



# A Commitment to Surgical Renewal in B.C.

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## Progress Report #6: October – November 2020

January 6, 2021

## Minister's Message

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Nine months ago, on March 16, 2020, we postponed non-urgent scheduled surgeries to ensure our hospitals had the capacity for COVID-19 patients. On May 7, we released our commitment to surgical renewal in B.C. and began calling patients to reschedule their surgeries.

We resumed non-urgent scheduled surgeries on May 18 and have been providing weekly progress updates at our Thursday COVID-19 briefings. We provided our first monthly progress report in July and this monthly report – our sixth – again chronicles the extraordinary work of everyone in this massive undertaking to change how surgeries are delivered in British Columbia.

The information in the pages ahead tells a remarkable story of achievement in the number of patients called, surgeries delivered, operating room hours extended, waitlists reduced, and in staff hired and trained. It tells a story of progress on all fronts essential to getting patients the surgeries they need and the care they require.

As I write this, we are well into the second wave of COVID-19, vaccines are being administered across B.C., but our hospitalization rate is the highest it has been since our fight began. We are losing so many seniors and elders. COVID-19 is everywhere, and we must again force it to loosen its grip.

Through Dr. Henry, we know our task, our duty and our obligation. We need to keep doing what we've been taught to do, what Dr. Henry has asked us to do, and what the health measures require us to do to slow the spread, and to save lives.

Everyone involved in delivering surgeries counts on each of us to stop the spread to keep our hospitals safe and our surgeries possible. Our progress so far in fighting COVID-19, and the remarkable achievements in our Surgical Renewal Commitment make it clear: In a pandemic, each of us has an essential role in health care.

If we have any uncertainty about our plans for the weeks ahead, or whether our actions fit within Dr. Henry's guidance and orders, we need to think about where we are in our B.C. pandemic. We need to think about all that we've achieved in our surgical renewal commitment to patients. We need to think about how those in health care are counting on us to do our job so they can do theirs. We need to think about all this, and if we have uncertainty or are unsure about our plans, we must continue to make this our touchstone: *When in doubt, rule it out.*

This sixth monthly progress report shows what is possible when we work together. And at this point in our B.C. pandemic response, working together has never been more essential. When we work together, we stop the spread. When we work together, we save lives. When we work together, our future bright.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adrian Dix', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Adrian Dix  
Minister of Health

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## Surgical Renewal Progress At-A-Glance #6: October 16 – November 12

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- ▶ By November 22, an additional 10,634 calls were made to patients to see if they were ready to reschedule their surgery, bringing the number of patients called since May 7 to 111,584. All health authorities have completed their calls to patients who were on the waitlist prior to May 7.
- ▶ We have delivered surgeries to 90% of the patients who were called during the first wave of COVID-19 and had their surgery postponed and who still wanted to pursue a surgical treatment.
- ▶ We performed 8,156 urgent scheduled surgeries – 263 more compared to the same timeframe last year.
- ▶ We have reduced the waitlist size for urgent cases by 8% compared to the same timeframe last year.
- ▶ We performed 2,233 non-urgent surgeries on patients waiting longer than two times their target wait – a 51% increase over compared to the same timeframe last year.
- ▶ We have decreased the total waitlist size to 88,401 — a 4% decrease compared to the same timeframe last year.
- ▶ Operating rooms ran 1,946 more hours – a 4% increase over the same timeframe last year.
- ▶ We completed 27,615 scheduled and unscheduled surgeries – 218 more than in same timeframe last year, including 201 fewer unscheduled surgeries and 419 more scheduled surgeries.
- ▶ Surgical capacity continues to increase across health authorities as a result of extending weekday and weekend operating room hours to improve operating room efficiency, and contracting private surgical centres.
- ▶ We have hired 33 surgeons since April 1.
- ▶ We hired five additional anesthesiologists this period. Since April 1, we have hired 32 anesthesiologists and three general-practice anesthesiologists.
- ▶ We hired 44 perioperative registered nurses, six perioperative licensed practical nurses, 28 post-anesthetic recovery registered nurses and 23 medical device reprocessing technicians.
- ▶ Since April 1, we have hired 305 perioperative registered nurses, 38 perioperative licensed practical nurses, 171 post-anesthetic recovery registered nurses and 173 medical device reprocessing technicians.
- ▶ Since April 1, 172 surgical specialty nurses have started their training and 86 have completed their programs.

