

Dear North Nanaimo Probus,

The Nanaimo Medical Staff Association wants to wish you all health and safety during these challenging times. We recognize the tremendous efforts by the Ministry of Health and Provincial Health Officer, Dr. Bonnie Henry, in steering our present course away from an impending health care disaster. However, as you are well aware, Nanaimo and communities north of the Malahat were already markedly under resourced in regard to critical care beds before the Covid-19 pandemic.

The implementation of a High Acuity Unit (that was recommended over seven years ago) would mean we have an appropriate space to look after patients who are sick enough to need critical care, but do not need to be on a ventilator. Many patients with SARS CoV-2 (Covid-19) require additional respiratory support and require this critical care to survive their illness. Our ICU is not the place to meet the needs of these patients and is undersized. The emergency department is often overcrowded. It is more important now than ever that we do not diminish our resolve to narrow the gap between the standard of care that all patients should receive in the best of circumstances and the care that is too often the reality on the ground when there are insufficient resources.

The Medical Staff at NRGH are working together to face the challenges of providing care during this pandemic in a way that is quite frankly inspirational. As you recall from our presentation to your community group, we have identified multiple priorities to ensure you and your loved ones receive the level of care they need. While the Covid-19 pandemic has required we sharpen our focus, it has not weakened our resolve to achieve our plan to becoming a true tertiary hospital, along the lines of the 5-year priority services plan. This means that we need to continue to strive together, to achieve the accepted standard of care for patients who come to NRGH for treatment of all manner of illnesses, including strokes and heart attacks.

We thank you for your continued support of our front line and essential staff. Many of you have already made tremendous personal sacrifices during this pandemic, and we want you to know that we are diligently working together to ensure that you and your loved ones receive the care that you need not only today as we face this pandemic, but tomorrow and into the future. We are here for you. Together with your support we will stand strong and see positive changes in patient care at the NRGH for all up-island patients.

Sincerely,

The Nanaimo Medical Staff Association