
NEWS RELEASE

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MRI services reach a milestone at Mills Memorial Hospital

Northern Health leaders and staff in Terrace joined with the Northwest Regional Hospital District today to mark a milestone in diagnostic imaging services at Mills Memorial Hospital. The new MRI unit at Mills Memorial has now performed its first 500 exams.

“This milestone means that hundreds of residents of Northwest B.C. have been able to receive important diagnostic imaging services closer to home,” said Northern Health Board of Directors chairperson, Colleen Nyce. “This is a key aim of our overall strategy to help improve access to medical imaging technology in northern B.C.”

The new MRI unit at Mills Memorial Hospital went into service in late August, following approximately 5 months of construction, and equipment testing. The unit is expected to do approximately 2,000 scans in its first year of operation.

Funding for the \$2.9 million Terrace MRI project came from:

- Ministry of Health (Province of B.C.) - \$1,779,964
- Northwest Regional Hospital District - \$1,135,612

“MRI is a service that was greatly needed in our region, and we welcomed the opportunity to contribute to this project,” said Harry Nyce, North West Regional Hospital District Board Chair. “We appreciate Northern Health’s leadership on this project, which will see our residents able to access MRI services with shorter wait times and less travel.”

The Mills Memorial project was one of three MRI installation projects across the Northern Health region in 2017, including a new MRI at Fort St. John Hospital, and a replacement unit at the University of Northern BC in Prince George. Together, the new units triple the number of MRI’s in the region, improving access and wait times and bringing services closer to home for residents across the north.

An MRI is a valuable test for medical professionals that use a magnetic field and pulses of radio wave energy to make pictures of organs and structures inside the body. Muscles, ligaments, cartilage, and other joint structures are often best seen with an MRI. In many cases MRI gives information about structures in the body that cannot be seen as well with an X-ray, ultrasound, or CT scan.

Northern Health's 10-year medical imaging plan to help improve access to medical imaging technology in northern B.C. also includes the implementation of the Provincial Breast Health Strategy, which has recently seen state-of-the-art digital mammography units installed at hospitals in Quesnel, Dawson Creek, Smithers, Terrace and Prince Rupert.

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