## Surgical Renewal Commitment Progress Report

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The reporting period covers October 16 to November 12 and compares it to the same timeframe in 2019. In some cases, where noted, the reporting or comparison period differs.

Monitoring during this period continues to focus on three key components of renewal.

1. **Focusing on Patients** *by making calls to patients; prioritizing and completing postponed surgeries; performing urgent scheduled surgeries; and, completing non-urgent scheduled surgeries.*
2. **Increasing Surgeries** *through extending operating room hours; expanding summer capacity; improving operating room efficiency; performing more surgeries; and implementing new initiatives to increase capacity.*
3. **Increasing Essential Personnel** *through training and recruitment.*

As we did in Progress Report #5, we again look at waitlist size and how it compares to the same timeframe in 2019.

### Focusing on Patients

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By May 18, 2020, health authorities had performed an estimated 32,400 fewer scheduled surgeries than expected. Patients with the most urgent need for surgery are having their surgeries scheduled first.

#### Making Calls to Patients

On May 7, health authorities began calling all patients on waitlists across all health authorities to see if they were ready and willing to have their surgery rescheduled in a COVID-19 environment. Most were ready to proceed. Some patients preferred to wait for surgery until the pandemic is behind us, and their decision is shared with their surgeon for follow up.

As of November 22, 111,584 patients have been contacted. All health authorities have completed their calls to patients who were on the waitlist prior to May 7.

The calls show that regular contact with patients leads to a more accurate waitlist, which in turn enables the surgical system to work more effectively.

## Calls to Patients<sup>1</sup> Progress Report: May 7 – Nov. 22, 2020

Health Authority	# Patients Contacted <sup>2</sup>	# Available Patients	# Unavailable Patients (due to COVID-19)	# Unavailable Patients (non-COVID-19 reason)	# Patients Removed from Waitlist
Fraser Health	26,378	22,416	721	975	2,266
Interior Health	17,981	16,157	332	992	500
Island Health	34,228	30,597	294	1,052	2,285
Northern Health	4,758	3,819	103	325	511
PHSA	2,876	2,748	29	50	49
Vancouver Coastal Health	25,363	12,655	867	1,265	2,438
<b>B.C. TOTAL</b>	<b>111,584</b>	<b>88,392</b>	<b>2,346</b>	<b>4,659</b>	<b>8,049</b>

<sup>1</sup> Callouts are as entered at the time of reporting and may not be reflective of all callouts in the date range. There may be changes in callouts reported compared to previous reports if the health authorities have updated (or restated) their callouts for that date range.

<sup>2</sup> The number of patients contacted is not necessarily the sum of # available patients + # unavailable patients + # patients removed from waitlist because the health authorities could be conducting multiple follow-ups with the patient to confirm their availability.

## Prioritizing and Completing Postponed Surgeries

On March 16, 2020, non-urgent surgeries – surgeries that have a target wait time of greater than six weeks – were postponed as part of the initial COVID-19 pandemic response. Urgent and emergency surgeries continued to be performed during this period. On May 18, these surgeries resumed and were prioritized to be completed. A total of 17,418 surgeries were postponed.

As patients are contacted for surgery, some patients, in consultation with their surgeon, have decided to no longer pursue a surgical intervention. As of this reporting period, 1,691 patients no longer wish to pursue surgery as a treatment, leaving 15,727 surgeries to be completed.

As of November 12, health authorities have completed 90% of these surgeries.

### Postponed Surgeries<sup>1</sup> that have been Completed

Health Authority	% Postponed Surgeries Completed (at November 12)
Fraser Health	89%
Interior Health	93%
Island Health	94%
Northern Health	89%
PHSA	92%
Vancouver Coastal Health	88%
<b>B.C. TOTAL</b>	<b>90%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Based on cohort of postponed cases identified in the Surgical Wait Times database. Restated data.

