

**POINTS OF
INTEREST:**

See how Fillmore
Health Centre
Staff recognized
OH&S Week—on
Page 12

**INSIDE THIS
ISSUE:**

Child and Youth 3
Newsletter

What to do if you 4
get the flu

Ideas from the 6
Therapies
Department

Energy Awareness 12
Days

Dress code 14

News from the 15
Recycling
Committee

New staff 17

Stay out of the sick bed



How to do that?

- Regular and thorough hand washing with soap or alcohol-based hand rubs (not antibacterial liquid) is the single most important way to avoid getting the flu.
- Practice good respiratory etiquette. Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Coughing and sneezing into the elbow will also help to reduce the spread of infection.
- People with mild flu-like symptoms should stay at home and avoid public places until they have recovered.

Information for schools, health providers, employers and the public is on the Ministry of Health website at www.health.gov.sk.ca/influenza-monitor. Sun Country Health Region information is on our website at www.suncountry.sk.ca with links to the Public Health Agency of Canada and the U.S. Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. Call HealthLine at 1-877-800-0002 or online at www.healthlineonline.com/ with specific concerns.

Letter to the Community

Sun Country Health Region (SCHR) activated its Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) in late April, as have all other Saskatchewan Health Regions, to implement emergency plans, as necessary, to respond to the H1N1 Influenza (swine flu) outbreak.

SCHR's EOC connects regularly with the Saskatchewan Ministry of Health Emergency Operations Centre (HEOC), all other Saskatchewan health regions, and additional provincial health service agencies for briefing on the latest developments in our province, country, and around the world.

We communicate information and issues of common concern and prepare SCHR facilities, programs and staff for any situation that may emerge in the coming weeks.

During the weeks from April 27 to May 8, SCHR held staff briefings to provide information about H1N1 Influenza (swine flu), how to recognize it, how to prevent infections, how to protect themselves and our clients and how to treat this new virus.

As well, all physicians, registered nurse, nurse practitioners, emergency room and facility managers, and infection prevention and control officers were advised by Sun Coun-

try Health Region Medical Health Officer Dr. Shauna Hudson of the criteria and screening process for pa-

tients presenting with concerns and/or symptoms of Influenza-like Illness (ILI) or Se-

vere Respiratory Illness (SRI).

These education sessions will be ongoing.

Medical personnel in Sun Country Health Region know how to identify and reduce risk among the population.

All acute care facilities and physicians were alerted Wednesday, April 22 by Dr. Hudson and the Infection Control Department of SCHR to increase surveillance for severe influenza infections. Our enhanced surveillance has not detected any cases to date.

As part of our commitment to communicate with the community, SCHR will provide regular updates about the situation and the latest medical advice on best practices to avoid spreading H1N1 Influenza (swine flu).

More information is on our website at **www.suncountry.sk.ca** with links to the **Public Health Agency of Canada, Fight Flu, and the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention.**

This letter was sent to municipalities, police and fire departments, schools, and other community partners in Sun Country Health Region.

Advice for families about flu:

Online links for advice during the H1N1 outbreak or any other flu season:

1. Flu self-help: www.fightflu.ca
2. <http://www.health.gov.sk.ca/flu-caring-for-yourself>
3. For more information on Human Swine Influenza, visit the **U.S. Centre for Disease Control** at: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/> and/or the
4. **World Health Organization** site at <http://www.who.int/en/> and/or the
5. **Public Health Agency of Canada** site at <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/>

Keep an eye out for this new newsletter!

Child and Youth Services



Shannon Culy, Child and Youth Social Worker with the Estevan Mental Health Clinic, prepares this colourful and interesting newsletter every month for children and their parents in Sun Country Health Region.

If you don't see copies of it where you work, find it on our website at www.suncountry.sk.ca, under Health News and Tips/ Child and Youth Newsletter. Print it out for your facility, clients and co-workers.

This month's issue offers encouragement to parents: You're not alone!

What to do to avoid getting sick:

Basic infection control to avoid getting sick:

The Public Health Agency of Canada advises Canadians to:

- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm water, or use hand sanitizer.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Coughing and sneezing into the elbow will also help to reduce the spread of infection.
- Keep doing what you normally do, but stay home if you are sick.
- Check www.fightflu.ca for more information
- Check www.voyage.gc.ca for travel notices and advisories
- Talk to a health professional if you experience flu-like symptoms.

What is the best technique for washing my hands to avoid getting the flu?

Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs. Wash with soap and water or clean with alcohol-based hand cleaner.

