
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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May 12, 2025

Office of the Premier
Ministry of Health

Streamlined process cuts wait times, bringing more U.S. nurses to B.C.

VICTORIA – New streamlined credential recognition means nurses from the United States can now work in B.C. much quicker, with registrations taking only a few days, compared to the previous average as long as four months.

“American health-care professionals are increasingly drawn to B.C. as a place that supports science, protects reproductive rights and takes care of people no matter how much money they have in their bank account,” said Premier David Eby. “That’s why I’m delighted to see that our new, fast-tracked credential recognition has cut registration time from months to just days and is bringing in new U.S. nurses to strengthen our public health system and deliver better care for British Columbians, faster.”

Since launching the new, streamlined process, applications from the U.S.-trained nurses have increased by 127%. The BC College of Nurses and Midwives is leveraging common systems and exams to make the registration process more efficient. Nurses can now apply directly to the college without first going through a third-party assessment organization. Collaborating with counterparts from the U.S., the college can access a database to review the education, exam results, employment and registration history of nurses who apply.

“With the uncertainty and chaos happening south of our border, we have an opportunity to attract the skilled health-care workers our province needs to strengthen public health care. That’s why we are ramping up our recruitment efforts in the U.S. and streamlining regulatory processes,” said Josie Osborne, Minister of Health. “And we are already seeing results with an increase in nurses applying to work in British Columbia and help deliver care.”

Since announcing its co-ordinated recruitment campaign in March 2025, nearly 1,200 nurses, doctors and allied health professionals from the United States have expressed an interest to come work in the province. This includes 573 physicians, 413 nurses, 133 nurse practitioners and 39 allied health professionals.

The Province is taking a Team BC approach to recruiting health-care workers from the U.S. and is working in collaboration with health authorities, regulatory colleges and other partners. This includes tailored support and guidance in navigating the process, provided free by Health Match BC. Recruiters are highlighting job opportunities for U.S. nurses in the areas they are the most needed, such as cancer care and emergency departments, as well as rural communities facing health-care worker shortages.

In early June, the Province will be launching a targeted U.S. marketing campaign in parts of the country with the highest interest in moving to B.C., including the states of Washington and Oregon, and select cities in California.

U.S. nurses, doctors and allied health professionals arriving in B.C. will be able to work in a variety of health-care settings throughout the province, including in primary care, where they can be part of team-based care.

An example is the Victoria Primary Care Network Allied Health Centre that opened in its new location at 1025 Johnson St. on April 24, 2025. Family doctors and nurse practitioners, who are part of the Victoria Primary Care Network, can have registered nurses to support them in their practices. Family physicians and nurse practitioners can refer their patients to the centre if they need services from clinical pharmacists, dietitians, social workers or mental-health and substance-use consultants. As well, Indigenous wellness providers, who are working from the Victoria Native Friendship Centre, are helping people access the allied health centre.

“This new and upgraded allied health centre is the result of government, Island Health, the City of Victoria and the local Division of Family Practice coming together to grow team-based care capacity and is tailored to the needs of the community through ongoing engagement,” Osborne said. “This is another action we are taking ensuring patients get the team-based care they need, when they need it, close to home.”

Learn More:

To learn about B.C.’s measures to attract doctors, nurses from U.S., visit:
<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2025HLTH0013-000194>

To learn more about health career opportunities in B.C., visit: <https://bchealthcareers.ca/>

To learn more about B.C.’s actions to strengthen health care, visit:
<https://strongerbc.gov.bc.ca/health-care/>

Two backgrounders follow.

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BACKGROUND 1

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What people are saying about U.S. recruitment, Victoria PCN Allied Health Centre

Susie Chant, parliamentary secretary for seniors' services and long-term care –

"I thank Minister Osborne for her leadership in strengthening B.C.'s health-care workforce and making it easier and faster for nurses trained in the U.S. to come to our province. As a registered nurse, I know this announcement is great news for our province, patients and for our nurses. To the nurses in the U.S. looking to move here, we welcome you."

