



From the desk of: Timothy Roberts - Director, Electoral Area "G" (Keremeos Rural/Hedley)

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January 29, 2024

Honourable Adrian Dix
Minister of Health
PO Box 9050, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Dix:

Re: Removal of Laboratory at the South Similkameen Health Centre

As you may be aware, laboratory services at the South Similkameen Health Centre have been replaced by a private lab that is only open on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. I would like to bring to your attention the challenges that the changes to laboratory services have created in the Keremeos area.

The population of lower income residents and persons at risk in the Keremeos area is increasing due to the relatively lower cost of housing and the several BC Housing facilities located near or within the Village of Keremeos. The loss of the lab is a decrease in service for these vulnerable residents. Residents who are unable to obtain urgent lab work at the private clinic must drive 45 minutes to Penticton Regional Hospital. Senior citizens are often not comfortable driving in winter or inclement weather. Public transportation to Penticton is almost non-existent as it is only available on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and only one round-trip per day.

Further, doctors are unable to get real time diagnoses or lab work needed prior to an inter-facility transfer to a higher level of care. This is another decrease in service.

I am respectfully requesting that the move to a private lab away from a service offered within the Health Centre be reconsidered.

Sincerely,

Director Tim Roberts
Electoral Area "G"

cc. Interior Health
Village of Keremeos
Director G. Bush, Electoral Area "B"

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this letter are those of the Director and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen.

