



PLEASE POST March 14, 2024

Facilities rural retention incentive program extended to 48 more health areas

Province aims to address health care worker staffing shortages

The provincial rural retention incentive (PRRI) program for B.C. Facilities health care workers has been extended to more communities as of March 1. This expansion of the program from 15 to 63 health areas is part of the B.C. government's ongoing commitment to address staffing shortages in health care.

"In these times of chronic staffing shortages across health care, it's great to see the provincial government take additional steps to recruit new staff and retain existing workers to stabilize health care services and reduce the risk of any interruptions," says HEU secretary-business manager Meena Brisard.

"We applaud Minister of Health Adrian Dix for his ministry's decision to expand this program, as we know it will improve the working conditions for our members and the caring conditions for patients and residents at health care facilities in all 48 health areas."

The PRRI program includes three incentives for all Facilities health care employees who work in the designated health areas – a retention incentive, a travel incentive, and an enhanced referral Incentive. Members who work regular full-time or part-time hours in communities in 48 more health areas will soon be able to access the program.

In these communities, workers will receive an incentive of up to \$2,000 per quarter to a maximum of \$8,000 per year from April 1, 2024 until March 31, 2025, provided they have regular employment status at the end of each quarter.

There is also premium pay for staff travelling more than 40 km to work at their job site and a referral bonus for staff that help recruit new employees.

The PRRI was introduced in 2021 to incentivize retention and minimize churn of health care workers in rural areas. It was initially prototyped in Northern Health's North East Health Service Delivery Area, Prince Rupert, and Hazelton and then expanded to Grand Forks in Interior Health in 2022.

Below is a list of the additional health area communities by authority the PRRI program will now apply to:

Fraser

Hope

Interior

100 Mile House
 Arrow Lakes
 Ashcroft
 Cache Creek
 Cariboo/Chilcotin

Island

Bamfield
 Galiano
 Gold River
 Mayne
 Pender
 Port Alberni
 Salt Spring
 Saturna
 Tofino
 Ucluelet
 West Coast

Castlegar

Clinton

Creston

Elkford

Enderby

Fernie

Golden

Invermere

Keremeos

Northern

Atlin
 Burns Lake
 Dease Lake
 Fort St. James
 Fraser Lake
 Granisle
 Houston
 Kitimat
 Mackenzie
 McBride
 Quesnel
 Smithers

Kootenay Lake

Lillooet

Lytton

Merritt

Nelson

North Thompson

Princeton

Revelstoke

Sparwood

Stewart

Terrace

Valemount

Vanderhoof

Vancouver Coastal

Bella Bella

Bella Coola

Gibsons

Powell River

qathet

Sechelt

Sunshine Coast