## Performing Urgent Scheduled Surgeries

Surgical Renewal has focused on patients who need surgery most, and where it can be done safely. This has included a focus on urgent surgeries, which would typically include surgeries like cancer cases. From October 16 to November 12, health authorities performed 263 more urgent surgeries compared to the same timeframe last year.

### Completed Overall Urgent Scheduled Surgeries<sup>1</sup> as Compared to 2019/20\*

Health Authority	Urgent Surgeries 2019/20	Urgent Surgeries 2020/21	% of Previous Surgeries
Fraser Health	1,991	1,915	96%
Interior Health	1,521	1,535	101%
Island Health	1,625	1,839	113%
Northern Health	308	326	106%
PHSA	266	279	105%
Vancouver Coastal Health	2,182	2,262	104%
<b>B.C. TOTAL</b>	<b>7,893</b>	<b>8,156</b>	<b>103%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Volumes include all surgical activity regardless of urgency, time of day, or day of week of completion. Endoscopy is excluded except for procedures performed in the operating room at BC Children's Hospital. Activity from four small sites within Interior Health are not currently included.

\* Period from October 16 to November 12 (2019/20 compared to 2020/21).

## Completing Non-Urgent Scheduled Surgeries

From October 16 to November 12, health authorities completed 757 more non-urgent surgeries waiting longer than two times their target wait time compared to the same timeframe last year.

### Completed Non-Urgent Scheduled Surgeries<sup>1</sup> as Compared to 2019/20\*

Health Authority	>2x Target Wait Times 2019/20	>2x Target Wait Times 2020/21	% of Previous Surgeries
Fraser Health	371	517	139%
Interior Health	341	453	133%
Island Health	329	632	192%
Northern Health	75	74	99%
PHSA	17	43	253%
Vancouver Coastal Health	343	514	150%
<b>B.C. TOTAL</b>	<b>1,476</b>	<b>2,233</b>	<b>151%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Volumes include all surgical activity regardless of urgency, time of day, or day of week of completion. Endoscopy is excluded except for procedures performed in the operating room at BC Children's Hospital. Activity from four small sites within Interior Health are not currently included.

\* Period from October 16 to November 12 (2019/20 compared to 2020/21).

## Decreasing the Waitlist Size

### Total Waitlist

The waitlist size at the end of the reporting period was 88,401 cases – a 4% decrease over the same timeframe last year.

### Overall Urgent and Non-Urgent Surgical Waitlist Size<sup>1,2</sup> as Compared to 2019/20

Health Authority	Waitlist Size 2019/20	Waitlist Size 2020/21	% of Previous Waitlist Size
Fraser Health	27,922	24,573	88%
Interior Health	15,644	15,933	102%
Island Health	18,595	17,771	96%
Northern Health	4,459	4,492	101%
PHSA	2,361	2,581	109%
Vancouver Coastal Health	22,786	23,051	101%
<b>B.C. TOTAL</b>	<b>91,767</b>	<b>88,401</b>	<b>96%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Data source: Surgical Wait Times (SWTP), Site ID 219.

<sup>2</sup> Total waitlist is the sum of the scheduled urgent, non-urgent, and unknown priority cases waiting at a point in time. In this case, the waitlist size for both 2019/20 and 2020/21 are being compared at the end of fiscal period 8.

### Urgent Waitlist

The urgent scheduled waitlist at the end of the reporting period was 16,283 – an 8% decrease over the same timeframe last year.

### Overall Urgent Surgical Waitlist Size<sup>1,2</sup> as Compared to 2019/20

Health Authority	Urgent Waitlist Size 2019/20	Urgent Waitlist Size 2020/21	% of Previous Waitlist Size
Fraser Health	5,838	4,730	81%
Interior Health	3,178	3,125	98%
Island Health	3,038	3,398	112%
Northern Health	663	634	96%
PHSA	140	175	125%
Vancouver Coastal Health	4,802	4,221	88%
<b>B.C. TOTAL</b>	<b>17,659</b>	<b>16,283</b>	<b>92%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Data source: Surgical Wait Times (SWTP), Site ID 219.

