

**September 9, 2018**

**Re: Update on Private Surgery**

This letter is to inform the public that after 15 years of providing the option of private surgery for medically insured procedures (those covered by the Medical Services Plan), Prince George Surgery Centre will no longer provide this option as of October 1, 2018 until further notice.

We will continue to provide surgery in partnership with third-party sponsors such as Northern Health, WorkSafe BC, insurance companies, and eligible employee programs; and for those members of the public who are not enrolled in the Medical Services Plan. In addition the Cosmetic surgery program will continue.

While we still believe in the option for patient access to medically-insured surgery via a wholly private process, BC's current government has taken a different view at this time. We remain optimistic that the future may bring Canada's Provincial and Federal governments a better understanding of how responsibly administered private surgery can contribute to healthcare.

Canada, like other Commonwealth countries, provides a universal public access system which we believe is of fundamental importance. However unlike other countries, Canada is without a private-access pathway other than the one that requires travel to another country; and, public waits for surgery are lengthy particularly in BC.

While we appreciate the BC provincial government's intentions to provide additional funding for public surgery, it remains to be seen whether this translates to acceptable wait times. While we don't purport that private surgery is *the* answer, we do believe it is adjunctive to other initiatives to increase capacity.

In closing, we do hope to provide private surgery again in the future when the government is satisfied that private surgery is a reasonable option for BC patients, right here at home.

Sincerely,

***Prince George Surgery Centre Directors***