

What We Heard

Mills Memorial Hospital Replacement Project Feedback and Questions

April 2022



TABLE OF CONTENTS

WHAT WE HEARD OVERVIEW	1
Release of Draft Designs	2
FEEDBACK	3
Major Feedback	4
Responses to Major Feedback.....	4
Specific Feedback.....	8
QUESTIONS	10
Location	10
Size	10
Landscaping and Pathways	12
Parking	13
Repurposing Buildings	13
Specific Design Elements	14
Cultural Practices	15
Services.....	16
Staffing and Employment	18
Amenities.....	19
Design Process.....	20
ABOUT THE PROJECT	21
Overview.....	21
Highlights.....	21

WHAT WE HEARD OVERVIEW

In the fall of 2021 we released draft designs of the new Mills Memorial Hospital and Seven Sisters facilities currently under construction in Terrace, BC. We asked you for your thoughts and if you had any questions.

It's time to share with you what we heard and answer some of the questions you had.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to review the designs. Your feedback and questions will help the new Mills Memorial Hospital best serve the people of Northwest BC.

Happily, the feedback confirmed that what's important to you is also important to us. Northern Health and the project team had heard and considered many of the comments we received, which shows that for the most part, we are all on the same page.

Planning for the new Mills Memorial Hospital has been ongoing for almost a decade. During this time we have had many in-depth discussions with physicians, staff, patients, partners and stakeholders.

For the most part, feedback and suggestions from these earlier discussions meshed with feedback we received when we released the draft designs.

For this reason, many of the comments and requests we heard had already been considered and whenever possible, incorporated into the design of the new build.

This doesn't mean we are able to fulfill every request. Nor does it mean all problems will be fixed.

The planning, design and construction of a new hospital is complex and many competing factors must be balanced. Similarly, some solutions to concerns raised require long-term, multipronged, multilayered approaches involving a number of different agencies.

Most importantly, as your positive and excited comments reflected, the new Mills Memorial Hospital will mean increased access to care and new and expanded services closer to home for all Northwest BC residents.

The new hospital will offer a smoother, safer and more welcoming patient journey, as well as support the recruitment and retention of much-needed health care workers.

There's a lot to celebrate!



JOIN THE CONVERSATION

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RELEASE OF DRAFT DESIGNS

Draft designs released to the public in September 2021 included

- Site landscaping plan and plant list
- Exterior design of new hospital
- Floor layouts of new hospital (Levels 0, 1, 2 and 3)
- Renderings of Spiritual Space and main lobby in new hospital
- Exterior design of new Seven Sisters
- Floor layout of new Seven Sisters

Draft designs were shared in a number of ways, including

- Displays at the Skeena Mall
- Display in current hospital
- Online on [Let's Talk MMH project page](#)
- Social media
- Emails to key partners and stakeholders

Northern Health received feedback and questions through the following

- Written comments on notepads at physical displays
- Comments and questions on [Let's Talk MMH project page](#)
- Committee and working group meetings
- Face-to-face conversations
- Phone
- Email
- Social media
- [Northern Health website](#)



September 2021 - Display of draft designs in current hospital.

MORE TO COME

Throughout 2022 and beyond, the conversation around the new Mills Memorial Hospital and Seven Sisters facilities will continue.

We will continue to provide updates, and seek out and respond to questions, comments and feedback about the project.

We will also continue to meet with the MMH Community Advisory Working Group, and Indigenous Advisory Working Groups to ensure the new hospital is locally and culturally welcoming, relevant, respectful and safe.

[We look forward to future discussions!](#)

FEEDBACK

We asked you for one word to describe how you wanted to feel at the new hospital and you said:



WE COULDN'T AGREE WITH YOU MORE!

We want you to feel this way too - now and at the future hospital. We are working hard to make that happen through design and operational planning.

MAJOR FEEDBACK

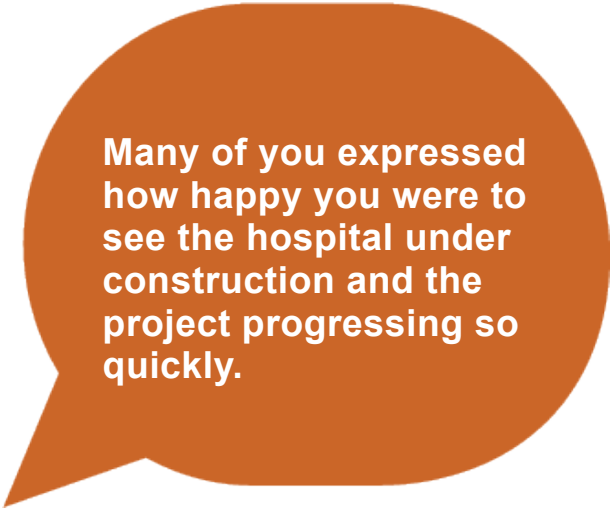
You want

- As much space and as many beds as possible
- Detox and substance use treatment services
- Enough staff
- More amenities, inside and outside the hospital
- Northwest BC design features
- Services as close to home as possible

You want the hospital to be

- Culturally safe
- Full of light
- Modern (with flow)
- Welcoming and inclusive

Note: Feedback is listed in alphabetical order. Feedback is not ranked in order of importance.



Many of you expressed how happy you were to see the hospital under construction and the project progressing so quickly.

RESPONSES TO MAJOR FEEDBACK

As much space and as many beds as possible

The number of beds at the new facility is based on comprehensive modelling projections, which look at the projected future regional population and its health care needs. The new hospital and its beds are meant to meet the needs of the area for 50 years and beyond.

