Saskatchewan residents and interested organizations are invited to provide feedback to the recently-announced advisory panel examining the restructuring of Saskatchewan’s health care system.

On August 18, the Minister of Health appointed a three person advisory panel to review the current Regional Health Authority (RHA) structure and provide advice on a system with fewer RHAs in Saskatchewan.

The panel will also look at services that could be delivered more efficiently and effectively on a provincial scale, examine RHA board governance and accountability, and identify ways to enhance measurement of health system performance.

“Our panel wants to support a robust and open dialogue with key partners and stakeholders throughout this process,” panel member Dr. Dennis Kendel said. “The panel wants to ensure the patient is at the centre of a redefined system, which will be structured and governed to best support and improve patient care.”

The panel is now accepting online written submissions from all interested individuals and groups.

The submission deadline is September 26. The submission form, located at www.saskatchewan.ca, includes options for responding to each of the four areas within the panel’s mandate, though there is no requirement to complete all four.

“Restructuring the health system is an extremely complex process,” panel member Brenda Abrametz said. “The panel welcomes opinions from different perspectives to enhance our abilities to make informed recommendations to the government.” Cont’d pg. 2
Antimicrobial Stewardship five minute update

What is antimicrobial stewardship?
Antimicrobial Stewardship is the right drug at the right dose for the right duration in the right route.

Did you know?
Antibiotics are NOT effective in eliminating viruses.

What’s the problem?
In a recent European survey, 57 per cent of respondents said they believe that antibiotics can kill viruses. In a US survey, 40 per cent of respondents said antibiotics are the best treatment for a runny nose or sore throat, generally symptoms of viral illnesses.

How do we fix it?
Educating the public about when antibiotics are effective is a key strategy for antimicrobial stewardship. This will help to prevent pressure on prescribers to give antibiotics when they are unnecessary.

What’s been done since the last update?
• Community Health Care Worker Knowledge and Attitudes survey has moved into data analysis, and we’re still awaiting dentist and veterinarian completion;
• Antimicrobial use policies under revision;
• Collaboration with pediatrics to begin data analysis and participation in a pharmacy resident research project; and
• Draft versions of community clinic tools complete and under revision.

What’s next?
• Developing our internal web page;
• Develop plan for asymptomatic bacteriuria project – bacteria in the urine that does not cause symptoms;
• Continued conversations with various departments and stakeholders regarding antimicrobial stewardship initiatives; and
• Continue to network and formally introduce the Antimicrobial Stewardship Program to other departments and educational institutions.

What needs more work?
• Obtaining a more permanent workspace for the program team;
• Planning for Agribition, November 21-26. We will be creating posters and banners and will be contacting agriculture and vet colleagues; and
• Planning for the global Antibiotic Awareness Week, November 14-19.

Your say, cont’d
“We sincerely appreciate everyone’s input in this important review that will help shape the future of Saskatchewan’s health system structure,” panel member Tyler Bragg said.
The Advisory Panel will provide scheduled updates throughout the process. All submissions are part of a consultation process that may be released publicly upon the completion of the panel’s work.
Personal information and personal health information will not be disclosed.

For more information about the review and to access the online submission form, visit the Government of Saskatchewan’s website, www.saskatchewan.ca, and search for “Health Advisory Panel.”
In partnership with the Canadian Institutes of Health Research’s (CIHR) Strategy for Patient Oriented Research, the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation awarded funding to five teams conducting innovative research activities that have the potential to benefit the health of Saskatchewan residents. Two of the five successful teams are from RQHR, and we are proud to highlight their research below.

**Study Title: Predicting risk of disease progression in patients with chronic kidney disease (CKD) in Saskatchewan**

**Principal investigator:** Dr. Bhanu Prasad ($43,076)

Multidisciplinary care is used to slow the progression of disease in patients with CKD. Newer evidence, however, suggests that for patients with low risk of progression to renal failure, multidisciplinary care is more expensive than needed and leads to inappropriate tests/procedures.

