“Good hygiene, nutritious food and exercise are all very important for good health, but the best way to prevent a child from getting a vaccine-preventable disease is through immunization.”

Dr. Tania Diener
Medical Health Officer
Regina Qu’Appelle Health Region

It’s National Immunization Awareness Week!

This year, National Immunization Awareness Week is recognized from April 25 to May 2. Parents are encouraged to have their child/children immunized on time, and to keep immunizations up to date to prevent them from getting serious diseases such as measles, and pertussis (whooping cough).

“A child could become very ill or even die because this simple safeguard was overlooked,” said Dr. Tania Diener, Medical Health Officer for the Regina Qu’Appelle Health Region (RQHR).

“Good hygiene, nutritious food and exercise are all very important for good health, but the best way to prevent a child from getting a vaccine-preventable disease is through immunization,” she said.

Why do parents fail to take this simple precaution? Misinformation is a key reason. There is a lot of fear-mongering and myth-making around the practice of immunization.

One myth is the belief that vaccination timing does not matter, as long as the child is vaccinated at some point. This approach puts young children
at risk of getting preventable diseases, said Diener. Children are vulnerable from the time they are born to certain vaccine preventable diseases. Every week or month that goes by without the child being immunized at the recommended time puts the child at greater risk of getting these diseases. Others believe that giving children multiple vaccinations for different diseases at the same time increases the risk of harmful side effects and can overload the immune system. Research does not support this. Multiple vaccines given at the same time have no adverse effect on the normal childhood immune system. Research also does not support the assumption that a child with a cold should not be immunized. Studies show that having a mild illness does not affect a child’s ability to react appropriately to the vaccine.

Some parents worry that the vaccine could hurt more than it helps. Several websites falsely link vaccines to sudden infant death syndrome, autism and diabetes. According to Diener, this information is misguided. While vaccines are not 100 per cent risk-free, there is no research confirming that any immunization causes such diseases in children. In fact, studies show that failing to immunize your child for tetanus, pertussis, measles and other diseases puts your child’s health in far greater jeopardy than immunization ever would.

As part of National Immunization Awareness Week, Morag Granger, Nursing Manager for Population & Public Health Services, appeared on CTV Morning Live. To watch her discuss the importance of vaccines, visit http://regina.ctvnews.ca/video?clipId=600943&binId=1.1167267&playlistPageNum=1

Another argument against immunization stems from the belief that there is no need to immunize, as vaccine-preventable diseases have been virtually eliminated from Canada.

“Because of vaccinations, many diseases are at low levels in Canada,” said Diener. “However, some diseases, such as pertussis and measles, are still present and can be just a plane ride away. Some travellers can bring these diseases from other countries.”

In 2003, the RQHR reported 127 cases of whooping cough. In September that year, the province introduced a vaccine to grade eight students to prevent the disease, in 2010 for mothers and adult caregivers of children less than six months, and in 2011 all adults 18 years of age and older became eligible to receive a pertussis-containing vaccine once in a lifetime. As a result the number of cases decreased. In 2014, only two cases were reported in the RQHR.

There are some children who are unable to be immunized because of medical reasons or because they are too young. These children are at greater risk for getting vaccine preventable diseases, and by immunizing your children you are not only protecting them, but also protecting those who can’t be immunized.

Parents who are unsure of when to immunize their children or whether their child has been immunized can find out by calling 306-766-7500 or by contacting their local RQHR public health office.

Aggression and Violence in the Workplace Survey

There is still time to fill out the 2015 Aggression and Violence in the Workplace Survey. Preventing aggression and violence in our workplace is important. Our goal is to ensure a respectful workplace. By having a voice – filling out the survey – you can help us have the information and backing necessary to ensure this.

Paper copies can be accessed from –

• Employee Health and Safety Offices at the Pasqua Hospital, General Hospital and the Wascana Rehabilitation Centre
• A PDF version can also be found on the Employee Health & Safety Intranet page which can be printed off http://rhdintranet/ohs/Default.htm

The survey can be done electronically –

• By accessing it through the scrolling marquee on the Intranet Home Page http://rhdintranet/rqhr/default.asp
• Through the Employee Health and Safety Intranet page

Your completed paper survey can be returned to any one of the Employee Health and Safety offices at the PH, RGH or WRC.
“Be Accreditation ready, rather than getting ready for Accreditation,” said Kris Gustavson, Lead Surveyor, at the final Accreditation debriefing held Friday, April 17.

