

# Salt Spring Island New Physician and Locum

## WELCOME PACKAGE



*We humbly acknowledge that we exist on the traditional, unceded territories of the Hul'qumi'num and SENĆOTEN-speaking peoples*

*"Salt Spring Island has been an exceptional, vibrant community to live in and work as a family physician. I've raised my family here and have been privileged to be part of a caring and strong medical community. I can think of no better place to work as a rural family physician."*

*-Dr. Paula Ryan*

Salt Spring Island is the largest in the Southern Gulf Island chain, part of the archipelago between Vancouver Island and BC's Southwest Coast, in the Salish Sea. Salt Spring is accessible by [BC Ferries](#), the largest car ferry system in the world. You can also arrive here by private boat or floatplane. Ganges village is the commercial and geographic centre of the island, with smaller communities clustered near the ferry terminals at Vesuvius in the north and Fulford in the south, making easy connections to Vancouver, Victoria, and central Vancouver Island.

[Float plane service](#) is available from Ganges Harbour to downtown Vancouver, Vancouver International Airport, Victoria Harbor, and Maple Bay.

# LIVE

## SOCIAL LIFE

Salt Spring is home to approximately 11,000 people, and this number rises significantly in the summer months with seasonal residents and tourists. The island has a friendly and welcoming feel, and life goes on at a more relaxed pace than in the city. Islanders hold a wide mix of political and economic viewpoints, but overall, the social climate is progressive and inclusive. Nature features large in Salt Spring society - most people take full advantage of the range of available outdoor adventures. Community dinners, theatre, and other events are often held outdoors. Although a small island, Salt Spring is busy and there is plenty to do year-round. Regular events and seasonal celebrations include the apple festival, sailing race, fall fair, film festival, book sale, soccer tournament, and many more.



Salt Spring and the other Southern Gulf Islands fall under the joint jurisdiction of the Islands Trust and the Capital Regional District, which provides many of our services. We are part of the Saanich-Gulf Islands electoral district, which for the last several elections (federally and provincially) has voted Green.

Residents are able to take advantage of being so close to BC's two largest cities, but the number of amenities on Salt Spring means they don't have to leave for basic services and necessities. We have a library, two large grocery stores (and several small ones), a fully staffed RCMP detachment, and three fire halls.

## EDUCATION

Salt Spring is home to four public elementary schools and one secondary school, with options for online learning ([sd64.org](http://sd64.org)). Gulf Islands Secondary School offers specialized programs in Performing Arts, French Immersion, and Trades. There are also several private/alternative schools to choose from. School registration happens in early Spring, so check the district website for details.



# SOCIAL SERVICES

[Salt Spring Community Services Society](#)

[Capital Regional District](#)

[CRD Parks and Rec info](#)

[Salt Spring Community Health Society](#)

[Islands Trust](#)

[Islanders Working Against Violence Society](#)

[The Circle Education Society](#)

[Diverse & Inclusive SSI \(DAISSI\)](#)

[Salt Spring Literacy](#)

[Transition Salt Spring](#)

[Stqeeye' Learning Society](#)

[Salt Spring Housing Council Society](#)

# HOUSING

Like most places, real estate is in high demand on Salt Spring and rentals are at a premium. Market prices have been on an upswing for several years, and most residential properties sell for \$1 million+. The Lady Minto Hospital Foundation recently secured a hotel property on Salt Spring to renovate the building and provide housing for healthcare staff. We expect it to be ready in 2024. There are also a few options for townhouses and condominiums, and some vacant land and cleared building lots. Those interested in hobby farming or gardening will find many spots to their liking. Salt Spring has unique building guidelines, so if you're planning to build a new home or renovate an old one, it's important to plan ahead. When house-hunting, it can be helpful to tell folks you are a healthcare professional!

To get a feel for Island society and find rentals:

[www.saltspringexchange.com](http://www.saltspringexchange.com)

For real estate listings:

[www.realtor.ca](http://www.realtor.ca)



Gulf Islands Secondary School, copyright John Cameron

# PLAY

Salt Spring Island's location gives it a unique, semi-tropical micro-climate, offering a variety of year-round outdoor pursuits, as well as a thriving arts and culture scene.

The island is about 27km long and 14km wide; there's lots to explore, but its easy accessibility means that you can hike to the top of our highest mountain and go wine tasting in the same afternoon. Kayaking, sailing, hiking, paddle-boarding, rock climbing, and fishing are popular all year. We have a nine-hole golf course, an indoor pool, indoor squash courts, a yacht club and two marinas, tennis courts, a track, and several sports fields. The island has many parks and nature reserves, as well as an extensive walking trail network in and around Ganges village.

