**SURREY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL GETS MUCH NEEDED TRANSFUSION FROM PROVINCE**

British Columbians will have greater access to ER and perinatal care with today’s announcement of additional funding at Surrey Memorial Hospital (SMH). With one of the busiest emergency departments in the province and one of the largest health authorities in Canada, today’s transfusion of $400 million will see SMH services expand dramatically. Many of these improvements are taken directly from recommendations of the Health Services Capacity Initiative launched in 2007. The Minister of Health was on hand with hospital officials to outline the specific improvements:

**Suggested Quote:**

Honourable Michael de Jong – Minister of Health

“In 2007, the B.C. government committed itself to improving ER congestion and increasing inpatient capacity at SMH. Today we launch the final phase of that commitment. We will begin building a new ER four times larger than the one we have now. We are adding a perinatal centre to care for premature and critical newborns. In total 140 new inpatient beds are being created.”

Hospital officials welcomed the news, noting that SMH currently sees about 80,000 patients a year, a number projected to increase to 101,000 by 2020. The addition of 20 Neo-natal ICU beds to the 20 currently in use was also cheered. The NICU will have single-occupancy rooms, which is more conducive to family-centred care. This has been proven to reduce transmission of hospital-acquired infections, and decrease the overall length of stay.

Surrey Memorial Hospital Foundation reps were also on hand for the announcement and plan to kick-off a $20 million fundraising campaign immediately. Child Health BC has also committed $5 million.

Construction on the project will start in 2013 with the ER slated to open its doors in the spring of 2015. In total, a projected 4000 jobs will be created by the SMH Critical Care Tower and renovations project.