



The foundation
of kidney care.

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MEDIA RELEASE

March 17, 2010

For Immediate Release

One-stop approach for kidney patients with complex health conditions delivers better care at lower cost

Vancouver, BC – A new, integrated approach to medical care developed by the BC Renal Agency, an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority, is providing patients with advanced kidney disease and additional chronic conditions with improved, more coordinated treatment in a single location at a lower cost to the province’s healthcare system.

The integrated care clinic at St. Paul’s Hospital, opened in 2009, is staffed by an interdisciplinary team of care providers, including a dietitian, pharmacist, social worker and nurse, as well as by a nephrologist (kidney specialist), cardiologist and endocrinologist (diabetes specialist). Similar integrated care clinics have been established in Salmon Arm, Penticton and Langley.

“Many people with advanced kidney disease are also affected by heart disease and diabetes,” said nephrologist Dr. Monica Beaulieu, “so it makes perfect sense to treat them for all three conditions at the same time, in the same place.”

“Taking an integrated approach also helps eliminate unnecessary duplication of medical and laboratory tests. Such duplicate testing costs the BC healthcare system \$4.5 million a year,” continued Beaulieu.

“I love the system and feel totally connected to the team,” said 23-year-old Emily Barker of Vancouver, who has kidney disease and type-1 diabetes. “They’re so on top of things, and I love how they’re so committed and interested in my case.”

The integrated care clinic was established as the result of a study by the BC Renal Agency that revealed that more comprehensive treatment for kidney patients with other chronic conditions resulted in fewer of them needing emergency treatment or hospitalization.

Backgrounder

Are Your Kidneys OK?

Test your knowledge of kidney disease by filling out the quiz posted throughout Kidney Month at www.bcrenalagency.ca. At the end of March, random draws will be made and prizes awarded.

What are some of the symptoms to look for?

In the early stages of kidney disease, many individuals experience no symptoms. However, common early symptoms of kidney disease include: foamy or bloody urine; a frequent need to urinate at night; headaches; and puffy eyes or ankles.

Why is there a Kidney Month?

While patients with kidney disease in British Columbia have some of the best outcomes in the country and a broad range of care options, early diagnosis and treatment are essential to achieve the best patient outcomes, as changes to diet or medication can slow or even stop the progress of kidney disease.

During the March Drive...

More than 8,000 Kidney Foundation volunteers will canvass homes across BC to raise awareness and funds for research and patient programs.

Where can I find out more about World Kidney Day?

www.worldkidneyday.org

Where can I learn more about kidney disease?

www.bcrenalagency.ca

www.kidney.bc.ca

The BC Renal Agency (www.bcrenalagency.ca) and the Kidney Foundation of Canada, BC Branch (www.kidney.bc.ca) are good sources of information for patients and their families. The BC Renal Agency, an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority, has an informative DVD (English, Mandarin, Cantonese, Punjabi and Tagalog versions) featuring patients who tell their stories about living and dealing positively with kidney disease. The DVD can be ordered through the agency's online order form. It can also be viewed online (English only).