There is always something interesting going on, from concerts to improv, studio tours to karaoke, pottery to skateboarding competitions. We have a wide variety of arts, hobby, sport, and recreation groups. It's an easy and welcoming place to try new things, whether you're looking to sail, spin wool, or dance - there seems to be a group for everything!

Food is a huge part of Salt Spring culture and we take great pride in our local, small-scale agriculture. Many working farms provide the island with healthy and delicious foods. Islanders are working hard to find sustainable farming solutions in the face of climate change and economic challenges.

## SPORTS & REC

### **Gymnastics**

[Salt Spring Gymnastics Club](#)

[SSI Circus & Gymnastics](#)

### **Martial Arts**

[Elements Academy](#)

[SSI Karate Club](#)

[Tai Chi](#)

### **Running/Jogging**

[Salt Spring Sneakers](#)

### **Sailing**

[SSI Sailing Club](#)

### **Golf**

[SSI Golf Club](#)

### **Soccer**

[Salt Spring United](#)

[Lower Island Soccer](#)

### **Tennis**

[SSI Tennis Association](#)

### **Squash**

[Salt Spring Squash Club](#)

### **Swimming**

[Salt Spring Seals](#)

### **Yoga**

[Ganges Yoga Studio](#)

[Salt Spring Centre of Yoga](#)

[Salt Spring Wellness Centre](#)

[Ganges Fitness](#)

+ many more

# ARTS & THEATRE

Salt Spring Island is famous for its creative community. Many people move here to connect with other artists, musicians and writers. We have a small cinema and several venues for live performance, including ArtSpring, Mahon Hall, Fulford Hall, and Beaver Point Hall. You will find no small number of art studios, with painters, potters, sculptors, fabric artists, and an abundance of crafters making all sorts of interesting items.

The relaxed beauty of the island seems to bring out people's "right brain" tendencies, so you'll find an abundance of opportunities to explore your creative side.

Classes and hobby groups exist for most types of art, and Salt Spring is home to several artist guilds who show their works in the community on a regular basis.



Floating concert, photo copyright Gary McNutt



Xwaaqw'um welcome pole, copyright Stqeeeye' Learning Society

# HOBBIES & CLUBS

[Salt Spring Painters Guild](#)

[Salt Spring Potters Guild](#)

[Salt Spring Photography Club](#)

[Salt Spring Weavers & Spinners](#)

[Salt Spring Arts Council](#)

[GISS Performing Arts Program](#)

[SSI Community Theatre](#)

[Exit Stage Left Theatre Co.](#)

[Salt Spring Big Band](#)

[Salt Spring Concert Band](#)

# WORK

- Most GPs on Salt Spring run clinic 3-4 days per week, do an average of 12 hours per week of on-call, and provide service to their patients within the island's two residential care facilities.
- Clinics on Salt Spring Island use OSCAR for their electronic medical record (EMR).
- Greenwoods Eldercare and the extended care unit at LMH. Home visits to palliative patients do occur.
- Salt Spring Island GPs have a history of innovation and supporting continuing medical education within the community. The provincial ConsultDerm platform was tested on Salt Spring; the medical staff runs a Continuing Medical Education program tailored to the needs of local physicians, and there is an ongoing trauma simulation lab to help GPs keep their skills current.
- Salt Spring Island physicians are eligible to participate in the rural retention program. On-call work is supplemented by MOCAP and REEF funding. Physicians moving to Salt Spring may be eligible for a recruitment incentive.
- We have a close, collegial atmosphere among medical staff, and excellent working relationships with hospital support staff and other professionals in the community.



The current Lady Minto Hospital

## PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

There are a number of groups and initiatives on Salt Spring Island addressing health and wellness issues, who often collaborate with local physicians. Below are some groups and their mandates:

### Salt Spring Health

#### Advancement Network

A group of individuals and organizational reps working to improve community health and wellbeing through networking, information sharing, collaboration and advocacy.

### Islanders Working Against Violence

A local anti-violence nonprofit that coordinates sexual assault response in the SGI region; they accompany rape survivors to the hospital and work closely with the forensic nurse examiner.

### Victim Services

In partnership with the RCMP, Victim Services provides a variety of services to victims of crime or other traumatic events.