<sup>2</sup> Total waitlist is the sum of the scheduled urgent, non-urgent, and unknown priority cases waiting at a point in time. In this case, the waitlist size for both 2019/20 and 2020/21 are being compared at the end of fiscal period 8.



## Non-Urgent Waitlist

Non-urgent surgeries were postponed for eight weeks beginning March 16, 2020, and the waitlist size for these surgeries grew. Health authorities have since resumed non-urgent surgeries and the non-urgent scheduled waitlist at the end of the reporting period was 71,925 cases, compared to 73,973 cases in the same timeframe last year.

### **Overall Non-Urgent Surgical Waitlist Size<sup>1,2</sup> as Compared to 2019/20**

Health Authority	Non-Urgent Waitlist Size 2019/20	Non-Urgent Waitlist Size 2020/21	% of Previous Waitlist Size
Fraser Health	22,084	19,843	90%
Interior Health	12,466	12,808	103%
Island Health	15,549	14,357	92%
Northern Health	3,795	3,853	102%
PHSA	2,101	2,269	108%
Vancouver Coastal Health	17,978	18,795	105%
<b>B.C. TOTAL</b>	<b>73,973</b>	<b>71,925</b>	<b>97%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Data source: Surgical Wait Times (SWTP), Site ID 219.

<sup>2</sup> Total waitlist is the sum of the scheduled urgent, non-urgent, and unknown priority cases waiting at a point in time. In this case, the waitlist size for both 2019/20 and 2020/21 are being compared at the end of fiscal period 8.

## Increasing Surgeries

All health authorities have plans in place and are implementing the additional surgical capacity required to recover lost surgeries and to meet the needs of patients for whom surgery has been identified as necessary. Capacity is being increased by extending both weekday and weekend operating room hours, expanding summer capacity, improving operating room efficiency, and contracting private surgical centres.

### Extending Operating Room Hours

From October 16 to November 12, health authorities collectively achieved a 4% increase in operating room hours over the same timeframe last year, adding 1,946 hours of operating room time.

## Operating Room Hours<sup>1</sup> by Health Authority\*

Health Authority	Total Hours 2020/21	% of Previous Hours
Fraser Health	11,991	104%
Interior Health	8,514	106%
Island Health	10,139	109%
Northern Health <sup>2</sup>	1,433	95%
PHSA	2,108	92%
Vancouver Coastal Health	14,117	103%
<b>B.C. TOTAL</b>	<b>48,303</b>	<b>104%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Volumes include all surgical activity regardless of urgency, time of day, or day of week of completion. Endoscopy is excluded except for procedures performed in the operating room at BC Children's Hospital. Activity from four small sites within Interior Health are not currently included.

<sup>2</sup> Northern Health is based on University of Northern B.C. data only.

\* Period from October 16 to November 12, 2020/21.

## Operating Room Hours by Surgical Division

Under Surgical Renewal, the immediate focus shifted to addressing postponed, urgent and long waiting cases – cases that have waited more than twice the recommended timeframe. In order to respond to these priorities, the allocation of operating room hours also shifted. Neuro, ENT (ear, nose and throat), plastic, thoracic and vascular surgeries are continuing to see significant increases in hours this reporting period. As well, orthopedic and dental surgeries are seeing additional hours performed this reporting period compared to the same timeframe last year.

## Operating Room (OR) Hours by Division<sup>1</sup> as Compared to 2019/20\*

British Columbia	OR Hours 2019/20	OR Hours 2020/21	% of Previous OR Hours
Cardiac	2,319	2,199	95%
Dentistry/Oral	1,230	1,281	104%
General	8,995	9,612	107%
Neurosurgery	2,161	2,426	112%
Obstetrics & Gynecology	5,801	5,905	102%
Ophthalmology	3,697	3,929	106%
Orthopedics	10,434	10,705	103%
Otolaryngology (ENT)	2,388	2,463	103%
Plastic	2,795	2,930	105%
Thoracic	714	759	106%
Urology	3,671	3,999	109%
Vascular	1,666	1,666	100%
Other	485	428	88%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>46,357</b>	<b>48,303</b>	<b>104%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Volumes include all surgical activity regardless of urgency, time of day, or day of week of completion. Endoscopy is excluded except for procedures performed in the operating room at BC Children's Hospital. Activity from four small sites within Interior Health are not currently included.