We recommend that when you wash your hands -- with soap and warm water -- that you wash for 15 to 20 seconds.

When soap and water are not available, alcohol-based disposable hand wipes or gel sanitizers may be used. You can find them in most supermarkets and drugstores. If using gel, rub your hands until the gel is dry. The gel doesn't need water to work; the alcohol in it kills the germs on your hands.

Consumers Advised Against Counterfeit and Unapproved H1N1 Flu Virus (Human Swine Flu) Products

Health Canada is advising Canadians not to purchase products claiming to fight or prevent H1N1 flu virus (human swine flu).

While there are approved antiviral drugs that may help prevent or reduce the symptoms associated with the flu in general, there are currently no products authorized for sale in Canada that are indicated specifically for the treatment of H1N1 flu virus (swine flu).



What to do if you get sick:

What is H1N1 flu?

More investigation is needed on how easily the virus spreads between people but it is believed that it is spread the same way as regular seasonal influenza. Influenza and other respiratory infections are transmitted from person to person when germs enter the nose and/or throat. Coughs and sneezes release germs into the air where they can be breathed in by others.

Germs can also rest on hard surfaces like counters and doorknobs, where they can be picked up on hands and transmitted to the respiratory system when someone touches their mouth and/or nose.

If Your Doctor Tells You to Isolate at Home

This is advice on managing influenza illness at home when isolation practices are advised.

Influenza is a viral respiratory illness that causes fever and cough with sore throat, headache or muscle aches. In addition to these, children occasionally experience vomiting and diarrhea.

What does home isolation mean? Why have I not been admitted to the hospital?

If your respiratory illness is mild to moderate, home isolation and treatment is less disruptive and more comfortable than a hospital.

If you must go into the community (i.e. to seek medical care), avoid exposing others by avoiding crowded areas and consider wearing a face mask.

How long will I be in isolation?

Stay at home for seven days unless directed otherwise by your health care provider. Reschedule appointments and coordinate with friends and family to pick up groceries, prescriptions etc. to reduce the risk of exposing others.

If you have been prescribed medication, complete the course of treatment recommended by your health care provider before returning to work.

Should I remain in contact with anyone?

Ask your health care provider whether you should check back with them to report your health status. However, if your symptoms of influenza worsen and you experience difficulty breathing, chest pain or high fever, contact Healthline at 1-877-800-0002 for further direction.

What should I have at home during isolation?

Comfort: Ensure your home is supplied with basic needs such as telephone, drinking water, functioning bathroom, hygiene products and a comfortable sleeping area (preferably separate for other members of your household).

Support: ensure you have a personal resource who can check in on and help as necessary with meals and essential shopping and can keep you company.

Are other people in the house at risk?

It is important that everyone in the household follow basic infection control measures to prevent the spread of the virus. Other people living with or attending to you should:

- Practise frequent hand washing with soap and water.
- Use alcohol-based hand gels (containing at least 60% alcohol) when soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty.
- If you are within two metres (six feet) of others at home, consider wearing a face mask. If you have questions, please contact HealthLine at 1-877-800-0002 or www.healthlineonline.com/ Your physician may recommend that those who have been in contact with you be isolated for some time in order to prevent spreading the virus prior to showing symptoms. Your physician may also recommend that you self-isolate yourself from all people who are well while you have symptoms or up to 7 days (whatever is longer). If you experience a worsening of your symptoms such as:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting

Call your doctor or seek emergency care

In Children watch for:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish skin color
- Not drinking fluids
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improve, but then return with fever and worse cough
- Fever with a rash

Active transportation ideas

Brought to you by
Sun Country Health Region
Therapies Department



Active transportation is any form of human-powered transportation.

It is any trip made for the purposes of getting yourself, or others, to a particular destination - to work, to school, to the store or to visit friends. As long as it is "active", you can choose the mode - walking, cycling, wheeling, rollerblading, skateboarding, snow shoeing, you get the idea. Active transportation provides several benefits.

Walking or riding your bike not only saves you money on gas but also taps into a fuel source that we all have lots of, especially at the end of a long, cold winter!

There aren't any exceptions, if it requires you to power it, it can

be considered active transportation and you get to reach your destination, burn some calories and improve your health, all at the same time!

Depending on your location some of these options may seem more feasible than others.

If you live out of town, consider dropping your kids and their bikes off at the edge of town and allowing them to ride to school.

If they have after-school activities in town, they now have an independent and active way to get themselves there, and it provides you with a meeting place to pick them up.

The important thing to remember is that every little bit helps and the sooner they develop active and healthy habits the better!