Dr. Prasad and team members are investigating a new tool that identifies which patients with CKD require intensive care in a multidisciplinary clinic and which patients can be appropriately managed in primary care or by a nephrologist. The team members are: Dr. Joanne Kappel, Saskatoon Health Region (SHR); Diane Kozakewycz, RQHR; Tiffany Blair, SHR; Dr. Jennifer St.Onge, RQHR; and Dr. Navdeep Tangri University of Manitoba.

The researchers believe that stratifying patients with CKD to the appropriate care level will improve access to primary care in the community and patient experience, reduce wait times for specialists, and potentially save over a million dollars annually in health care costs in Saskatchewan.

**Study Title: A Combined bio-statistical and behavioural approach to understanding outcomes in patients living with HIV in Saskatchewan**

**Principal Investigator:** Dr. Alexander Wong ($73,192)

Saskatchewan’s HIV epidemic remains amongst the worst in the developed world.

Limited evidence exists on best approaches to care.

A diverse multi-disciplinary research team led by Dr. Wong will determine factors which predict poor outcomes in HIV-positive individuals in southern Saskatchewan, and collect behavioural data such as medication and appointment adherence in real-time using an innovative smartphone application platform developed by Dr. Nathaniel Osgood. By identifying patients likely to have poor clinical outcomes and their barriers to optimal care, individualized interventions can be tailored for each patient.

Team members include Drs. Tania Diener and Maurice Hennink, Debbie Rodger and Julie Reed, RQHR; Drs. Nathaniel Osgood, Cindy Feng and Holly Graham, University of Saskatchewan; and Drs. Jeffrey Joy and Richard Harrigan, University of British Columbia.

---

**Sale at General Hospital gift shop**

The RGH Gift Shop would like to thank all the staff who participated in the RGH staff appreciation gift basket giveaways. Your purchases helped increase revenue used to fund special requests for the RGH.

We appreciate your patronage. The RGH Gift Shop would like to congratulate the following winners of the baskets, Bridget Verszers, Shauna Hugg, Sandra Cozma, Cathy O., Lori Garchinski and Erin McAvoy.

Beginning September 5, the RGH Gift Shop will be clearing out their summer stock at a **40-50 per cent savings**, and on Friday, September 9, there will be a liquidation of stock at **70 per cent off** from 7:30 to 9 a.m. Come early for the best selection.
Join the Stoma Stroll awareness walk

People from across the country support the Ostomy Canada Society through the annual fundraising stroll.

Photo credit: Ostomy Canada Society

Enterostomal Therapy Services, along with the Ostomy Canada Regina Chapter, are preparing for the third annual Ostomy Canada Stoma Stroll Awareness Walk. The Stoma Stroll is an event that is held in various cities across Canada. The purpose is to raise awareness for the Ostomy Community.

The Regina Stoma Stroll will take place on Canada Ostomy Day, Saturday, October 1, with registration at 9:30 a.m. and the walk beginning at 10 a.m. The walk will start at the Community of Christ Church, 4710 – 8th Avenue, Regina. Lunch will follow.

To register or donate, visit www.stomastroll.ca. For more details email reginaostomygroup@gmail.com or call Enterostomal Therapy Services at 306-766-2271.

Perinatal memorial gathering

If you have experienced the loss of a baby at any time during pregnancy or after the baby’s birth, you are not alone.

Please join us for a special memorial gathering to remember our precious babies. All families, friends and staff are welcome.

Sunday, October 2 at 2 p.m.
Wascana Rehabilitation Centre Auditorium

To RSVP, contact Mary Brubacher at 306-766-3569 by September 26.

Mark Your Calendar

Long Service and Retirement Recognition Event

Thursday, October 6, 2016
Registration 1:00pm & Program 2:00pm
Evraz Place Salon B & C
Dessert Banquet

Published weekly by the Regina Qu’Appelle Health Region. Submissions are welcome. For details, contact Communications at 306-766-5227 or email E-LinkCommunications@rqhealth.ca.