

For Immediate Release | March 18, 2020

COVID-19 UPDATE: Impact on scheduled surgical procedures

Interior Health (IH) is working in partnership with the Ministry of Health and the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) to respond to COVID-19.

Along with other agencies and health authorities, IH has pandemic plans in place and is prepared to adjust capacity as required. As part of this planning, and following direction from the Ministry of Health on March 16, IH will immediately begin postponing non-urgent scheduled surgeries. It is important to note that urgent and emergency procedures will not be impacted.

Patients with scheduled surgeries will be contacted by an IH booking clerk. In addition, for gastrointestinal and endoscopy procedures, patients may be contacted by their surgeon's office. Patients should wait to be contacted directly about their procedure.

Some surgeries, including those related to cancer and scheduled caesarean sections, will not be impacted. Patients will be contacted to confirm date and time.

IH recognizes the significant impact of postponing surgeries. However, this is a necessary step to ensure we have enough hospital capacity for those affected by COVID-19, should we see a rapid increase in demand like other countries have experienced.

Interior Health will assess this action over the coming weeks and will advise patients when their procedure has been rebooked.

The BC Centre for Disease Control is the recommended resource for provincial information that is accurate and current: <http://www.bccdc.ca/>. Information is being updated frequently on the site and individuals are encouraged to check back regularly (eg. daily).

Interior Health also has frequently updated information on our website: www.interiorhealth.ca.

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