



Interior Health



Provincial Health
Services Authority

Virtual Support for Hospitals Model of Care Project

Quality Forum: March 12, 2025

Provincial Digital Health and Information Services

Partnering with the BC health sector, providers and citizens

We acknowledge with gratitude that we are gathered on traditional, ancestral and unceded territories of the First Peoples of British Columbia, who have cared for and nurtured the lands and waters around us for all time.

We give thanks, as Occupiers, for the opportunity to live, work and support care here.

Agenda

Topic

Speaker

Introductions

All

Problem Summary

Karen Cooper

Overview of Virtual Support for Hospitals Models of Care

- Virtual Support Models of Care in Canada

Robyn Emde

Overview of Cariboo Memorial Hospital

- Three Month Summary: Key Metrics

Karen Cooper

Building a Provincial Virtual Support for Hospitals Model of Care

Robyn Emde



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Problem Summary

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5 emergency rooms close in B.C. Interior over long weekend

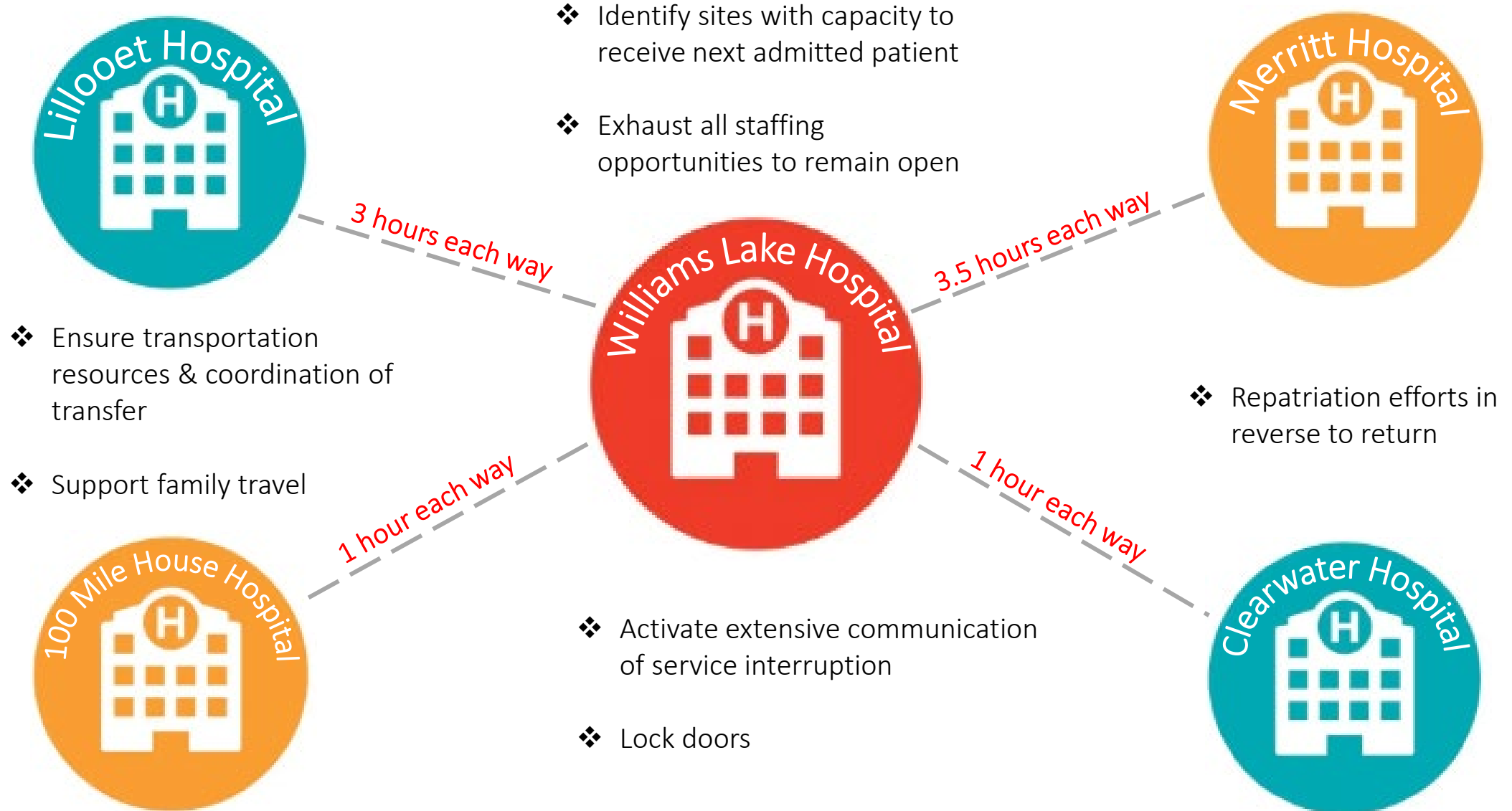
All but 1 have since reopened, with Nicola Valley Hospital set to resume services Monday morning

