

For Immediate Release | May 18, 2021

## New 1-800 number expanded to improve access to community care

EAST KOOTENAY - Interior Health is making it easier for seniors and others in the East Kootenay region to access and navigate home and community care and chronic disease management services.

Residents throughout the East Kootenay can now easily connect to health-care services in their community Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. (MST) by calling **1-800-707-8550**. Communities in the East Kootenay are the latest to see implementation of the new 1-800 number. The central number was launched as a pilot project in South Okanagan in September 2020, and later expanded to the Kootenay Boundary, Central Okanagan and the Cariboo Chilcotin.

People calling this number reach a central intake office and will be connected to the appropriate services including:

- Care management services:
  - community nursing, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, dietitian, social work, speech language, and respiratory therapy
  - support in your home to assist your daily living needs, such as personal care, special exercises, medication assistance and in-home respite
  - adult day services (personal care services and therapeutic activities in a community setting)
  - eligibility assessment for funded assisted living and long-term care homes
- Chronic disease management
- Palliative care services:
  - community nursing
  - social work
  - hospice care
- Acquired brain injury services

It does not replace existing contact numbers, including the Interior Health crisis line (1-888-353-2273), acute or emergency services, or 911.

The phone line has been developed in response to feedback from clients and the public, to make it simpler for people to find and access the services they need.

The central phone service will be expanded to additional regions later this year.

Similar improvements to access have been initiated for community mental health and substance use, where a new single phone line 310-MHSU was launched earlier this year.

### Quick Facts:

The communities included in the East Kootenay expansion are: Brisco; Canal Flats; Cranbrook; Creston; Edgewater; Elkford; Fairmont; Fernie; Golden; Invermere; Jaffray; Kimberley; Moyie; Panorama; Radium Hot Springs; Sparwood; Spillmacheen; Wilmer; Windermere; and Yahk.

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