For more ideas and guidance visit the following website: http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/fitness/active_trans.htm

Chronic Disease Management Collaborative II

Want to be on the cutting edge of chronic disease care in Saskatchewan?

Sun Country Health Region is pleased to be involved with Health Quality Council's (HQC) Chronic Disease Management Collaborative II (CDMC II).

CDMC II will begin in October 2009 to improve the quality

of care for people living with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and depression.

Primary care physicians and nurse practitioners may participate in the Collaborative. CDMC II is building on the success of the Chronic Disease Management Collaborative I which improved the care of over 17,000 Saskatchewan people living with diabetes and coronary artery disease.

A Collaborative is a method to improve current practice by sharing, spreading and changing ideas to fit into multiple settings. This approach has been used worldwide to significantly improve chronic disease care. A Collaborative uses a learn-by-doing approach. It allows physicians, nurse practitioners and other health professionals to

work together to ensure their patients receive the highest quality care for chronic disease.

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease is the fourth leading cause of death in Canada. COPD is a lung disease in which the airways become narrowed limiting the amount of air

to and from the lungs.

The goal of CDMC II is to reduce the number of

emergency visits, hospitalizations and urgent family physician visits for people living with COPD.

More than 80% of depression cases are diagnosed, managed and treated in primary care (at the family physician). However, depression is only properly diagnosed in about half of the people who live with the disease. Depression rates are particularly high in people living with other chronic conditions. The goal of CDMC II is to improve symptoms of depression and to increase remission rates for patients with depression.

If you are interested in learning more about the Collaborative, please contact Sun Country Health Region's Chronic Disease Management Facilitator, Sheena Grimes, at (306) 637-2464 or sgrimes@schr.sk.ca

Cutting edge patient care!

Safer Health Care Now!

The Sun Country Health Region Leadership Team chose four facilities as pilot sites for Environmental Cleaning and Hand Hygiene improvements to reduce and prevent MRSA transmission.

Our four facilities include:

- Weyburn General Hospital (40 acute care beds),
- Estevan St. Joseph's Hospital (53 acute care beds),
- Estevan Regional Nursing Home (70 bed LTC), and
- Radville Marian Health Centre (49 LTC bed).

Our Environment team includes representation from all disciplines including front line environmental staff, environmental managers, nursing managers, needs assessment coordinator, infection control practitioners and the Medical Health Officer.

Our team worked on a number of PDSAs including the development of an audit tool to match the High Touch Spots (HTS) we would include in our audits and how we would score them. Once our audit tool and testing were finalized, we conducted a blinded audit (staff were not aware that testing was being done). Our initial baseline testing revealed that a small percentage of HTS were cleaned according to our standards.

After the baseline testing results were completed, the team chose to work on a significant education session for all housekeeping staff in these four sites as well as updating our housekeeping protocols to include HTS and checklists.

Our education session included input from all members of the team and focused on:

- basic education on MRSA,
- basic infection control principles,
- the importance of environmental staff as part of the infection control team,
- review of the new housekeeping protocols and checklists,
- hands on learning, including hand hygiene, how the audits will work using the product "Glitterbug lotion," and cleaning a room with the new protocol.

Safer Health Care Now! continued:

During the hands-on sessions, front line staff paired up with their managers to clean the room and audit themselves. At the beginning and the end of the education sessions, we had the participants complete a pre and post-test to determine if our education made a difference.

The results of the pre and post test results showed our session did improve their learning (from 80% on pre-test to 88% on the post-test) and the over-all evaluations were extremely positive. We have included a few charts to show how after our intervention we exceeded our April 1, 2009 goal of 21% for HTS.

Our first audit after the intervention indicated that 64% of HTS were cleaned, a dramatic increase. You will notice for one facility there was not as large an improvement in their results - unfortunately this facility was not able to attend our