CBC News · Posted: Sep 01, 2024 8:15 PM PDT | Last Updated: September 1, 2024



The Nicola Valley Hospital, the only hospital in Merritt, B.C., was closed on Sunday. Four other hospitals in B.C.'s interior paused emergency services over the long weekend. (Interior Health)

Service Interruption Provider/Patient Impacts



Mitigation Strategies



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Vision

Enabling equitable local access to quality health-care for all citizens of BC through virtual care.

Virtual Support for Hospitals Principles



Virtual care
complements
in-person care



Strengthen &
support
quality
patient care



Equity &
access to care



Culturally safe



High-quality
patient-
centered care



Complementary
to existing
virtual care
services



Improve
provider
experience

Project Collaboration Model

The regional Virtual Support for Hospitals Model of Care projects are co-led by:

- Interior Health Authority: Digital Health and Clinical Ops
- PHSA Emergency Care BC (ECBC)
- PHSA Provincial Virtual Health (PVH)

The project is supported by MOH Hospital Services Branch and Rural Coordination Centre of BC, with representatives from each organization part of the project.





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Virtual Support for Hospitals Models of Care in Canada

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Informant Interviews Across Canada



“Virtual care is safe care” –
Dr. Puneet Kapur, Saskatchewan

“Design the service based on the problem you are trying to solve” –
Dr. Jan Sommers, Nova Scotia



(On the patient experience) Ensure patient culture is considered in decision making –
Dr. Todd Young, Newfoundland

(On the provider experience) Focus on relationship building and making them feel like a team -
Dr. John Pawlovich, British Columbia



Jurisdictional Scan Summary

	Virtual Provider Staffing				Technology Complexity			Technology Implementation & Support		Virtual Provider Coverage Arrangement		
	Internal		External		Low-Tech	Medium-tech	High-Tech	Internal	With Third-party Company	On-Site Hybrid	On-Call Hybrid	Fully Virtual
	Local	Health Authority	Provincial	Third-party								
British Columbia: RCCBC VERRA			X		X			X			X	
British Columbia: <i>Eagle Ridge Hospital Virtual Evening Hospitalist</i>	X				X			X		X		
Newfoundland & Labrador: <i>Virtual Emergency Room Services</i>		X					X	X				X
Newfoundland & Labrador: <i>Virtual ED Physician Coverage, supported by Teladoc Health</i>				X			X		X			X
Nova Scotia: <i>Virtual Emergency NS, supported by Maple</i>		X				X			X	X		
Central Saskatchewan: <i>Virtual Physician in Emergency Room</i>		X			X			X				X
Northern Saskatchewan: <i>Virtual Care and Remote Presence Robotics Program (University)</i>			X				X		X			X



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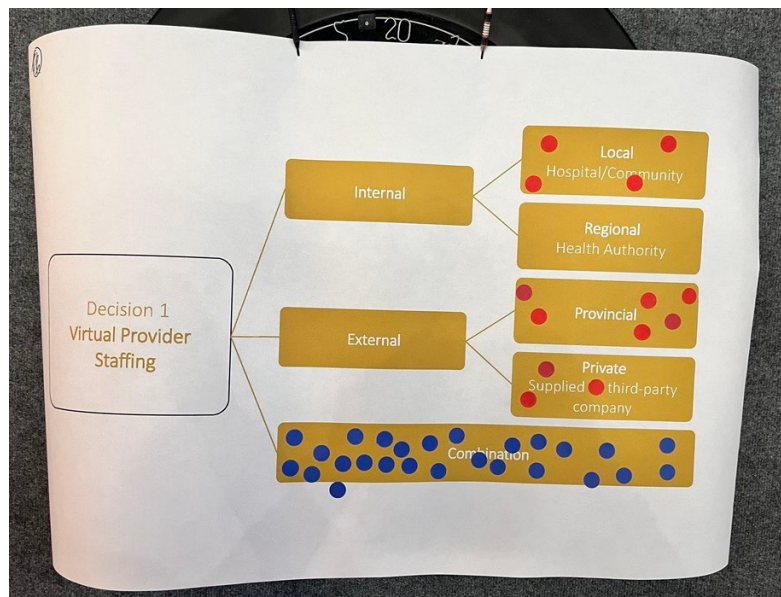
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Regional Virtual Support for Hospitals Model of Care: Cariboo Memorial Hospital