Extensive planning for the project has been taking place over almost 10 years.

The new Mills Memorial Hospital will be more than double the size of the current facility. The size of the hospital is increasing from approximately 124,969 square feet to approximately 356,500 square feet. This increase in the building size will translate into much more space for patients and staff.

The number of beds at the hospital is also increasing from 44 to 78, and the emergency department is increasing from 10 treatment spaces to 20.

The design of the new hospital is also being created with the future and flexibility in mind. If expansions or upgrades are required, they will be considered in the future. Programs and services may also be housed in nearby locations.

Detox and substance use treatment services

We understand people are looking for support when it comes to problematic substance use in the area, and Terrace does not currently have a dedicated treatment centre.

However, this is not part of the replacement project. Hospitals mainly focus on acute care, which is care for short-term needs. A treatment centre does not fit into this environment.

Northern Health, however, and many other organizations including non-profits and community groups, do play a part in supporting those with substance use and mental health issues in Terrace and surrounding communities. Some groups, with Northern Health's support, are taking steps to set up a local treatment centre.

At Mills Memorial Hospital, two in-patient treatment beds are prioritized for the medical management of withdrawal from alcohol. Two beds will be prioritized for this in the new hospital too. Patients experiencing withdrawal symptoms or who have overdosed can also access acute care at the Mills Memorial Hospital – now and at the new one.

If any patients who receive care at the hospital request information and access to harm reduction and treatment programs, staff will provide them with information and support individuals to access services.

People who are experiencing problematic substance use may also have concurrent mental health disorders. In some circumstances, if a person requires further stabilization and support for the treatment of an acute mental health presentation, following medical stabilization, admission to the acute psychiatry unit in Mills Memorial Hospital may be necessary for further assessment, consultation, and treatment.

Currently the hospital has 10 acute psychiatric inpatient adult beds that serve Northwest BC. The new hospital will have 20 psychiatric inpatient adult beds. The current Seven Sisters rehabilitation and recovery facility has 20 beds. The new Seven Sisters facility will have 25 beds.

Recovery is a very personal journey and can look different for each person. A variety of supports and services are available in the area to support people experiencing problematic substance use. Northern Health teams focus on supporting people wherever they are at in their wellness journey.

Enough staff

Having enough and the right mix of staff is essential for good health care. Staffing shortages for medical and support positions are a current reality for all of BC and Canada; there's simply not enough trained health professionals to fill all the positions and needs.

Planning for staff at the new hospital has already begun with lots of discussion around recruitment, and the number and mix of staff that will be required. Staffing numbers at Mills Memorial Hospital, and throughout Northern Health, are monitored continuously.

Our aim is to work closely with our partners and be creative in our recruitment efforts. Thankfully, the chance to work at a new facility is a major draw for potential hires.

Note: More information about the number and types of positions that will be available at the new hospital are in the 'Questions' section of this document.

More amenities, inside and outside the hospital

The new hospital is being designed with current and future standards in mind. With that will come a number of amenities not available, and not even possible, in the current facility.

Examples of specific amenities people have asked for include bike racks, bathrooms close to the main entrance, sinks for staff and visitors throughout the hospital, a place to buy food and drink, and more. Many of these amenities are part of the new build.

Note: We've provided more information about specific requests in the 'Questions' section of this document.

Northwest BC design features

This is a regional hospital, and many of you expressed that it should feel and look like a Northwest BC hospital.

We've heard many ideas for including Northwest BC design elements in the project – from using local and traditional plants in the gardens, to visually incorporating symbols and colours of Northwest BC's iconic landscapes, including rivers, mountains, and forests. The call to see regional art, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, in the interior and exterior of the buildings, has been especially strong.

We hear you and aim to make the new MMH feel locally and culturally welcoming and relevant. As much as possible, with health care standards and requirements permitting, we hope to incorporate Northwest BC elements.

As for art, we are still developing the process, and will work on this with members of the MMH Community Advisory working group and Indigenous Advisory working group.

Services as close to home as possible

Northern Health aims to offer as many services and the highest level of service possible in the Northwest, in each community and at each facility. Many factors must be considered when deciding on the level of care and services offered at different locations.

Our aim is to offer a high quality regional network of services. While some programs, services and departments at Mills Memorial Hospital will expand, it will still be necessary for some patients, requiring higher specialized services and/or higher levels of care than what is offered in Terrace, to travel to other centres.

Culturally safe

The goal of cultural safety is for all people to feel respected and safe when they interact with the health care system. Culturally safe health care services are free of racism and discrimination. People are supported to draw strengths from their identity, culture and community.

Indigenous Health, a department within Northern Health, has provided important guidance to the Mills Memorial Replacement project team. So have an Indigenous Advisory Working Group and a Community Advisory Working Group, both created specifically for the project and made up of local representatives.

These groups meet every few months to review and provide feedback on draft designs. They will play a significant role in ensuring the new facility is culturally safe, welcoming, respectful and relevant.

Throughout the project, Northern Health has met with local Indigenous groups and territory holders to gather feedback on the project and answer questions. In these meetings, local Indigenous groups have expressed what's important to them about the new project and what they'd like to see in the new facility. Other discussions topics have included work and contract opportunities during the construction phase and in the new facility,

Indigenous Health plays a major role in supporting Northern Health's commitment to build a health system that honours diversity and provides culturally safe services. Their work includes, but is not limited to:

- Partnering with Northern Health programs, communities, and the First Nations Health Authority to enhance access to needed services and to improve continuity of care.
- Supporting leaders and staff within Northern Health through committees, working groups, training, mentoring and more.