From April 12 – 17 the Regina Qu’Appelle Health Region (RQHR) participated in its Accreditation survey. The purpose of the survey is to gain an external peer-reviewed perspective on the quality of care delivered by the RQHR. During the week, ten surveyors visited rural and urban facilities and measured the RQHR against standards derived from best practices. Patients, families, staff, physicians, and community partners played a key role in providing feedback to surveyors throughout the week.

At the Accreditation debrief, which was held at the Pasqua Auditorium and broadcast across the Region via Telehealth, Gustavson repeated the importance of using the Accreditation standards as the best practices for improving daily work and working towards achieving strategic objectives. She emphasised the importance of always being prepared for a survey rather than preparing in the months leading up.

“We can anticipate improvement recommendations in a variety of areas including policy development, medication management, and infection control. It is important to note, that the Required Organizational Practices and Accreditation Standards are everyone’s responsibility. As a Region we meet or fail these requirements as a whole, and accountability is not just on one department or facility,” said Gustavson.

“The Region has been on a journey of continuous quality improvement and Accreditation supports the work we have been doing. The survey is for our benefit and will help us gain a better understanding of our practices and culture across the Region,” said Keith Dewar, RQHR President and CEO.

“We are committed to quality and safety when it comes to patient care. The Accreditation results contribute to our aim for no harm to patients, staff and physicians.”

At the Accreditation debrief, many successes for the Region were identified including:

- Leadership: The RQHR was recognized for having a strong Board with strong teams;
- Patient Flow and wait times: The significant reduction in the number of people waiting more than three months for their surgical procedure;
- Volunteers: Our dedicated and loyal volunteer base, and;
- Infection Prevention: Increasing our hand hygiene audit compliance rate to close to 70 per cent.

“We greatly value the surveyors’ observations and take the findings very seriously. These will be incorporated into our annual planning process, which will allow us to prioritize improvement work already being done. Accreditation is one of the many inputs we can use to plan better, and be better,” said Dewar.

The final report and final decision is expected to be provided by Accreditation Canada within 15 business days of the survey. A summary of the final results will be made available to staff and a follow-up article will be published in e-link.

The RQHR would sincerely like to thank all patients, staff, physicians, volunteers, and community partners who took part in the Accreditation process.
Client Representative Services transitioning to Patient Advocate Services

Client Representative Services is currently transitioning to the new name of Patient Advocate Services. This new title of Patient Advocate Services for a critical service within the Regina Qu’Appelle Health Region is the result of feedback from patients, families, residents and clients over several years that the name - Client Representative - was not easily understood and did not define or clarify the role.

Following a review that included an environmental scan, literature review and a patient/family survey, the decision was supported by the Senior Leadership Team to change the name to Patient Advocate Services.

Preliminary feedback has been positive, and there is optimism that the name change will also improve awareness and accessibility for patients, residents, clients and families, as well as for staff and physicians when they need support from this resource.

Contact information will remain the same and updates will be provided as our transition continues. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we work through this change.

As the Region continues to focus on its transformation to a patient and family-centred system, with no harm, waste or waits; high-quality outcomes for patients, residents, clients and families; and high-quality workplaces for our staff and physicians, the Patient Advocate Services will continue to evolve, providing training and support for real-time concern resolution and seamless care for patients, families, residents and clients.

Watch for these developments in the near future.

Please note that in the next few months of transition, the Patient Advocate promotional materials such as brochures and cards will be updated to reflect the new name change.

To reach Patient Advocate Services
Toll Free Outside Regina: 1-866-411-7272
Regina Residents: 306-766-3232
Fax: 306-766-7068
2nd Floor, 2550 15th Avenue
Regina, SK S4P 1A5
client.rep@rqhealth.ca
patientadvocate@rqhealth.ca

South Saskatchewan Chapter
Presents:
Diabetes and the Elderly:
A Dynamic Duo

Featuring:
Aileen Knip
RN BScN MN CCHN(c) CDE

Friday, May 22, 2015
8:00 a.m. - 4:15 p.m.

Jocquie Shumitcher Theatre

For more information about the program and registration fees contact:
Colleen Hollinger 306-697-4007 Colleen.Hollinger@rqhealth.ca

New Privacy and Access e-learning tool

Roxane Priddell, Privacy and Access Officer, would like to advise staff that there is a new e-learning tool available on the Regina Qu’Appelle Health Region’s Intranet for Privacy and Access Training.

She invites staff to test their Privacy & Access knowledge for the HIPA on-line quiz, which can be accessed through the Privacy Office homepage under the Directory tab.

Please feel free to contact Priddell at 306-766-6481 if you have any questions or would like more information.