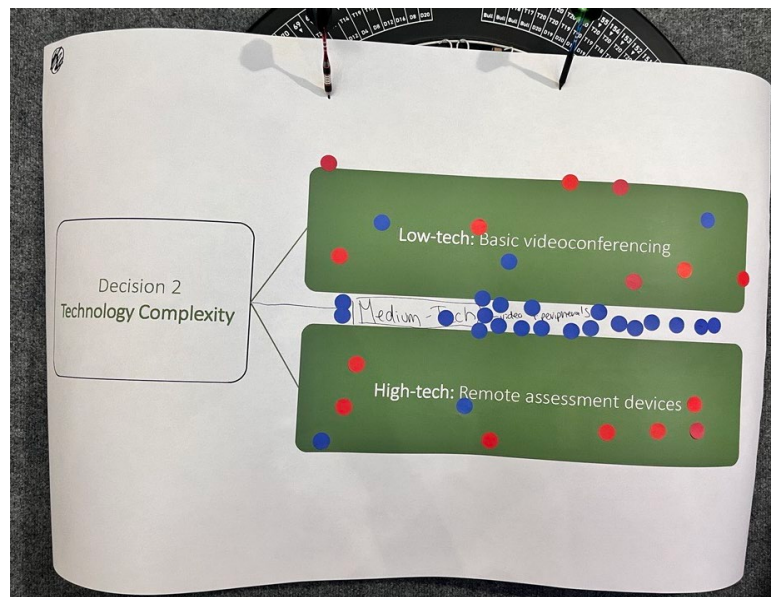
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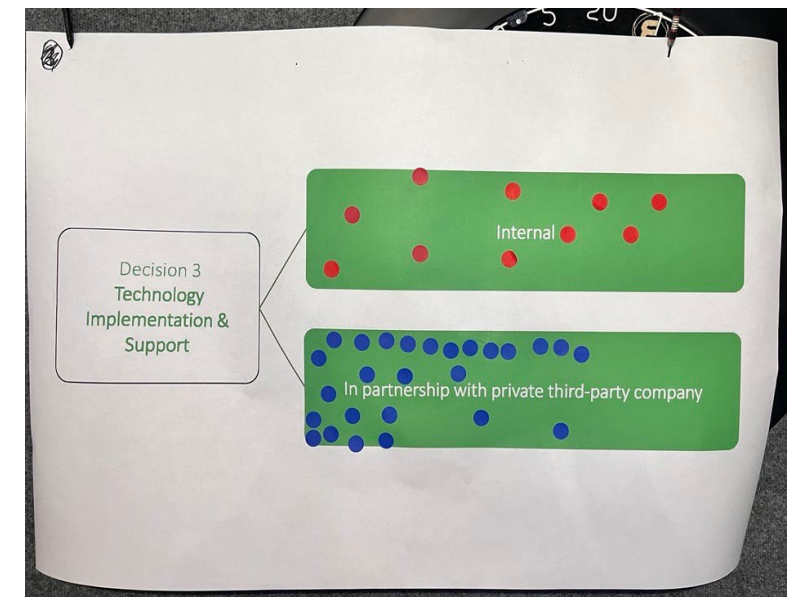
CMH Virtual Support Model Development



Key Decision 1:
Combination of Internal and
External Virtual Provider Staffing



Key Decision 2:
Medium Technology Complexity



Key Decision 3:
Technology Implementation and
Support in Partnership with
Third-Party Company



Cariboo Memorial Hospital Pilot

Summary of Key Metrics (3 Month)

Higher admissions
but occupancy
trending downwards

No differences
observed in key
safety metrics

No difference in length
of stay, readmission
rates, or transfers back
to the emergency
department

Patient satisfaction
is high

Provider satisfaction
is high

Analysis:

If the virtual model
was not present, the
hospital would be
struggling to support
patients

Analysis:

Virtual care is safe care,
with appropriate
escalation pathways

Analysis:

Virtual care maintains
status quo for access
and flow indicators

Analysis:

Patients are pleased
with service vs.
transfer

Recommendation:

- Consistent provider
over multiple shifts
- Ensure 1:1 time with
virtual physician and
patient
- Adequate training
for virtual providers

Analysis:

Better solution vs.
service interruptions

Recommendation:

Continue to improve
workflow efficiencies
to decrease extra
workload on staff



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Building a Provincial Virtual Support for Hospitals Model of Care

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Virtual Support for Hospitals Model of Care

Regional Pilots, Supported by Vendor

Short Term

Address immediate needs in mid-sized hospitals

- External vendor contracted as short-term solution
- Vendor contracts with Health Authorities up to 2 years for virtual physician services
- Pilots launched or planned in Interior Health, Northern Health and Island Health

Provincial Planning

Long Term

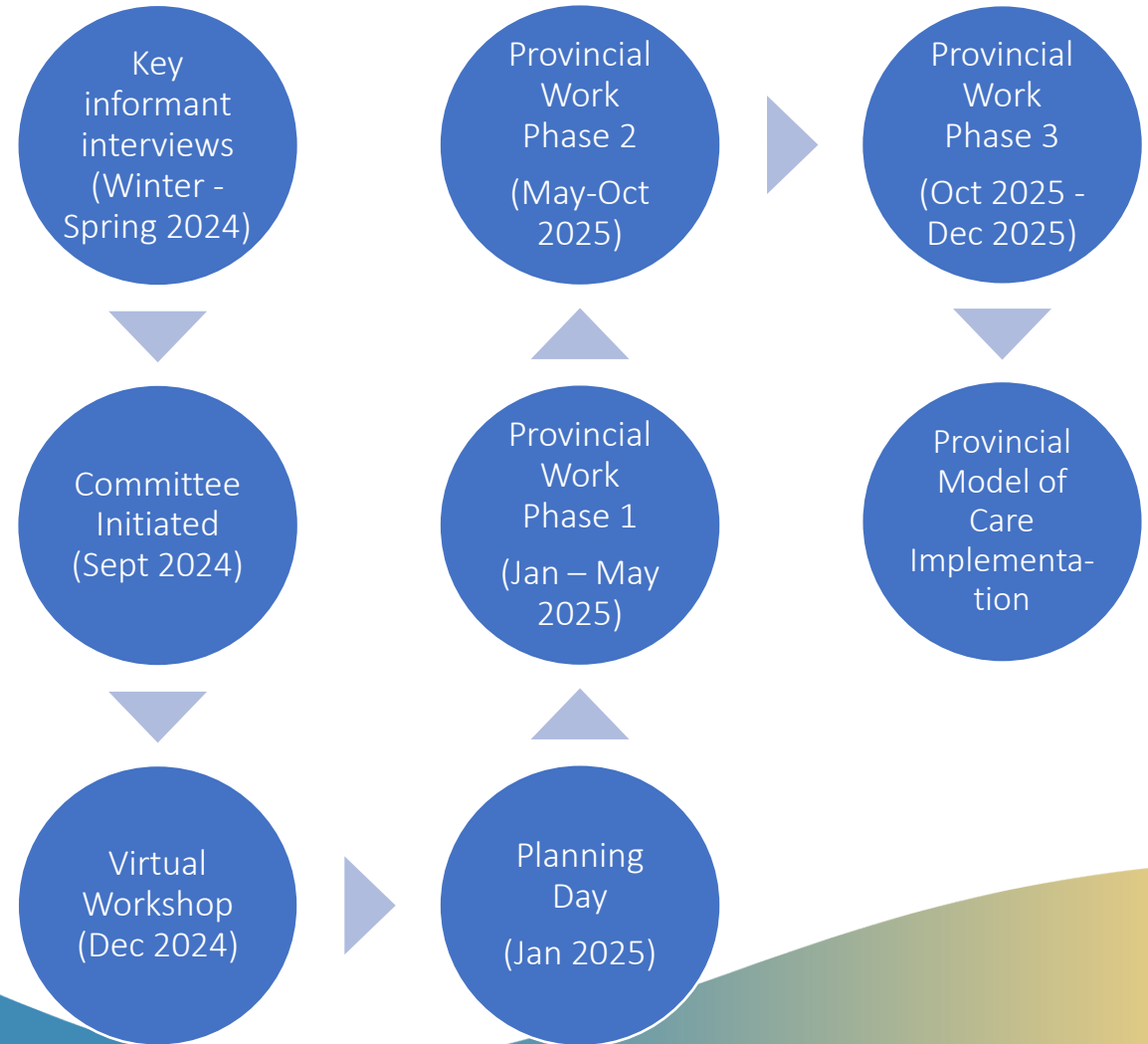
Developing a sustainable provincial solution