- Organizing regional gatherings to learn about and address topics relevant for Indigenous Peoples' health and wellness.
- Undertaking knowledge translation activities including identifying information gaps and the best approach to address that gap, then developing and disseminating resources and undertaking initiatives in response.
- Working with Human Resources and Recruitment staff to develop and roll-out a strategy to support a strong Indigenous workforce in Northern Health. Northern Health and First Nations Health Authority recently partnered to create and hire for an Indigenous-specific recruitment staff position.

Read more in the 'Cultural Practices' question section of this document.

Full of light

Many people commented on the need and desire to maximize natural light in the building. Many also requested outdoor lighting around the building and throughout the parking lots, for accessibility and safety. Northern Health is aware of the healing effects of natural views and natural light. With consideration to other design factors, our aim is to maximize natural light and views of the outdoors in the building for the well being of patients and staff.

Current health standards do determine some window locations. For example, every patient room and labour delivery room has a window. Moreover, as the project aims to achieve LEED gold building designation, LEED design requirements also inform the number and type of windows required in a building.

As for outdoor lighting, much consideration has been put to make sure the site, including the parking lots, are well lit.

Modern (with flow)

The new hospital will be modern and state-of-the-art, built to current building codes and health care standards. That means larger, more comfortable, and safer spaces.

Some major pieces of equipment will be moved from the current facility to the new one, but along with the building, the majority of the furniture, equipment, and technology will all be new.

The patient journey, experience, and movement have been a top consideration throughout the design process. A lot of thought has gone into patient flow, staff flow, and department adjacencies. The design aims to maximize efficiency, safety, and comfort.

The new hospital is also on its way to achieving LEED gold designation, the second highest LEED designation possible. As defined by the Canada Green Building Council, "LEED certification provides independent, third-party verification that a building, home or community was designed and built using strategies aimed at achieving high performance in key areas of human and environmental health."

One factor in LEED designation is energy consumption. High performance, ultra efficient heating and cooling systems in the new hospital will reduce energy consumption greatly. Greenhouse gases produced per square foot in the new Mills Memorial Hospital will be at least 70% less than the current facility.

The total reduction in greenhouse gases, from the current facility to the new one, will be at least 40%. This means that despite the new building being more than double the size of the current building, we will emit less overall greenhouse gases.

Welcoming and inclusive

Our aim is for the new hospital to be welcoming, respectful, and safe for all people.

The new hospital is being designed to be as inclusive as possible and to cater to the needs of the diverse population of Northwest BC: youth, Elders, Indigenous, non-Indigenous, LGBTQIA2S+, patients with large families, patients with no family, and much more.

Just a few examples of inclusivity in the design include non-gendered bathrooms; a flexible spiritual space; and intentionally inclusive wayfinding.

Northern Health will continue to work with the MMH Community Advisory Working Group and the MMH Indigenous Advisory Working Group on making the facility welcoming and inclusive.



Current plans include bike racks with space for 30 bikes, as well as a covered and lockable bike storage area for staff.

SPECIFIC FEEDBACK

You want a helipad.

While helipads are always something that are considered with hospitals, they aren't always the right fit. Depending on a multitude of factors, a hospital helipad may not save much time for the patients and may also increase risk.

To determine if a helipad was right for Mills Memorial Hospital, we had a third party lead a process to review the benefits and risks. The review process concluded that:

- The airport is the optimal location for fixed and rotary wing emergency transportation.
- The risks associated with helicopters incidents at a healthcare facility helipad when compared to the short travel distance from the airport to the helipad are significant.
- The current project is prohibitive for the development of a ground level helipad at this time.

Check out the final reports from the review process, available on the [Let's Talk MMH project page](#):

- [Final Assessment Report](#)
- [Ground Effects Aerodrome Report](#)

While plans for the new hospital do not include a helipad, Northern Health, remains committed to long-term planning for air support.

Further reviews of helipad locations may occur in the future.



Updated exterior design of new Mills Memorial Hospital. In the top right corner is the previous draft exterior design, which was released in September 2021.

Not everyone liked the exterior design and colours.

Some people thought the exterior design was beautiful and modern. Others disliked it – especially the colours. The footprint of the building, which is based on the design of the services and amenities inside, will remain the same. However, Northern Health, has worked with the designers to update the buildings’ exterior colours. (See above photo)

You want improvements to the emergency department.

Many people suggested ways to improve the emergency department. Here’s just a few of major improvements to this department in the new facility:

- Significantly larger space
- Double the treatment spaces – increasing from 10 to 20
- Designated emergency department entrance, registration desk and waiting room
- New, modern equipment and technology

- Treatment spaces separated by walls (not curtains) to increase patient privacy and confidentiality, and provide better acoustics and infection control

These changes will mean significant improvements to the patient experience as well as the safety and ability of staff to give the best care possible. Patients will have more privacy and confidentiality. These improvements will also mean more advanced infection control measures.

Wait times were also mentioned as a concern. A significantly larger department with double the treatment spaces and more efficient workflows will help with wait times.

You want a café.

Staff, patients and visitors want to be able to buy food and drinks in the new facility. A large space for this purpose has been allocated on the main floor, close to the lobby. The plan is for a third-party operator to rent and operate this space as a café. Northern Health will engage in discussions with potential operators before the new hospital opens.

QUESTIONS

LOCATION

Why is the new hospital so close to the highway and railway?

During the planning process several locations were considered for the new hospital. The current location was the best choice for several reasons. It's centrally located and within walking distance of many areas of the city, including downtown; the 17-acre property, which Northern Health owns, had the space to build a new hospital; and we could continue to operate the current facility during construction. Acquiring another piece of land would have added extra costs and may have added complications.

