

College expands health programs

Pen West News
APR 4

Western News Staff

Okanagan College will offer more health care programs to meet increasing demands on the system, and high interest in programs.

The \$76.5 million budget for the 2007/08 year, passed last week by the board of governors, will allow for more spaces in health care programs.

"We're helping answer what we know to be a real issue for health care in this province," said Bill Cooke, the chair of the board's finance committee.

More than 120 new full-time equivalent student spaces are being added to the college's home support resident care attendant program.

Thirty of those spaces will be in Penticton, 50 in Kelowna, 30 in Vernon and 10 in Salmon Arm.

"In all, health care programming accounts for more than 71 per cent of our anticipated program growth for the coming year," said Janet Shaw chair of OC's board of governors.

A new stream of the college's practical nursing program will accommodate 16 students in Salmon Arm and the human service work diploma program in Vernon will get room for an additional 30 full-time students.

"There is incredible employer demand for the graduates of these programs," said Okanagan College president Jim Hamilton. "This budget means that we will increase our health care program capacity by about 50 per cent in a single year."