney transplant recipients being followed in the renal clinic, and cardiac, liver and bowel transplant recipients being followed in their respective clinics," said Dr. Douglas Matsell, division head of nephrology and the multi-organ transplant clinic at BC Children's Hospital. "Patients are now seen by a specialist and interdisciplinary team members on the same visit so there is an opportunity for urgent consultations to occur should any complications be discovered."

The clinic operates every Wednesday in the Ambulatory Care Building at BC Children's Hospital and patients are referred by their specialist.

A commitment from the throne speech included upgrading and expanding BC Children's Hospital in partnership with the BC Children's Hospital Foundation and the Provincial Health Services Agency.

1 backgrounder(s) attached.

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BACKGROUND

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MULTI-ORGAN TRANSPLANT CLINIC

The number of children who receive transplants and followed in British Columbia continues to grow, with more than 120 pediatric patients actively being cared for in BC Children's Hospital's ambulatory care clinics. Historically, care for these patients was provided by individual clinics based on the type of transplant the patient had received. That structure presented challenges in co-ordinating the care of the patients, including the physician, nursing and allied health services, medical records and the scheduling of patient visits.

The newly established multi-organ transplant clinic at BC Children's addresses the most urgent needs and ongoing management of patients' complex health needs. At the clinic, patients are followed by one of four specialized transplant physicians and have access to expanded nursing, pharmacist, social work, dietitian and psychology support. By seeing a number of the interdisciplinary team members on the same visit there is the opportunity for urgent consultations to occur should any complication be discovered. The clinic also provides preventative nutritional and psychosocial support for both the patients and their families.

Seeing patients in one clinic, regardless of the type of solid organ transplant they have received allows for greater efficiency of service, and improved communication with patients and their families. Improvements are demonstrated by having closer working relationships between team members at the clinic.

BC Children's mainly performs pediatric kidney transplant operations performing nine in 2008. A national network of children's hospitals provides cardiac, liver and bowel transplant services. Pediatric specialists at BC Children's assess, consult, diagnose and offer pre-operative care for patients regardless of the type of transplant they require and follow them post-operatively in the new Multi-Organ Transplant Clinic following their transplant.

The Multi-Organ Transplant Clinic operates every Wednesday in the Ambulatory Care Building at BC Children's and was made possible through \$288,000 in annual funding from the Ministry of Health Services through the Provincial Health Services Authority and BC Transplant. Post-operative pediatric transplant patients account for more than 500 outpatient clinic visits to BC Children's each year.

BC Children's Hospital, an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority, provides expert care for the province's most seriously ill or injured children, including newborns and adolescents. BC Children's is an academic health centre affiliated with the University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University, and the Child & Family Research Institute. For more information, please visit www.bcchildrens.ca.

BC Transplant (BCT), established in 1986, is a comprehensive health-care organization responsible for all aspects of organ transplant in British Columbia, including pre-transplant assessment, organ recovery and donor matching, follow-up care at regional clinics across the province, research and clinical trials, and public education.

Over the past four decades, more than 4,500 British Columbians have received a life-saving organ transplant. For more information, please visit www.transplant.bc.ca

The Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA) plans, manages and evaluates selected specialty and province-wide health care services across B.C., working with the five geographic health authorities to deliver province-wide solutions that improve the health of British Columbians. For more information, please visit www.phsa.ca.

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