Northern Health does have emergency and safety plans in place for any potential threat to hospital operations, including a major rail accident. We also maintain close relationships with relevant organizations such as the City of Terrace and Health Emergency Management British Columbia (HEMBC), to prepare for and mitigate potential issues.

What are you doing to mitigate potential issues related to the inland port proposed for nearby?

Northern Health has been and will continue to engage with both the City of Terrace and the local company proposing to build the inland port.

We hope to continue to work together to ensure actions are taken to mitigate any potential impacts and risks related to ongoing and uninterrupted operations at the hospital, and patient safety and care.

SIZE

How big will the new hospital be?

The new building will be more than double the size of the current facility – approximately 356,500 square feet across five floors. Patients and visitors will mainly access floors 1, 2 and 3.

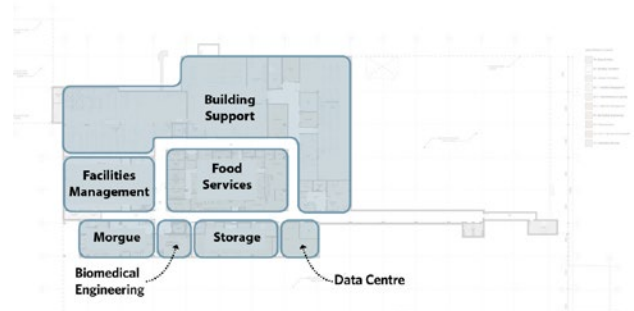
- Level 0 (Basement) – Support floor
 - Houses facilities and maintenance department, food services, support services, biomedical engineering, data center, the warehouse, and the morgue
- Level 1 (Ground/Main floor) – Medical floor
 - Houses main lobby, emergency department, ambulatory care clinic, cancer care, renal care, laboratory services, diagnostic imaging, intensive care unit, and pharmacy.
- Level 2 – Medical floor
 - Houses surgical services, staff facilities, education hub, administration, health information management services, and psychiatry.
- Level 3 – Medical/Surgical floor
 - Houses two medical/surgical units, rehabilitation, allied health, and maternity and labour delivery.
- Level 4 – Support floor
 - Houses mechanical systems, such as heating, ventilation, air conditioning (HVAC) and other systems.

The number of beds is increasing from 44 to 78. Treatment spaces in the emergency department are increasing from 10 to 20, and beds in the new Seven Sisters facility are increasing from 20 to 25.