- Provincial Hospital Hybrid Model of Care Committee has been established:
 - Developing a framework that is applicable to hospitals across BC
 - Exploring a provincial virtual provider pool
 - Ensuring consistency of technology and information sharing
 - Consistent quality standards and evaluation metrics

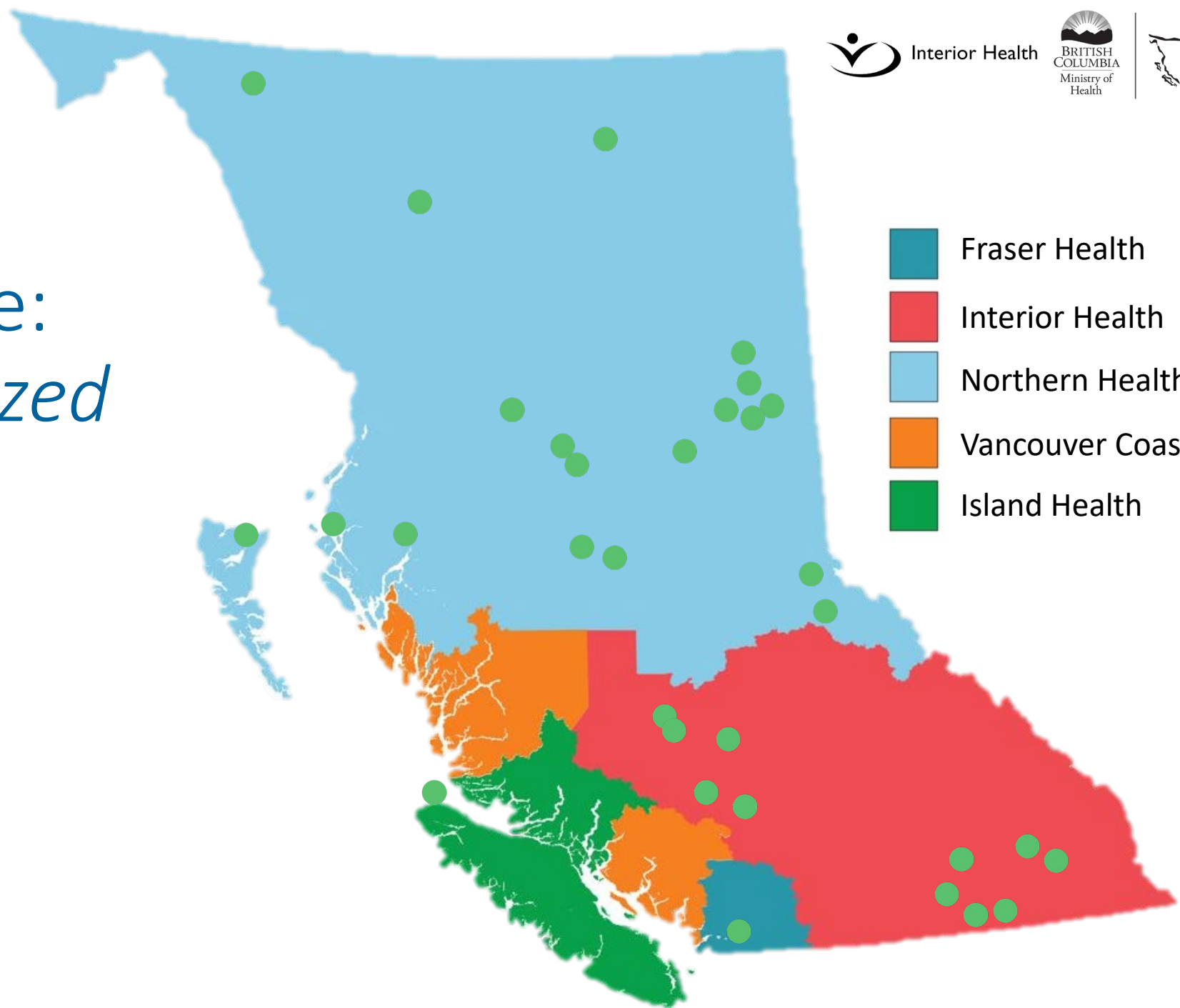
Provincial Virtual Support for Hospitals Model of Care Committee

Partners:

- Ministry of Health
- Emergency Care BC
- Provincial Virtual Health
- Critical Care BC
- Rural Coordination Centre of British Columbia
- First Nations Health Authority
- Interior Health Authority
- Providence Health Care
- Fraser Health Authority
- Vancouver Coastal Health Authority
- Island Health Authority
- Northern Health Authority
- University of British Columbia



Future State: *Vision Realized*



Questions



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Thank you

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