



District of Port Hardy

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MAYOR'S MESSAGE ON THE PORT HARDY HOSPITAL OCTOBER 28, 2025

We understand how deeply frustrating and concerning the limited Emergency Department hours are for our community and for the many neighbouring communities that rely on Port Hardy Hospital.

It's important to clarify that the District of Port Hardy does not operate the hospital; hospital staffing and operations are managed by Island Health and the Province of British Columbia.

Recent social media posts suggesting that the District is “sitting silent” or can reopen the ER are simply not accurate. There is a misunderstanding about who is responsible for health care services. The District does not have the authority or capacity to hire medical staff or operate the Emergency Department.

So, what are we doing?

Your Mayor and Council continue to take direct action with those who can make decisions. We are meeting regularly with Island Health, BC Emergency Health Services, and provincial officials to push for staffing support, sustainable recruitment, and improved emergency transport options. We have been unwavering in our advocacy for accessible, reliable health care for all North Island residents.

Most recently, Council met with the Minister of Health, Island Health, BC Emergency Health Services, and the Provincial Health Services Authority to continue the conversation on the restoration of full emergency services and to identify ways the District can support those efforts. This includes a request to extend ER hours to 7 p.m. nightly, which, to our understanding, is currently under review.

Our advocacy has contributed to important provincial investments, including a major financial contribution to regional health service improvements announced through former Minister of Health Adrian Dix and previous MLA Michele Babchuk. This funding supports new hirings, security enhancements, recruitment incentives, staff housing, air ambulance services, future hospital upgrades and the installation of a CT Scanner — all critical steps toward strengthening local health care

However, progress takes time. Across the region, there are currently over 40 health care vacancies, making it difficult to operate facilities safely and effectively. The national shortage of doctors, nurses, x-ray and lab technicians, and other health professionals continues to affect every rural community in British Columbia. We are not alone in this struggle; communities must travel as far as 90 minutes each way to access emergency care.

Here in Port Hardy, we're doing our part to make this a place where health professionals want to live and work. We continue to invest in recreation, infrastructure, and quality of life, and we're working with our partners on long-term attraction and retention strategies, including advocacy for expanded post-secondary health training opportunities.

Mayor's Message on the Port Hardy Hospital

October 28, 2025

Your Mayor and Council remain strongly committed to advocating tirelessly for 24/7 emergency care and improved access to health services for every resident of the North Island. We will continue to keep the community informed as we push for the sustainable solutions our region deserves. Updates are often shared during recorded Council meetings, through reports presented at those meetings, and at the monthly Mount Waddington Regional Hospital District meetings, ensuring our community remains informed and engaged in this ongoing work.

Pat Corbett-Labatt,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P Corbett-Labatt". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mayor