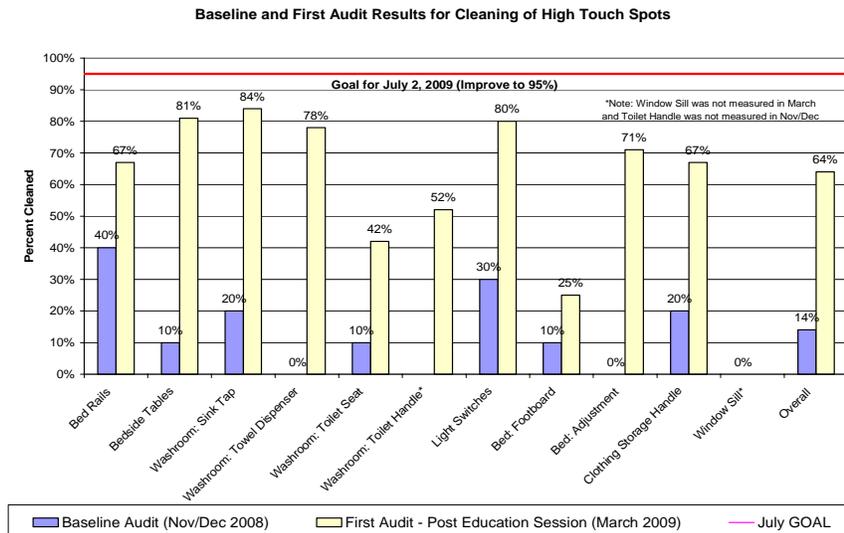
sessions due to a respiratory outbreak that occurred in their facility leading to staff cohorting beginning on the morning of our first education session..

Sun Country Health Region’s Medical Health Officer Dr. Shauna Hudson, says "Our baseline audit showed we had room for lots of improvement in our environmental cleaning.

“The support and enthusiasm of the MRSA team, the front line environmental cleaning staff and managers led to huge improvements after our first intervention.”

“We hope to reach our goal of 95% cleaning of High Touch Spots by July, sustain the improvement and then expand this to all of our health care facilities," she said.

For more information, please contact Michelle Luscombe at (306) 739-5212.



Way to go Redvers! . . .

Mary Deren, Telehealth Coordinator, announces that the 2009 February Sun Country Health Region Telehealth Innovation award goes to Gary Blezy and his partners Polly Godenir, Yvette Foster, Myrna Peterson and others out at Redvers Health Centre for accomplishing a second room availability for Telehealth.

[Way to go Redvers.](#)

Now Retired Redvers Manager Myrna Peterson explains. "We needed a second room because our board room was frequently busy at the same time as the Telehealth sessions.

As we see Telehealth access as a priority we wanted to ensure that it was accessible. We encourage the public to attend sessions by posting the monthly calendar in the community. We've found that the public is starting to attend more and more."



SCHR Doctor named Physician of the Year



Dr. Werner Oberholzer of Radville was named Physician of the Year at the annual meeting of the Saskatchewan Medical Association on May 8, 2009

Dr. George Miller, the newly elected president of the medical association is quoted as saying Dr. Oberholzer is driven to provide the best possible patient care in sometimes challenging circumstances. He is respected and admired both as a community member and as a medical professional said, Dr. Miller. Dr. Oberholzer and his wife, Dr. Nelleke Helms (also a family doctor), have worked in Radville since 1999.



Protect Yourself

...and others from influenza

Stop the spread of viruses that make you and others sick!



Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.



No tissue? Cough or sneeze into your elbow, not your hands.



Clean your hands often with soap and warm water, or a gel or alcohol-based hand cleanser.



Stay home if you are sick.



For more information, visit
www.health.gov.sk.ca/influenza-flu

Adapted from "Protect Yourself and others from influenza: Stop the spread of viruses that make you and others sick!" Province of British Columbia. All rights reserved. Adapted with permission of the Province of British Columbia.



Sun Country Health Region (SCHR) hosted two Energy Awareness Days in April to help raise awareness among staff of possible energy conservation measures. The events were held in conjunction with the beginning of renovations in each of the Region's health care facilities to save energy. SCHR is working with the Saskatchewan Ministry of Energy and Honeywell on the projects. Saskatchewan Conservation Society Program Coordinator Angie Bugg, on the left, Judy Espeseth, programmer, and Jason Lewandoski, Honeywell Project Coordinator, demonstrated energy saving techniques at the events. SCHR will host a kick-off to the renovations on May 22 at Tatagwa View.



Members of Sun Country Health Region Falls Prevention Team are: from left to right, Val Finney, activities; Deanna Pierce Colbow, RN; Sherry Pyett, RN; Lorrie Schultz, RN; Marnell Cornish, Tatagwa View Nurse Manager; Judy Krylychuk, RN; Denise Tourand, SCA; Debbie La Rose, SCA; Vivian Gatzke, SCA; Maricel Tamondong, Occupational Therapist; Barb Navieaux, Occupational Therapist.



Winner of the draw

The winner of the Honeywell door prize at one of the Energy Awareness Days in Sun Country Health Region in April is Colleen Heidebrecht, Home Health Aide of Weyburn. Colleen took home energy saving bulbs, a battery-free flashlight, and other energy saving helpers. Sun Country Health Region will hold another Energy Awareness Day in the fall.