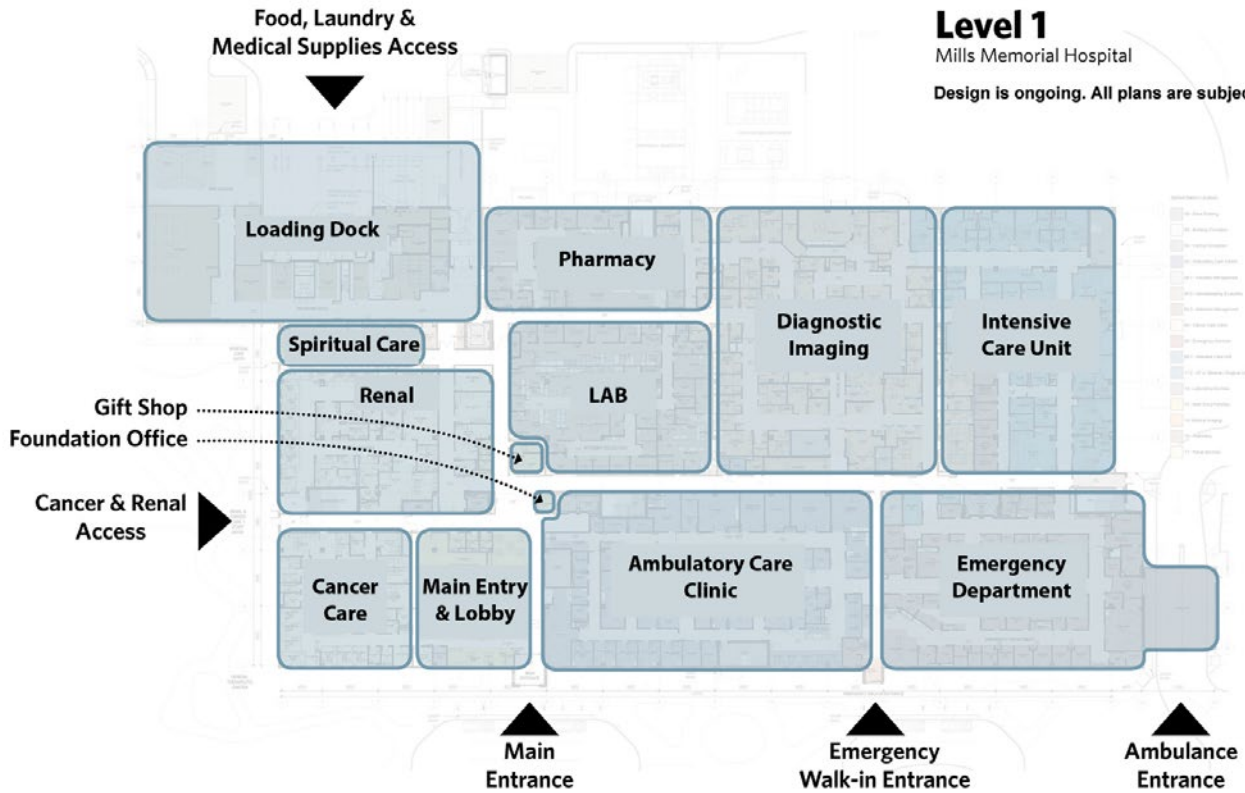
Go to

letstalk.northernhealth.ca/mmh
for a closer look at floor layouts

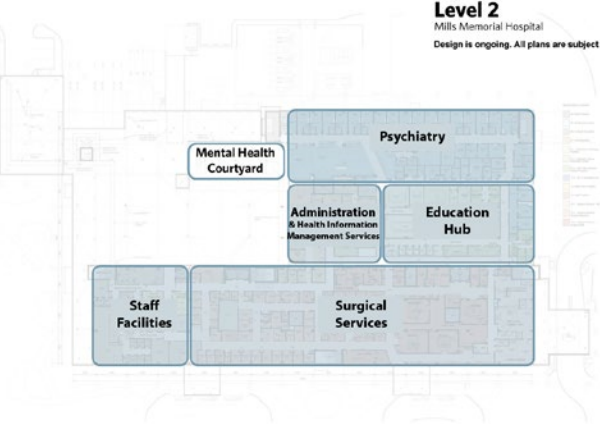
Level 0
Mills Memorial Hospital
Design is ongoing. All plans are subject to change.



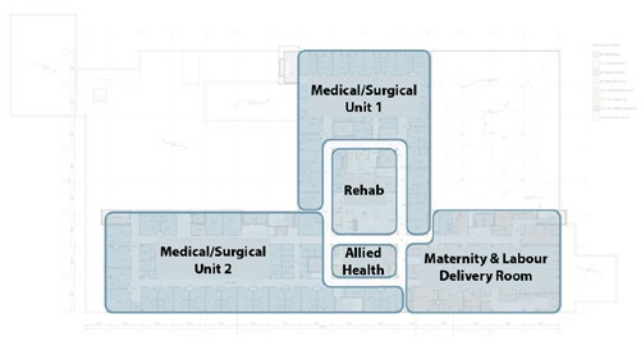
Level 1
Mills Memorial Hospital
Design is ongoing. All plans are subject to change.



Level 2
Mills Memorial Hospital
Design is ongoing. All plans are subject to change.



Level 3
Mills Memorial Hospital
Design is ongoing. All plans are subject to change.



LANDSCAPING AND PATHWAYS

Will trees and plants be put back on the property?

A comprehensive landscaping plan for the property is in place and available at on the [Let's Talk MMH project page](#).

The plan includes several gardens with local and traditional plants and trees as well as seating areas. It also includes several walking paths between Seven Sisters, the parking areas, and the new hospital.

The fence, currently surrounding the west and north side of the property (along the back of the Eby street properties and Keith Avenue), will be permanent.

Landscaping of the site will be the last part of the project. Landscaping will occur after the demolition of the current facilities, the construction of the new facilities, and the installation of parking.

Who will maintain the gardens?

Gardens at the hospital are currently maintained by an external contractor. Though it has not been finalized yet, future gardens and landscaping will likely be maintained by a combination of an external contractor and hospital staff.

Will there be bike racks for visitors and staff?

Yes. Current plans include bike racks with space for 30 bikes, as well as a covered and lockable bike storage area for staff.

Will there be a walking path from the overpass?

No. A permanent chain link fence, which was erected at the start of the project, will remain

along Keith Avenue, on the north end of the property. Therefore, it will not be possible for people to walk to the main entrance of the hospital, on Tetrault Street, directly to the overpass.

A path coming from the overpass would pass through the loading dock, and ambulance and emergency areas of the hospital, which could be potentially dangerous and interfere with operations.

Will there be designated patient walking paths, for example, for infectious patients?

General walking paths, mainly located between the parking areas and the new facilities, are part of the landscaping plans. Specific uses for walking paths on the new site have not been discussed; however, Northern Health always aims to balance the comfort and care of patients, including infectious disease patients, with required infection control measures.

What has been considered for the local weather - wind, snow, rain?

The contractor is incredibly experienced in building health care facilities as well as building in a variety of landscapes and climates.

Terrace and the site's weather conditions were considered at great length in the design of the Mills Memorial Hospital and Seven Sisters building. This includes a multitude of factors, now and in the future, such as temperatures, sunlight and shadows, precipitation, snow loading, wind force, and more.

It is important to note that it's not possible to eliminate all impacts of weather and climate conditions, but design and construction can aim to reduce their severity.

PARKING

Will parking still be free?

Yes!

How many parking stalls will there be?

Parking is doubling, increasing from approximately 150 at the current facility to 300. Adequate parking for patients, visitors, and staff is an issue at the current hospital and an important part of the new build.

Will there be designated staff parking and public parking?

Yes. The parking lot closer to Haugland Avenue will mainly be designated for staff, while the parking lot closer to Tetrault Street, in front of the main entrance and emergency entrance, will be mainly for the public.

Will there be covered parking?

Covered public and staff parking is not part of the plans. Covered parking is significantly more expensive than surface parking and was not possible for this project.

Will there be covered parking for ambulances?

The ambulance area will be more than covered. The new facility includes a fully enclosed, pull-through, heated, ambulance bay.

REPURPOSING BUILDINGS

Can we repurpose some of the buildings?

The design, construction and demolition schedule are complicated and interwoven. This project is especially tricky because the new facilities are being built on the same property as the current facilities.