\* Period from October 16 to November 12 (2019/20 compared to 2020/21).

## Improving Operating Room Efficiency

During the initial COVID-19 response, COVID-19 safety protocols were put in place that decreased the number of surgeries performed. As a result of these protocols, surgeries were taking 26% longer – with a noticeable 48% increase in the time required for urgent scheduled surgeries. In May, new clinical guidelines and safety protocols were put in place that improved operating room efficiency. As a result, during the period from October 16 to November 12, surgeries took 3% longer than the same timeframe last year.

As COVID-19 cases vary among communities across B.C. and fluctuate over time, this efficiency measure is expected to move up and down, which can be seen in the regional variation by health authority.

### Operating Room (OR) Hours per Surgery<sup>1</sup> as Compared to 2019/20\*

Health Authority	% of Previous OR Hours per Surgery
Fraser Health	104%
Interior Health	105%
Island Health	100%
Northern Health <sup>2</sup>	94%
PHSA	97%
Vancouver Coastal Health	106%
<b>B.C. TOTAL</b>	<b>103%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Volumes include all surgical activity regardless of urgency, time of day, or day of week of completion. Endoscopy is excluded except for procedures performed in the operating room at BC Children's Hospital. Activity from four small sites within Interior Health are not currently included.

<sup>2</sup> Northern Health is based on University of Northern B.C. data only.

\* Period from October 16 to November 12 (2019/20 compared to 2020/21).

## Performing More Surgeries

Non-urgent scheduled surgeries resumed on May 18, 2020. Between October 16 and November 12, 27,615 surgeries were completed across the province – 218 more than in the same timeframe last year.

Of the 27,615 surgeries, 5,468 were unscheduled surgeries (201 fewer) and 22,147 were scheduled surgeries (419 more) than the same timeframe last year.

## Surgical Volumes<sup>1</sup> as Compared to 2019/20\*

Health Authority	Total Surgeries 2019/20	Total Surgeries 2020/21	% of Previous Surgical Volumes
Fraser Health	7,414	7,436	100%
Interior Health	4,699	4,729	101%
Island Health	5,462	6,023	110%
Northern Health	1,602	1,451	91%
PHSA	1,186	1,129	95%
Vancouver Coastal Health	7,034	6,847	97%
<b>B.C. TOTAL</b>	<b>27,397</b>	<b>27,615</b>	<b>101%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Volumes include all surgical activity regardless of urgency, time of day, or day of week of completion. Endoscopy is excluded except for procedures performed in the operating room at BC Children's Hospital. Activity from four small sites within Interior Health are not currently included.

\* Period from October 16 to November 12 (2019/20 compared to 2020/21).

## Progress on Capacity Increases

Health authorities continue to make progress to increase operating room time and capacity.

### Progress

Health Authority	Progress (between May 18 and November 12)	
Fraser Health	<b>May</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chilliwack General Hospital's extended weekdays add 7.5 hours of OR time per week.</li> </ul>
	<b>June</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eagle Ridge Hospital's extended weekdays add 10 hours of OR time per week.</li> <li>Valley Surgery Centre, New Westminster Surgical Centre, and False Creek Surgical Centre running at full contracted capacity.</li> </ul>
	<b>September</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Langley Memorial Hospital opens an unused OR, adding 16 hours per week.</li> <li>Royal Columbian Hospital's extended weekdays add 130 hours of OR time per week.</li> </ul>
	<b>October</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ridge Meadows Hospital opens an unused OR, adding 7.5 hours per week.</li> </ul>
	<b>November</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jim Pattison Outpatient opens an unused OR, adding 7.5 hours per week for 20 weeks.</li> </ul>

