



Eastern
Health

NEWS RELEASE

Eastern Health Expands Mental Health and Primary Health-Care Services on the Burin Peninsula

November 28, 2017 – St. John’s, NL: Eastern Health has taken several measures to expand primary health care services and increase access to mental health and addictions services on the Burin Peninsula. The measures are part of a primary health-care initiative established on the Burin Peninsula in May of this year, at which time residents were surveyed to see what was working well in health-care services, along with opportunities for improvement.

Access to mental health and addictions services was identified as an area on the peninsula that required greater focus. The recent number of suicides in the Grand Bank area has also highlighted the need for additional services and support.

As a result, on Wednesday, November 29, 2017, Eastern Health will open a Mental Health and Addictions Wellness and Resources Drop-In Service in Grand Bank. Individuals will have additional access to counselling services, be able to connect with other members of the primary health-care team, and to access information and resources to better manage their mental health and addictions needs. Staffed by mental health practitioners (registered nurse and social worker), the service will operate each Wednesday from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Dr. S. Beckley Health Centre in Grand Bank. Mental health and addictions support is also available by appointment during the other days of the week.

“This is an important step as we continue to strengthen primary health care on the Burin Peninsula,” said David Diamond, President and CEO, Eastern Health. “Eastern Health is committed to ensuring access to quality services in the eastern region, particularly in the area of mental health and addictions, as outlined in our Strategic Plan *Lighting the Way: Navigating Together*. Providing the most appropriate services to people, when and where they are most needed, will help improve the overall health of the population.”

Mental health and addictions services will also be increased in Marystown. On Mondays and Tuesdays, Eastern Health will offer a walk-in mental health and addictions clinic in the Marystown Community Services Building, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., which will include DoorWays single-session counselling, among other services. Eastern Health is also partnering with Richard’s Legacy Foundation for Survivors of Suicide Loss, Inc. to offer suicide intervention training (ASIST) to health-care professionals and community groups on the Burin Peninsula in December, February and March.

In August 2017, Eastern Health partnered with town councils and community agencies on the Burin Peninsula to form a Coalition for Mental Health & Wellness. “The new coalition will foster a healthy community by promoting mental health and addictions awareness, reducing stigma and improving quality of life,” said Kim Grant, Regional Director of Mental Health and Addictions (Community).

“Our community partners will assist us as we improve access to mental health services in general, and develop a community action plan for suicide prevention, intervention and post-suicide supports.”

The Burin Peninsula Community Coalition for Mental Health & Wellness will be aligned with a newly-formed Community Advisory Council, which will guide the recently established Burin Peninsula Primary Health-Care Initiative. Access to primary health care will be enhanced with the hiring of a nurse practitioner at the Terrenceville Medical Clinic to provide service to residents of the area for two days per week.

Primary health care is generally the first point of entry into the health-care system, and includes services that promote health and wellness, prevent illness, treat health issues or injuries, and diagnose and manage chronic health conditions.

“This new primary health-care initiative provides individuals and communities with an opportunity to partner with us, as we identify renewed priorities and goals on the Burin Peninsula,” added Kim Green, Rural Health Manager and Senior Site Manager at the Burin Peninsula Health Care Centre. “All of these new and enhanced services are aimed at a transformed model of primary health care, which can be sustained into the future for the benefit of the men, women and children we serve in this area.”

For more information on the Burin Peninsula Primary Health Care Initiative, as well as the Burin Peninsula Community Coalition for Mental Health & Wellness, visit: www.easternhealth.ca/EngageUs.

About Eastern Health

About Eastern Health Eastern Health is the largest, integrated health authority in Newfoundland and Labrador employing approximately 13,000 dedicated employees, over 700 medical staff, and is supported by more than 2,000 volunteers, including members of numerous auxiliaries and fundraising foundations. With an annual budget of approximately \$1.45 billion, the authority offers the full continuum of health and community services including public health, long-term care, community services, hospital care and unique provincial programs and services. Serving a population of over 300,000, Eastern Health’s geographic boundaries extend from St. John’s west to Port Blandford including all communities on the Avalon, Burin and Bonavista Peninsulas.

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