Operations at the current facilities must continue, with as little interruption as possible, until the new facilities are completely operational and ready to have all patients and services transferred over. For this reason, certain construction activities are required to be in a certain order and location. Additionally, the older buildings on the site must be demolished to make way for other important parts of the project, such as parking.

As for repurposing the buildings, the current hospital opened in 1961 and has been stretched to the limit. Over the years, Mills Memorial Hospital has been expanded as best it could be to meet the health care needs of the region. However, building codes have changed significantly since the 1960s so the best approach is to build new.

While the current Seven Sisters is relatively new, much has changed within the mental health services field since it was built.

The new Seven Sisters facility will have improved patient amenities that meet the current standards of care.

SPECIFIC DESIGN ELEMENTS

Will you use wood in the design?

The design of a hospital, and the materials used, must consider many different factors. While wood accents and poles look good and represent a Northwest aesthetic, wood cannot be sanitized properly and does not meet infection control standards. Wood is also more susceptible to damage and doesn't last as long as other materials.

The hospital is being built to serve the region for the next 50 years. As much as possible, materials used in the design must be durable and low maintenance, to minimize costs and prevent the need for replacement, future repairs and renovations.

For all these reasons, wood will not be used for many elements. We recognize, however, that the aesthetic of wood is representative of Northwest BC, and have included this aesthetic in the exterior and interior design where possible – with hospital-friendly materials.



The new hospital's features various elements meant to represent wood as part of the new hospital's design. Above is a depiction of the main lobby.

Why is there a flat roof?

Living in the North, where we get a lot of rain and snow, people are worried a flat roof could lead to potential leaking. However, the roof of the new hospital isn't actually completely flat. It is sloped to drain water to designated drain points.

Flat roofs are quite common for commercial buildings and have many benefits. When it comes to leaking, usually flat roofs leak as a result of poor construction and/or maintenance – not because they are flat.

Flat roofs are also cost effective and require lower maintenance.

If the new hospital had a peaked roof, without constant maintenance, there would be a danger of snow and ice sliding off the roof onto people.

Can you add more windows?

Many people have commented on the need and desire to maximize natural light in the building. Northern Health is aware of the healing effects of natural views and natural light, and this has been considered in the design.

We also want as many windows and as much natural light in the new buildings as possible. We aimed to maximize natural light and views of the outdoors in the building for the well being of patients and staff, with consideration to other design factors too.

Some window locations are required as part of current health standards. For example, every patient room and labour delivery room must and does have a window.

CULTURAL PRACTICES

Will the windows open?

We understand many people would prefer windows to open, however, the windows at the new facility will not be able to open for several reasons.

Keeping windows closed is a significant factor in controlling the spread of infection and protecting vulnerable patients from the elements.

The temperature needs to be controlled in a LEED gold building, the designation the new hospital is aiming for. In our cold climate, this would be especially difficult if windows opened.

Will there be sound considerations for patients close to highway?

The contractor and Northern Health are working closely with an acoustic consulting engineering firm to ensure noise and vibrations are minimized in the design of the new hospital and Seven Sisters facility.

Sound transfer, reverberation control, and vibration control have been key considerations during the design process. The building design will follow all health acoustic standards of the [Canadian Standard Association](#).

The main entrance, the emergency entrance and their drop off zones seem really close. Is this a problem?

While the entrances may seem close together in the designs, in the construction they are not. Physicians and staff, including representatives from the emergency department and paramedics, have been part of design discussions and have had no concerns with the proximity of the entrances.

Will smudging be allowed?

Smudging will be allowed in the Spiritual space on the first floor of the hospital only. Specific ventilation is required for this practice and that ventilation will be in this space.

What spaces are available for families to visit and gather?

The new facility has been designed with all types of patients and visitors in mind, including patients with large extended families, and patients with no family.

All rooms in the new hospital will be private and allow families to gather comfortably and privately. Each room has its own bathroom and window, as well as visitor seating.

Several other spaces have also been placed throughout the facility. For example, family rooms, quiet rooms, and the TV lounge. This lets patients have places to go with their visitors other than their room. It also allows patients who may get lonely to have places to go and be around others.

The spiritual space on the first floor is also available for families to gather. The space has a large gathering room, as well as a small gathering room, a storage area, and a kitchenette. It also has technology in the larger room so that family members can join those in the room virtually.

SERVICES

Will the new hospital have a NICU (newborn intensive care unit) or a PICU (pediatric intensive care unit)?

To meet the growing needs for neonatal and pediatric services in Northwest BC, there are plans for space in the new Mills Memorial Hospital to enhance these services.

Currently, MMH is designated as a Tier 2 level maternal/fetal and neonatal service centre and we are working towards being a designated Tier 3 level maternal/fetal and neonatal service centre, as per [Perinatal Services BC](#) guidelines. There is more work to do on that and more information coming as we work through what is needed.

Will there be a psychiatric unit for youth?

The new hospital will not include an adolescent psychiatry unit. The clinical staff at the hospital, however, do assess and triage children and youth with mental health or substance use concerns.

Northern Health takes a culturally safe, trauma-informed, patient- and family-centred approach to supporting these children and youth. Hospital staff assess their needs then collaborate with other organizations – such as [Foundry](#), and the [Ministry of Children and Family Development](#) – to connect them with the appropriate care and services.

Depending on the circumstances, the person may stay at the hospital, be referred to virtual or regional programs or other specialized services, or a combination. If a higher level of care is required, they may be transferred to UHNBC in [BC Children's Hospital](#) in Vancouver.

Will I be able to donate blood at the new hospital?

Northern Health does not manage blood donations. Blood donation in Canada is managed and coordinated by [Canadian Blood Services](#).