Health Authority	Progress (between May 18 and November 12)	
Interior Health	<b>June</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Penticton Regional Hospital adds 23 hours of OR time per week.</li> <li>• Royal Inland Hospital adds 75 hours of OR time per week.</li> <li>• Vernon Jubilee Hospital adds 22.5 hours of OR time per week.</li> </ul>
	<b>July</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kamloops Surgical Centre adds five hours per week of contracted capacity.</li> </ul>
	<b>August</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kelowna General Hospital adds 75 hours of OR time per week.</li> <li>• Cariboo Memorial Hospital adds up to three additional hours of OR time per week.</li> </ul>
	<b>September</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Queen Victoria Hospital adds up to 7.5 hours of OR time per week for dental procedures.</li> </ul>
	<b>October</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Queen Victoria Hospital adds 7.5 hours per week for same day orthopedic procedures.</li> <li>• Royal Inland Hospital adds 15 hours of OR time per week.</li> <li>• Caribou Memorial Hospital opens an unused OR, adding 10 hours per week.</li> </ul>
	<b>November</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elk Valley Hospital opens an unused OR, adding 7 hours per week.</li> <li>• Creston Valley Hospital opens an unused OR, adding eight hours of OR time per week.</li> <li>• Golden and District Hospital opens an unused OR for daycare orthopedic surgeries, adding 7.5 hours per week.</li> <li>• Kelowna General Hospital Eye Care Centre opens unused ORs, adding 16 hours per week.</li> <li>• Caribou Memorial Hospital opens an unused OR, adding one hour per week of day care ears, nose and throat procedures.</li> <li>• Vernon Jubilee Hospital opens an unused OR, adding 16 hours per week.</li> </ul>
Island Health	<b>July</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cowichan District Hospital's extended weekdays add 10 hours of OR time per week.</li> </ul>
	<b>September</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Royal Jubilee Hospital opens an unused OR, adding 7.5 hours.</li> <li>• Nanaimo Regional General Hospital's extended weekdays add 12.5 hours per week in one OR.</li> <li>• Victoria General Hospital's extended weekdays add 12.5 hours of OR time per week.</li> <li>• Saanich Peninsula Hospital opens two unused ORs, adding 21 hours of OR time per week.</li> <li>• Campbell River General Hospital opens an unused OR, adding 15 hours of OR time per week.</li> <li>• Seafeld Surgical Centre adds 18.75 additional OR hours per week of contracted capacity for surgeries.</li> <li>• Seafeld Surgical Centre adds 30 hours per week of contracted capacity for cataract surgeries.</li> </ul>
	<b>October</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nanaimo Regional General Hospital's extended weekdays add 12.5 additional hours per week in a second OR.</li> <li>• Cowichan District Hospital opens unused ORs, adding 7.5 hours of OR time per week.</li> </ul>
	<b>November</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Royal Jubilee Hospital adds an additional 15 hours per weekend.</li> <li>• Victoria General Hospital adds an additional 15 hours per weekend.</li> </ul>

Health Authority	Progress (between May 18 and November 12)	
Northern Health	<b>August</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prince George Surgical Centre adds 280 hours of contracted capacity for surgeries.</li> </ul>
PHSA	<b>June</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full surgical capacity achieved at BC Women's Hospital by adding eight hours of OR time per week.</li> </ul>
Vancouver Coastal Health	<b>June</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>False Creek Surgical Centre running at full contracted capacity.</li> <li>Mount Saint Joseph's Hospital adds three procedure rooms that run one Saturday per month.</li> </ul>
	<b>September</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>St. Paul's Hospital's extended weekdays add 20 hours of OR time per week.</li> <li>Richmond Hospital's extended weekdays add 8.75 hours of OR time per week.</li> <li>Mount St. Joseph Hospital's three procedure rooms added in June now run one-to-two Saturdays per month.</li> <li>Vancouver General Hospital opens unused ORs, adding 95 hours of OR time per week.</li> <li>ASC Vancouver Surgical Centre adds 47.5 hours per week of contracted capacity for surgeries.</li> </ul>
	<b>October</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lions Gate Hospital adds one procedure room in October to run on Fridays.</li> </ul>

## Increasing Essential Personnel

Training of personnel is ongoing, and recruitment of additional staff is continuing.

### Training

As reported in previous Progress Reports, all health authorities have completed the training plans for the additional 400 nursing and 100 medical device reprocessing staff. Each health authority will add staff primarily through training, with a small number to be recruited. This training will take place over 2020/21 and 2021/22, with additional training sessions offered to complete training as quickly as possible.

