








## Physician Recruitment in Ashcroft. A third doctor is needed.

*How should we go about it. Some things to consider.*

1. We must offer an attractive position for a new physician to consider.
2. We should promote our communities and our health site showings our strengths and needs and challenges. *(Transparent)*
3. We should align our promotion with that of other groups promoting our location. *(Consistent)*
4. We should be clear about what we need, versus what we want. *(Sustainable).*
5. Community(s) members, municipalities, Interior Health, and others should collaborate.

We continue to offer to work collaboratively with Interior Health, the physicians at the Ashcroft Medical Clinic, and the municipalities to land on a consistent and sustainable approach to recruit physicians.

These are some of the areas we have found with recruitment information that could / should be consistent.

-  HealthMatch
-  Division of Family Practice
-  Interior Health
-  Community – Municipality
-  Rural Coordination Centre of BC

## HOW DO OTHERS DO IT?

*Did you know that Lytton has 24 hour a day 7 day per week emergency services, including laboratory, x-ray and nursing services? See page 2*

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**Community Engagement is...the process of working collaboratively with and through groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity, special interest, or similar situations to address issues affecting the well-being of those people. It is a powerful vehicle for bringing about environmental and behavioral changes that will improve the health of the community and its members.**

## LYTTON EMERGENCY SERVICES AND MEDICAL CLINIC

We have taken a look at the medical services provided in Lytton and wonder how this small but resilient community can maintain a very good service that meets the needs not only of their community but also of those in surrounding areas, and on the highway.

Here's what we know:

Via Wikipedia. *"The **population** of the village municipality as of the 2016 census was 249, with another 1,700 in the immediate area living in rural areas and on reserves of the neighbouring six Nlaka'pamux communities."*

New Interior Health building houses the items below.

7 days per week, Nurse on duty from 9AM to 9PM, emergency services are provided to the community with staffing of a nurse, laboratory, and Xray services, and of course a physician. In addition Emergency services are provided from 9PM to 9 AM by the physicians, with assistance as required by the physician by ambulance, nurse and diagnostics.

Lytton has a medical clinic (private and run by the physicians) inside the Interior Health building. It operates Monday to Friday 9AM to 5 PM

Pharmacy is across the street. (private)

*"The Lytton Medical Clinic has served the area for over twenty-five years. Our family clinic features three doctors who each take on twenty-four/seven (24/7) coverage of the St. Bartholomew's Emergency Department as well as Clinic hours for their shifts."* **As shared on their website.**

Consistent and Sustainable care thanks to a unique situation that works for this community.

We know there are many possibilities to consider that meet the needs of the physicians, the community, the patients, and the remainder of the supporting healthcare professionals.



**If you know about a unique healthcare delivery model that you think we might find interesting, please email us at [info@ahawc.ca](mailto:info@ahawc.ca) And tell us what we should know.**

What a surprise to have the political announcement /promise by the NDP party hopefuls, to provide what we have been asking for since early 2019. Our emergency department was falling apart due to poor management decisions.



Aaron Sumexheltza, NDP candidate for Fraser Nicola, announced that John Horgan promised if the NDP were re-elected, they would ensure Ashcroft Health Site (emergency Department) would reopen 24 hours a day and 7 days a week.

We contacted Aaron for a virtual meeting to ask him what they had in mind.

Aaron was on the road but joined us by Zoom, with his campaign chairperson from Victoria, James McNish.



We asked Aaron what he knew about the current situation with regard to medical services in Ashcroft. He said he had received the message loud and clear from the people in our catchment area that emergency services was / is very important to him.



When he had the opportunity to meet with John Horgan during his campaign trip through Merritt, John asked Aaron, was there anything he could do to help. As Aaron explained to us, he told John of the needs in Ashcroft and it's surrounding areas. Aaron explained that John Horgan and Adrian Dix agreed that giving us 24/7 emergency health care was something they could and would do if the NDP were re-elected.

We asked Aaron why he didn't seek out our organization to hear our thoughts on the situation, and he said he tried to call but had the wrong number. However, he heard from so many, that he knew this situation needed to be resolved. We shared some history on the situation with him and James McNish. We told them we had been attempting to have dialogue with Health Minister Adrian Dix about our situation, but he would not speak with us or reply in any way. So we know he and John Horgan have been aware of our plight here.

James McNish (who works in Victoria for the government) told us this promise that was made publicly would mean something, and that it would give government employees the direction they needed to make this happen. He assured us this promise would mean something.

So now the question we have is this?

When? Does your promise mean anything?

# A promise is a promise.

### Laboratory Services in Ashcroft

Due to COVID and the extra challenges this has made for healthcare delivery, we have been respectfully staying out of the way and assumed nothing would be changing, that we would remain at status quo with healthcare delivery until COVID could be handled / managed etc.

Our society has learned that (under the cover of COVID) there has been a slow and deliberate change in staffing of the laboratory in the Ashcroft Health site.

Absences and departures of some of the lab staff, have not been replaced. When we reviewed the situation once we learned what was transpiring, we noted there were no postings for temporary or permanent positions for Laboratory Technologists for our site.

We understand there are planned retirements of workers.

We understand that rather than providing laboratory staff during the emergency department open hours, the nurses were / are required to use a Point of Care piece of testing equipment.

We understand that all almost all if not all specimen / blood collection etc. is packaged and shipped to Kamloops Laboratory.

Laboratory managers have decided not to fill vacancies but rather use a piece of equipment to assist with testing patients in the emergency department.

We understand the equipment has limitations to what tests can be delivered, which then limits the treatments possible in our emergency department.

We understand the burden of the cutbacks of Lab services means the nursing staff is being required to pick up the extra load in addition to treating, assessing patients in the emergency room. How much more can we ask of them. What is an emergency room without full diagnostics? Is this a lower tier level of care for rural communities?



**November 16th, Lisa Zetes-Zanatta, Executive Director, Interior Health West**, will be attending to update us on the current situation. Please make time to join us by Zoom.

### **Palliative Care—Dying in our Community**

We have a palliative care bed in our long term care facility. At times it isn't possible to gain access to the bed. This means a community member and all of their supporting friends and family must travel to another community, usually Kamloops for their final days / weeks.

The burden of costs and comfort are significant during a difficult time for support members. We need to lobby to ensure a bed is available when needed for our community members. We hope to have some discussions with Interior Health on how this can be achieved.

If you have a story about this particular challenge—we would like to hear about it. Email [info@ahawc.ca](mailto:info@ahawc.ca) and share your story.