Should Canadian Blood Services reach out to Northern Health about donor clinics in our area, we would aim to work with them to support that. However, there's no dedicated area in the new hospital for this purpose.

More info about donating blood can also be found at [Health Link BC](#).

Will there be day dental surgery and emergency dental care?

Dentists in town are given the ability to provide care for people with advanced dental care needs in the Mills Memorial Hospital operating rooms. Operating room time allotted to dentists for this purpose will continue.

The number of operating rooms in the new facility is increasing from three to four, and each room will be significantly larger with new equipment.

Will there be internists and/or on-call specialists?

Now and in the future, internists and specialists visit the hospital to offer services. Specific types of internists and specialists may be available on-call.

The operational and staffing plans for the new hospital have not yet been finalized, however.

Can you access medical appointments at BC Children's Hospital?

Now and in the future, patients can access telehealth services at the hospital for follow up appointments. Note, however, that families and patients are usually referred to [BC Children's Hospital](#) by their primary caregivers.

What will the rehabilitation space look like and be used for?

The new rehabilitation space will be on the third floor of the new hospital. The primary focus of the space is physiotherapy and occupational therapy for inpatients. The space will be significantly larger with updated equipment. The new design will be better for patients and staff.

Patients recovering from a stroke or major injury would be eligible for rehabilitation services in the hospital. Once they are discharged, they can continue to come to the hospital for these services.

The new hospital will have 78 beds. What is the breakdown of those beds?

During the planning stages, new health care facilities are assigned and funded for a set of number of beds. This number, and the types of beds, are based on a many factors including population and health care need projections.

The official breakdown of beds, old versus new, at MMH is:

- 25 to 41 medical/surgical beds
- 3 to 5 maternity/gynecology beds
- 3 to 4 labour room beds
- 3 to 8 intensive care unit beds
- 10 to 20 psychiatric unit beds



All patient rooms at the new hospital will be private rooms with private bathrooms.

The emergency department will also increase from 10 beds to 20. The number of beds at Seven Sisters will also increase from 20 to 25 beds.

The reality of a hospital though, including Mills Memorial, is that regardless of the official number of beds, if a patient needs care, they will receive care. Also, while the beds at the new Mills Memorial hospital are dedicated to particular types of care and services, if no one requires that care or service at the time, the beds will be used for the care that current patients require; the beds are not necessarily only used for the type of care they are dedicated to.

Another common misconception is that the beds dedicated to the same service are located in a particular section of the hospital, such as a ward. In the new hospital, however, every room will be private with a private bathroom, which will improve patient care and experience.

Also, every room will be able to accommodate all types and levels of care – though some rooms are dedicated, and therefore, more suited to particular forms of care or services.

STAFFING AND EMPLOYMENT

How many new staff will you hire and what positions will you be hiring for?

With an increase in services, a significant increase in the number of staff in various positions will be necessary. Plans for staffing the new facility, including recruitment, retention and training plans, have already started but are not yet finalized.

Staffing plans consider many factors, including how to balance the duties and workloads of different staff in different departments within the new facility. We are currently working on determining the exact staffing levels that will be needed for the new Mills Memorial Hospital and new Seven Sisters facility. However, we already know significant employment opportunities will likely be available in a number of areas.

- Care Aides
- Diagnostics Imaging Technologists
- Dietitians
- Facility and maintenance Workers
- Housekeeping, laundry and food services workers
- Indigenous Patient Liaisons
- Laboratory Technologists
- Licensed Practical Nurses
- Nurse Practitioners
- Patient Reception and Health Information Professionals
- Pharmacy Staff
- Physicians
- Physio and Occupational Therapists
- Registered Nurses
- Respiratory Therapists
- Social Workers

Will more Indigenous Patient Liaisons be hired?

Mills Memorial Hospital currently has one Indigenous Patient Liaison (IPL).

Northern Health is in the process of incorporating more supports for Indigenous patients as part of day-to-day operations. Indigenous Health, a department within Northern Health, is conducting a capacity review of Indigenous supports, resources and positions available at facilities and throughout the organization.

Which supports and support staff will be at the current and new Mills Memorial Hospital - and other facilities - will depend on the results of the capacity review.

Will staff be required to take cultural safety training?

Northern Health's Indigenous Health is currently piloting a new *Respectful Relationships* cultural safety and anti-Indigenous racism curriculum. The course will be launched and promoted across the organization in Spring 2022. The new curriculum will be available free-of-cost to all Northern Health staff and physicians through [UNBC's Continuing Studies department](#).

Northern Health staff and physicians are not currently required to take cultural safety training, but this is highly encouraged, and this topic is under discussion.

Until recently, Northern Health provided annual funding for a number staff and physicians to take the [San'yas Indigenous Cultural Safety Training Program](#). However, each seat cost the organization money. Staff and physicians are still able to enrol in the San'yas program depending on departmental funding.

AMENITIES

Will there be sinks around the hospital, for hand washing - for staff and visitors?

Yes! There are many hand hygiene sinks placed strategically throughout the hospital for visitors and staff. There are also hand sanitizing stations.

Will there be washrooms close to the main entrance?

Yes! Several.

Will there be free WiFi?

Yes. The current hospital has free WiFi (NH public) and the new hospital will too. The level of WiFi available, however, and what will be available for free to the public (for example, movie streaming, etc.) is not yet finalized.

Northern Health is looking at various options to deliver the highest level of WiFi possible.

Will laundry be on site?

Laundry will not be on site. The laundry at Kitimat General Hospital provides services on a regional basis to Northern Health facilities in Terrace. This has been the case for almost 20 years.

