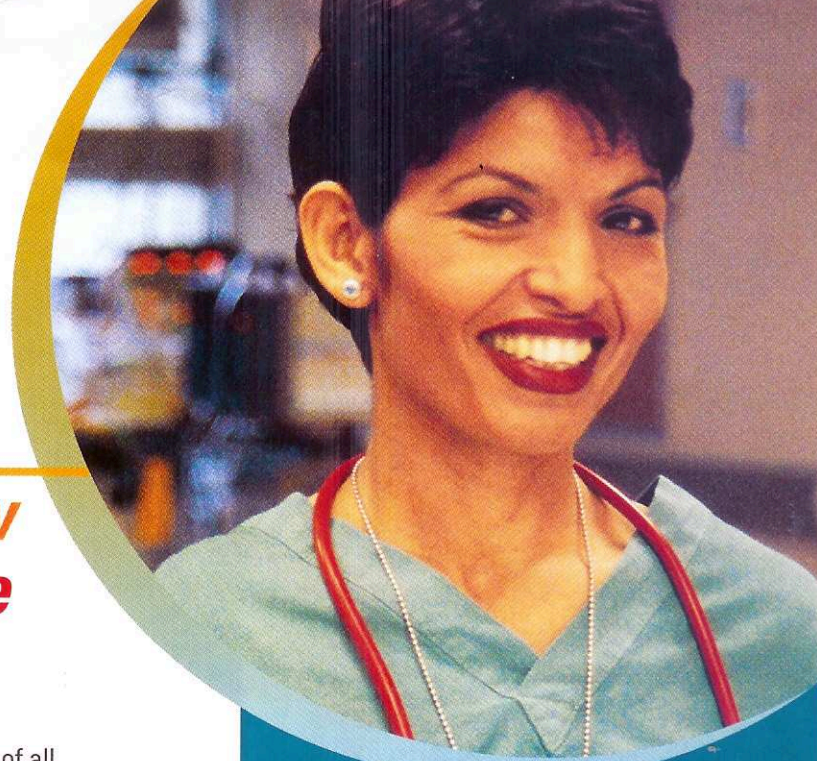


Health Care for the Future —

*finding new
ways to care*



Project expands role for nurses and brings faster emergency room care to patients

It started from a need to expand medical coverage in Ashcroft. Now, it's become an innovative program involving 230 registered nurses in 12 rural communities — all providing better health care for local residents.

With **RNFirstCall**, registered nurses are trained to treat uncomplicated or minor emergency room visits. Patients with common, low-risk health problems such as colds, minor scrapes, bruises, nose bleeds and sore throats make

up at least half of all emergency room visits.

RNFirstCall nurses also assess patients with more complex health problems.

After determining if a patient's condition is an emergency, **RNFirstCall** nurses contact the doctor on call. Based on information from the nurse, the doctor can judge whether to come to the hospital immediately and provide treatment, or provide further direction over the phone.

This program makes better use of limited emergency room resources while providing immediate care for families, even when doctors are not on site.

The **RNFirstCall** Project has reached these communities. You can talk to your local hospital about these and other innovations in health care for your community.

- Ashcroft District General Hospital,
- Golden and District General Hospital,
- Lakes District Health Centre (Burns Lake),
- Stuart Lake Hospital (Fort St. John),
- G.R. Baker Memorial (Quesnel),
- McBride and District Hospital,
- Chetwynd General Hospital,
- Ladysmith and District General Hospital,
- Mackenzie and District Hospital,
- Valemont Health Care Centre,
- Fraser Lake and District Health Care Centre, and
- Elkford Health Care Centre.

Self-Care by phone Puts Better Health in Your Hands

With a trained nurse at the other end of the phone, 12,000 households in Victoria are taking a hands-on approach to their families' health care with greater confidence. The families are part of a two-year self-care pilot project that is the first of its kind in Canada.

The Partnerships for Better Health self-care project gives each family a Healthwise Handbook full of information about common health problems, and immediate access by phone to the advice of a trained nurse. The idea is to involve you in your own health care by giving you the information to make appropriate decisions and choices about health care options.

The program also encourages the most effective use of health care resources — since its start-up, emergency room visits for minor complaints have dropped 12 per cent.

With results like this, self-care partnerships may not be far away in other BC communities.