Did you know?

SCHR has a dress code

Employees are expected to follow dress and grooming standards as established by Sun Country Health Region (SCHR) according to Policy Number HR-20-15. The dress and grooming standards have been developed to:

- Foster a positive image appropriate for a health care environment
- Establish confidence in and respect for Sun Country Health Region
- Maintain the health and safety of patients, the public and the employees

STANDARDS:

- These Standards are established as minimum requirements. Division/department /functional area standards or practices may exceed these requirements. See division/department /functional area standards attached to this policy.
- Employees wear an identification badge at all times while at work. The employee identification badge is issued by Human Resources and is worn uncovered and above the waist.
- Employees dress professionally, with a neat and tasteful appearance, appropriate for their work area and free of offensive language or pictures.
- Casual attire may be acceptable as defined by the division/department/functional area and as appropriate within job responsibilities.
- Employees maintain good personal hygiene and grooming habits.
- Footwear is appropriate to the work area and safe for the individual and work environment.



- Hair, beards, and moustaches are to be kept clean and well groomed at all times. The style of any of the aforementioned is not to interfere with the ability of the employee to maintain professionalism, standard precautions or sterile technique, when appropriate in their work environment.

Specific standards have been set for these departments:

Laboratory Services

Laundry and Environment Services

Medical Imaging Services

Nursing – Acute Care, Long Term Care and Community Care

Nutrition / Food Services

Office Employees

Operating Room, Recovery Room and CSR

Physical Plant / Maintenance Division

Therapy Services

The complete policy can be found at
R:\SCHR - Policies & Procedures\HR -
Human Resources\HR-20 - Performance
Management on the R Drive.



The Radville Improvement Team was the winner of Sun Country Health Region's 2007 Galloway Award. The team members, from left to right, are: Gale Pryznyk, former Regional Director of Primary Health and Rehabilitation; Susan Viergutz, RN; Dianne Green, Quality of Care Coordinator, who presented the award; Dr. Werner Oberholzer; Wanda Miller, Collaborative Facilitator; Candace Kopec, dietitian. Missing from the picture are Kim Borschowa, Pharmacist; Dawn Geiger, EMT and Office Assistant; Kay Steele, Regional Diabetic Nurse Educator; Leanna Wallin, EMT and office assistant; and Dr. Nelleke Helms.



Shirley Wheeler,
Chair,
SCHR
Recycling
Committee

SCHR Environmental News:

Question: What sorts of materials are recycled in SCHR?

Answer from Shirley Wheeler, Chair, SCHR Recycling Committee.

One of many things newly recycled this year are the 20 litre pails that hold our house-cleaning products.

After the contents are used, the pails are washed and sent to Weyburn General Hospital to the laboratory to store used blood

vials until they are transported for disposal.

Once they're full with the vials, each pail is properly labeled and the contents sent for disposal. We used to buy new pails, at \$5 each, to transport the used blood vials to the disposal company.

After we started the recycling committee in the Region, I began to ask, what can I do next?

I started seeing stacks of these pails and wondering what we could use them for. By reusing the pails, we will be saving a lot of money.



Staff at the Fillmore Health Centre were focusing on occupational health and safety during OH&S week in early May. From left to right are Judy Palmer, Debbie Kosior and Sharon Clay working on WHMIS Activities.

It only takes one minute to help ensure your safety at work. That's the theory behind the Occupational Health & Safety One Minute of Safety board set up at the Fillmore Health Centre in the first week of May. Helping to set up the board are, from left to right, Donna MacPherson, Debbie Kosior and Nancy Grieve.





Sun Country Health Region Administration

Please send information about the activities in your program or facility to:

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842-8706

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Welcome to some new staff

Murray Goeres, Regional Director Rural Facilities, is pleased to announce that **Naomi Hjertaas** is the Community Health Services Manager at Redvers Health Centre.

Labour Relations Consultant Terry Steininger announces the appointment of **Mark Rochat** to Labour Relations Officer, effective March 30, 2009. For the last 16 years Mark has been employed by Sun Country Health Region, working in Dietary. He was also an executive and involved with



CUPE Local 5999. Many of you will have dealt with Mark in his CUPE role of Union Chief Shop Steward.

Hal Schmidt, Vice President Finance and Corporate Services is pleased to announce the appointment of **Patrick O'Brien** as the Region's new LEAN Specialist. Patrick will teach staff about quality improvement using specialized quality improvement tools. Patrick comes to us from Ontario and will begin on May 19.