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## INVESTMENT INTO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES WILL ENHANCE PATIENT CARE AT ABBOTSFORD REGIONAL HOSPITAL

SURREY – Adults needing mental health support in the Abbotsford community will directly benefit from two new initiatives at Abbotsford Regional Hospital, part of a \$1.9 million investment into Fraser Health’s mental health and substance use services.

“For families, managing mental illness can be a challenging journey, and it’s in our best interests to ensure patients and their families have ready access to help,” said **Health Minister Terry Lake**. “By providing these new services, we’re following up on our priority of providing patient-centred care, when and where it is needed the most.”

The first initiative will see a new Integrated Transition of Care Team at Abbotsford Regional Hospital. This team will support patients discharged from the psychiatric inpatient unit to ensure they have a concrete care plan in place before returning home. The Integrated Transition of Care Team will consist of a psychiatrist, psychiatric nurse and mental health worker who will provide two weeks of follow-up care in the community to prevent re-admission to hospital or other negative experiences. Vulnerable patients will receive continued support while being connected to community resources that will assist them during their transition from hospital to home.

The second component will add an emergency psychiatric nurse (EPN) at Abbotsford Regional Hospital to complement the emergency psychiatric liaison nurse already in place. The EPN will provide 24/7 support to psychiatric patients in the emergency department waiting for assessment or transfer to an in-patient unit. They will also provide hands-on care including mental health status monitoring, medication and nutrition administration and psychiatric care, giving patients immediate support while they await next steps in their treatment.

“These investments begin to address the urgent need for increased mental health services in our region and are a timely addition to our services at Abbotsford Regional Hospital,” said **president and CEO Michael Marchbank**.

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