

NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Health

WHAT WE HEARD: BRITISH COLUMBIANS ON HEALTH

VICTORIA – The Province has released a summary of the input received from thousands of British Columbians during the year-long Conversation on Health. These comments, ideas and suggestions will assist government in making decisions about the next steps towards the renewal and sustainability of the public health system.

“When we began this journey over a year ago, we challenged British Columbians to come together, discuss and debate difficult issues and provide us with their thoughts on how they would like to see our public health system changed to improve and sustain it for future generations,” said Health Minister George Abbott. “Our government will now examine these ideas and bring forward actions beginning next spring to improve our public health-care system now and to ensure that it is there for our children and grandchildren in the future.”

Participants provided wide-ranging and often differing views on how to renew the health system. However, some general themes emerged, with many participants stating they want to see:

- A strong and sustainable public health-care system today and in the future, where people can access medical services regardless of income, location and other factors;
- More supports for personal health management through health promotion and disease prevention;
- More choices for patients, including more primary care, the creation of specialized geriatric services and health supports that are outside of hospitals and institutional settings. They also want to see more integration and co-ordination of care between health professionals;
- A system that makes the best use of our health professionals, promoting the maximum use of their skills and exercising a wider scope of practice.

“In the many Conversation on Health meetings I attended around the Province, I was impressed by the interest and commitment shown by all participants to improving our public health system,” said Mary Polak, Parliamentary Secretary for the Conversation on Health. “I can say with confidence that the Conversation on Health was a resounding success.”

The Conversation on Health had more than 6,400 registrations to participate in regional forums, 12,000 submissions, 78 forums and millions of hits on the Conversation on Health website.

To view the complete document, please go to www.conversationonhealth.ca.