Louise Aerts, acting registrar and CEO, BC College of Nurses and Midwives –

"By focusing on the similarities of nursing in Canada and the U.S. and leveraging an existing system, we've streamlined the application process for U.S. nurses, while maintaining the safeguards that protect the public. It's a win for applicants and British Columbians."

Angela Wignall, CEO, Nurses and Nurse Practitioners of BC –

"We applaud the Ministry of Health and the BC College of Nurses and Midwives for working quickly to establish processes that bring more nurses and nurse practitioners to British Columbia. Delivering eligibility to practise within a matter of days is a significant step toward our shared goal of every British Columbian having access to the quality care they need. As the provincial professional nursing association, we stand ready to welcome and support every nurse who chooses to make B.C. home."

Leah Hollins, board chair, Island Health –

"Island Health is pleased to participate in initiatives that make it easier for patients to get the care they need when they need it. Patients benefit from the strength of team-based primary care and the expanded Allied Health Centre allows dedicated health-care providers to further increase access to care for Victoria residents."

Dr. Melissa Duff, family physician, board chair, Victoria Division of Family Practice –

"The expanded Allied Health Centre strengthens team-based, wraparound care and fosters long-term patient-physician relationships that drive better health outcomes. Supporting physicians to offer this level of high-quality care not only attracts them to our community but also helps them stay. It's transformative. It's a big win for patients, physicians and clinicians, and the entire community."

Dr. Anna Mason, family physician and chair, Victoria Primary Care Network Steering Committee –

"Working in a team-based care setting has been a game-changer. It enhances patient access to

our clinical team and ensures that each concern is handled by the clinician with the most relevant expertise. For instance, when I involve our social worker to help address a patient's social challenges, I can stay focused on their medical care. Similarly, our primary-care pharmacist can manage medication adjustments between visits, allowing me to see more patients with new concerns. Patients truly value this expanded access, and the upgraded Allied Health Centre is a significant step toward sustaining this model for years to come."

Tarah Reece, family nurse practitioner and Lil'Wat Nation member –

"As an Indigenous nurse practitioner, I am empowered by the shared vision within my primary-care network cohort team to provide culturally safe and responsive care. Together, we stand as a collective, ensuring that the unique health needs of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples are met with respect, understanding, and a dedication to improving health and wellness outcomes. The new centre will go a long way to strengthen this joint effort."

Russ Harvey, renal transplant, Victoria Primary Care Network patient partner, and Community Advisory Group co-chair –

"I've been incredibly fortunate to have a care team working alongside my family doctor. Having the right person provide the right care in a timely manner has made all the difference. I wouldn't be here without it. The expanded centre gives many more patients access to this kind of support. It's a huge victory for Victoria."

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BACKGROUND 2

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Facts about health-care professionals in B.C., Victoria Primary Care Network Allied Health Centre

- Between 2018 and 2024, there was an increase of approximately 15,900 nurses registered in B.C.
- In total, there were approximately 75,400 nurses registered with the BC College of Nurses and Midwives at the end of 2024.
- Since 2017, B.C. has had the fastest-growing nursing workforce (27.3%) among major provinces according to most recent data from the Canadian Institute for Health Information.
- Since launching its new process for U.S. nurses in early April 2024, 177 nurses have applied to BC College of Nurses and Midwives and 113 have received their registrations to practise in B.C.
- The Victoria Primary Care Network Allied Health Centre provides services Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.
- Patient access is by referral only from a Victoria family physician or nurse practitioner who is part of the Primary Care Network.
- Appointments need to be booked in advance.
- An estimated 12,000 in-person patient visits and approximately 3,000 virtual visits are expected annually.
- The centre is operated by the Victoria Primary Care Network, a partnership between Island Health, Victoria Division of Family Practice and Ministry of Health.
- Inclusive planning took place with the broader community, including the local Division of Family Practice, City of Victoria, Indigenous partners and other local partners.
- Along with various incorporated design elements, this collaboration ensures comprehensive delivery that considers culturally safe, trauma-informed care.

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