# MEDICAL ENVIRONMENT

Lady Minto Hospital (LMH) is the main hub for urgent and acute care in the Southern Gulf Islands. Salt Spring Island has no walk-in clinic. A new emergency department opened in the fall of 2024. LMH is managed and staffed by the Island Health Authority. It has 19 acute care beds, four ER beds, one palliative suite, 29 long-term care units, and houses many services, including medical imaging, laboratory, obstetrics, endoscopy, internal medicine services, mental health, physiotherapy, and pharmacy. LMH is also well set up for a Telehealth practice. BC Ambulance can transfer patients to larger centres by ferry or helicopter. Larger nearby hospitals include Saanich Peninsula, Royal Jubilee (Victoria), Victoria General, Cowichan District, (Duncan), and Nanaimo General. Physicians regularly refer patients for specialist services and diagnostics at all of these.

Salt Spring has five family practice clinics, all located within ten minutes' drive of the hospital and Ganges Village, with a total of 17 general practitioners. Several local and visiting specialists also provide regular services at the hospital and host clinics. Most physicians hold hospital privileges and cover emergency room shifts. We have excellent midwifery care, and a thriving Home & Community Care program. Our public health clinic is in the heart of Ganges, providing neonatal care, breastfeeding clinics, harm reduction services, and immunizations. The Mental Health & Substance Use team maintains a good relationship with medical staff, working to provide wrap-around supports to patients in and out of hospital.



Lady Minto Hospital Emergency Department Redesign, copyright Lady Minto Hospital Foundation

## MEDICAL STAFF ASSOCIATION

Medical Staff Associations (MSAs) are made up of facility-based physicians who engage with health authorities so that together they can address health care system challenges and support quality patient care. MSAs are funded by Doctors of BC and through the Facility Engagement Initiative, a program of the Specialist Services Committee.

## OBJECTIVES

- Reflecting on any matters of recruitment and retention of physicians
- Making sure that the rights and privileges of members are maintained
- Consulting and engaging with health authority leaders on regional and local issues
- Consulting with representatives of the medical staff
- Identifying possible projects and initiatives at Lady Minto Hospital

- We work with others through teamwork, collaboration, and meaningful engagement to achieve responsive and sustainable solutions that improve rural primary care.
- We are a grassroots, member-driven organization that values and celebrates our unique and diverse communities.
- We lead with integrity, accountability, and transparency in our communications, relationships, and actions.
- We foster a climate of trust and respect in all our relationships.
- We support innovation, adaptability, creativity, and problem solving, while embracing change to address unique rural issues.
- We are committed to supporting a learning organization, through knowledge-sharing, evaluation, and quality-improvement.

*“Working on Salt Spring, I always feel supported by my colleagues. It’s a good physician group that looks out for one another. Everyone helps each other and we get along.”*

*-Dr. Kesh Smith*



# FAQs

## **Is accommodation included?**

Accommodation can sometimes be provided by the physician being replaced. Host clinics will do their best to help locums and new physicians to locate accommodation. Contact the Lady Minto Hospital Medical Staff Association Project Manager at [fems.lmh@gmail.com](mailto:fems.lmh@gmail.com) for more information.

## **What services do locums on Salt Spring Island provide?**

Practice on Salt Spring Island is a diverse rural generalist model and locums can expect to provide services that include clinic, residential care, in-patient, and call in to the emergency room. Obstetrical care is provided through our midwifery service.

## **What if I am not comfortable with providing Emergency Room care?**

Emergency room care is provided by local physicians; however it is not a requirement. There is the option to do community care, inpatient care and emergency room care.

## **Are you part of the GP Locum program?**

While Salt Spring Island is not eligible for the Rural General Practitioner Locum Program (RGPLP), we are eligible for a fee top up on fee-for-service billings and receive support for our on-call physicians through REEF and MOCAP. Contact the Lady Minto Hospital Medical Staff Association Project Manager at [fems.lmh@gmail.com](mailto:fems.lmh@gmail.com) for more information.

## **Does the community offer a guaranteed minimum income?**

Locum positions on Salt Spring are based on a fee split, and on the standardized Doctors of BC Locum Contract.

Locums arrange this with the individual practice, and the clinic is able to provide information on typical volumes and anticipated total compensation. Hours: Daytime - 0800-1800; Evening - 1800-2300; Night - 2300-0759; Weekend/stat -0800-2300.

# CONTACTS

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Salt Spring Public Library, copyright Salt Spring Library