Since April 1, 172 surgical specialty nurses have started their training programs and 86 have already completed training.

As reported in previous Progress Reports, an innovative sponsorship model for existing health authority staff will assist in this effort for medical device reprocessing technologists. By looking at new ways to recruit and train these professionals, we can help to increase retention and employee engagement.

## Recruitment

During this reporting period, 44 perioperative registered nurses, six perioperative licensed practical nurses, 28 post-anesthetic recovery registered nurses and 23 medical device reprocessing technicians have been hired.

We have hired 33 surgeons since April 1.

Also, since April 1, recruitment efforts by Health Match BC and health authorities have resulted in the hiring of an additional 305 perioperative registered nurses, 38 perioperative licensed practical nurses, 171 post-anesthetic recovery registered nurses and 173 medical device reprocessing technicians.

Targeted recruitment efforts of anesthesia through the Health Employers Association of B.C. continue to show progress. This reporting period, we hired six anesthesiologists. Since April 1, we have hired 32 anesthesiologists and three general-practice anesthesiologists.

## Work Ahead

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It is important to acknowledge the achievements over the past six months to deliver on the surgical renewal commitment to patients. Through the collective efforts of all who work in our surgical system, we have been able to add 7,979 more operating room hours between May 18 and November 12 compared to the same time period last year.

It is also evident, as we noted in our plan, that the required increase in surgical capacity cannot be sustained by existing staff alone. Our work with surgeons, anesthesia and health authorities on securing the health-care workers required to provide the operating room time that is needed for patients will continue. And we will continue to apply what we have learned and where we have adapted to build on the renewal and the achievements it makes possible.

In our first report, we cautioned that a potential resurgence or a second wave of COVID-19 this fall/winter could again impact surgical services. Our forecast showed that if a second wave caused a 10% reduction in non-urgent or scheduled surgeries for six months, the timeline to recover the lost surgeries would be extended by an additional three months. We are now in the second wave of our B.C. pandemic, and are watching the progress and data very carefully to monitor any impacts to the surgical renewal commitment to patients. We will adapt our plan as required.

## Surgical Renewal Progress At-A-Glance #5: September 18 – October 15

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- ▶ By October 11, an additional 10,053 calls were made to patients to see if they were ready to reschedule their surgery, bringing the number of patients called since May 7 to 100,950.
- ▶ We have delivered surgeries to 88% of the patients who were called during the first wave of COVID-19 and had their surgery postponed and who still wanted to pursue a surgical treatment.
- ▶ We performed 8,185 urgent scheduled surgeries, 359 more than in the same timeframe last year.
- ▶ We have reduced the waitlist size for urgent cases to 16,394 – a 7% decrease compared to the same timeframe last year.
- ▶ We performed 2,251 non-urgent surgeries on patients waiting longer than two times their target wait – an over 70% increase compared to the same timeframe last year.
- ▶ We have decreased the total waitlist size to 89,656 – a 2% decrease compared to the same timeframe last year.
- ▶ Operating rooms ran 1,786 more hours – a 4% increase over the same timeframe last year.
- ▶ We completed 27,553 scheduled and unscheduled surgeries – 152 more than in the same timeframe last year, including 47 fewer unscheduled surgeries and 199 more scheduled surgeries.
- ▶ Surgical capacity continues to increase across health authorities as a result of extending weekday and weekend operating room hours to improve operating room efficiency, and contracting private surgical centres.
- ▶ We have hired 31 surgeons since April 1.
- ▶ We hired six additional anesthesiologists. Since April 1, we have hired 27 anesthesiologists and three general-practice anesthesiologists.
- ▶ We hired 28 perioperative registered nurses, 12 perioperative licensed practical nurses, 18 post-anesthetic recovery registered nurses and 29 medical device reprocessing technicians.
- ▶ Since April 1, we have hired 261 perioperative registered nurses, 32 perioperative licensed practical nurses, 143 post-anesthetic recovery registered nurses and 150 medical device reprocessing technicians.
- ▶ Since April 1, 169 surgical specialty nurses have started their training and 81 have completed their programs.