Laundry equipment is very expensive and economies of scale are a factor in cost effective and efficient operations.

Northern Health is reviewing operational planning and investments in laundry equipment at Kitimat General Hospital, knowing there will be an increase in demand for laundry services in the future from a new, expanded hospital in Terrace.

Will the rooms have lights that kill bacteria and viruses?

These lights, 'UVC lights', will not be a permanent fixture in the hospital. However, portable light units of this kind may be used.

What amenities are available for staff?

The new plans include a large staff area on Level 2 of the new hospital. The area includes an exercise/wellness room, change rooms, and a locker area.

There's also a large staff room, with a gathering space, lounge chairs, TVs, a work station, and a kitchen. Break rooms and other amenities are also placed strategically throughout the hospital.

Will you have interpreters on site?

Interpreters are not on site now and won't be in the new hospital. All staff at Mills Memorial Hospital have access to interpreting services through a provincial language program offered by the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA).

Staff and health professionals in the hospital can access the program remotely – by phone or online. The program can help with spoken language, sign language and translations services.

The program website also has resources for staff, patients and health professionals.

More information at <http://www.phsa.ca/our-services/programs-services/provincial-language-service>

DESIGN PROCESS

What does 'design is ongoing' mean?

Many of the structural and design elements in the draft plans, released in September 2021, will not change. However, until the end of the project, parts of the design may evolve.

The basic design of the new hospital is based on services, best practices and input from physicians, nurses, clinicians, and many allied workers that use the facility to fulfill health care needs every day. The design of the new hospital must look at a number of factors, all of which must be weighed and balanced in the final build.

This includes but is not limited to:

- Best practices
- Budget
- Business plan
- Clinical and operational staff input
- Cultural considerations
- Department workflows and functions
- Indigenous and community input
- Local population
- Services offered
- Site and location
- Statement of requirements

Evolutions to the design may come from any of these factors and affect any part of the build – from department layouts, room layouts, materials used, furnishings, etc.

Input from community, stakeholders and other local and regional groups including the project's various advisory committees and groups is important to the design process and continues to be collected. All the feedback we receive is considered and weighed against the many factors affecting the design.

Who did you ask for input on design?

Several rounds of comprehensive meetings have taken place over the previous year and a half. Those meetings included members of the MMH Replacement Project Management Team, the design team and representatives from various departments at MMH, including staff and physicians. It was in these meetings that representatives had the chance to provide their input and give feedback on design, operational workflows, and equipment needs for the services provided.

Similar to the public display, we had a staff display at the hospital, asking for comments and questions.

We've also had meetings with various Indigenous and community groups, committees, and stakeholders, where we've gathered input and comments. Representatives from local Indigenous groups, as well the Patient Voices network, have been part of the project's various committees and working groups.

Anyone with a question or feedback can get in touch at any time through the following means:

- [Let's Talk MMH](https://letstalk.northernhealth.ca/mmh)
<https://letstalk.northernhealth.ca/mmh>
- [Email](mailto:letstalkmmh@northernhealth.ca)
letstalkmmh@northernhealth.ca



ABOUT THE PROJECT

OVERVIEW

- New Mills Memorial Hospital
 - More than double size of existing facility
 - Acute care and integrated services facility
 - Centre for trauma services, orthopedic surgeries, pathology, radiology, clinical support, and pharmacy services
 - Training site for students of Northern Medical Program
- New Seven Sisters mental health residential facility
- Built on the same 17-acre property where current facilities are located



Any time, any day, you can go to [Let's Talk MMH](#) and link to the 24/7 construction cam to check out progress on the site.



Various videos are also on [Let's Talk MMH](#).

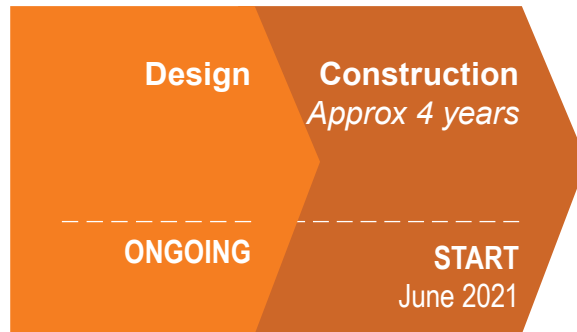
HIGHLIGHTS

- Increased size, services, and staff
- Total number of beds increasing from 44 to 78
 - 25 to 41 medical/surgical beds
 - 10 to 20 psychiatric unit beds
 - 3 to 8 intensive care unit beds
 - 3 to 5 maternity/gynecology beds
 - 3 to 4 labour room beds
- Emergency treatment spaces increasing from 10 to 20
- Operating rooms increasing from 3 to 4
- Seven Sisters residence beds increasing from 20 to 25
- Increasing from a level 4 to a level 3 trauma centre
 - Will be able to care for some patients now transported to other facilities
- All patient rooms will be private
- Modern building, equipment, and furniture
- Updated technology
 - Will increase efficiency and effectiveness of services
 - Will increase staff and patient safety and security
- Welcoming and culturally relevant design
- Designated spiritual space with large gathering area, kitchenette, and outdoor garden

Completed



We are here!



What's next



Join the conversation!

Let's Talk Northern Health is where you'll find everything you want to know about the new Mills Memorial Hospital.

Whether you've got a question, want to share your feedback or thoughts, or want to know more about the project, we would love to hear from you.

Anyone can visit the Let's Talk site and MMH project page. But to ask questions and participate in project discussions, you must register.



 northern health



QUESTIONS?
COMMENTS?



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