

NEWS RELEASE

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Leading-edge training technology in place at four northern hospitals

Implementation of a new training resource for health care practitioners in the north is complete thanks to a one-of-a-kind partnership between Northern Health, the University of Northern B.C. (UNBC) School of Nursing, and the University of B.C. (UBC) Northern Medical Program.

Today marked the grand opening of the Northern Clinical Simulation Centre at Fort St. John Hospital, and the final step in the implementation of a network of simulators that includes hospitals in Terrace, Prince George and Quesnel.

"This program is unique, not only for being the only clinical simulation program in BC that is a partnership between nursing, medicine and a health authority," said Peace River North MLA Pat Pimm. "Northern Health is the only region where this partnership supports a program with multiple centres in multiple locations,"

The Northern Clinical Simulation Program uses state-of-the-art robotic patient simulators to allow health care students, staff and physicians to learn and practice skills for responding to a patient's real-life care needs. Patient simulators exhibit patient signs such as pulses, breathing, heart sounds and speech, based on customizable scenarios. Those scenarios, and the learning outcomes from them, can then be shared with students and staff throughout the network.

"Simulation has gathered increasing acceptance over the years as an integral part of healthcare training and is a fundamental approach to help improve patient safety," said Tammy Hoefer, regional manager for the Northern Clinical Simulation Program. "Skills repetition in simulated practice reduces the potential for error and enhances skills performance when it really matters."

The Fort St. John centre was included in the design and construction of the new Fort St. John Hospital, while centres in Terrace, Quesnel and Prince George were added through renovations to existing facilities since 2011. Grant funding, applied for by UNBC, supported \$654,000 in improvements and renovations in Prince George, Terrace and Quesnel, as well as equipment costs. Annual operating costs, funded through NH's

partnership with the UNBC School of Nursing and UBC Northern Medical Program, are estimated at \$500,000.

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