

POINTS OF INTEREST

MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM THE RHA CHAIR AND THE CEO: PAGE 13

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They're baaack . . .



OH-OH! - Inspector Dismay, aka Infection Control Nurse Michelle Luscombe, finds a hole in the safety tent guarding the construction project at a Sun Country Health Region facility. The visiting M & M Ladies, on the left, *accidentally* made the hole with a cane when they were checking out the tent designed to protect staff and visitors from infection during construction. They said it definitely was not a result of their curiosity. This is the fourth year the M&M Ladies have stopped by the Region's Patient Safety Conference to lend a hand with the organization and voice their displeasure with some aspect of the health care system. They tell us things just aren't done in our facilities like they were in the old days. (One of them was careful to wear a hard hat to this renovation site). See more pictures of the annual conference inside, on Page 2.

Information displays at SCHR's Patient Safety Conference



John Megenbir demonstrates some of the methods the maintenance department use to clean the air in our facilities in the Region.



Val Borgen, left, Lenna Schmidt, and Yvette Longley stand by the Patient First demonstration at the conference.



From left to right, Mona McKay, Angela Gervais, and Sheila Szakacs examine the progress being made on the Depression Collaborative.

Focus on Patient Safety

Sun Country Health Region (SCHR) hosted its fourth annual Patient Safety Conference this week at McKenna Hall in Weyburn.

This annual event is always well attended and is an important event for SCHR. Improving patient safety is one of the Region's top priorities.

This year's theme was All for One, Patients First. Speakers included Donna Davis, (a public member of the SCHR Patient Safety Committee and a national patient safety advocate); Dr. Mark Wahba, Emergency Room Physician, Saskatoon Health Region, who discussed bias in decision-

making in health care and Jerry Bell, RN, from Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region, who discussed the role of attitude and the opportunities to learn from adverse events in the health care system.

The conference included displays of patient safety initiatives in the Region, as well as a panel discussing the fall prevention initiative in the Region for long term care residents, home care clients, and the community.

About 200 staff members from facilities and programs around the Region attended.

Dave Galloway Award winners:



The winners of the 2010 Dave Galloway Award are, from left to right, standing, Shirley Wheeler, Regional Director, Environmental Services; Janice Giroux, Vice President, Community Health. Sitting are Cheryl Harrison, Nurse Manager, Dialysis Unit; Mary Anne Veroba, Director, Patient/Resident Care, St. Joseph's Hospital; Michelle Luscombe, Infection Control Nurse. Team members not in the picture are Darlene Champagne, Brenda Freeman, Sharol Lansberry, Debbie Donald, Jean Piel, Theresa Lasko, Karen Goudy, Kristin Bahsler.

The winning project is:

Michelle Luscombe received a notification from Safer Healthcare Now (SHN) regarding the introduction of a western collaborative process to control, reduce and prevent MRSA infections.

With several outbreaks of MRSA in SCHR, Michelle felt the collaborative would be a strategic approach to addressing MRSA in SCHR.

The goal of the collaborative was to implement evidence-based strategies. Following Michelle's initial work with SHN, SCHR enrolled in the collaborative.

There were five evidence-based strategies. One of the interventions chosen was a systematic cleaning and disinfection program for the environment.

SCHR used a team approach and team members come from several SCHR facilities and programs. The team developed a charter (see end of application). Janice Giroux, Vice President, Community Health, is the Leadership sponsor.

The initial priority was to focus on environmental cleaning at four sites that have experienced a higher rate of MRSA cases and outbreaks - Radville Marion Health Centre, Estevan Regional Nursing Home, Weyburn General Hospital and St. Joseph's Hospital.

The quality improvement teams worked to identify improvements that were tested in the pilot facilities and then implemented throughout the Region.

The MRSA Collaborative focused on environmental cleaning.

The LEAN story of laundry



Part of the Team - From left to right, Emma Reich, Marcy Hill, Susann Patterson, Jenny Knox, Miranda Hockley, Tally Gaab, Shirley Wheeler, Barbara Benning fold and sort some of the smaller items they handle every day in SCHR's regional laundry facility.



Folding the clothes - Most of the folding in the SCHR regional laundry is still done by hand. Sandra Hill, left and Janet Standler work together to fold a large sheet.



Ironing - Janet Standler irons. One of the new rolling closets stands in the background.

Making the laundry change

Sun Country Health Region (SCHR) has adopted a program called LEAN, which is intended to do just what it sounds like it might. It's supposed to help make our systems leaner, more efficient, less costly, so that more of the whole operating cost goes toward providing direct care to the client/patient/residents we serve.

Last winter, that LEAN process moved into the six year old, regional laundry system.

Staff, manager, and a LEAN specialist looked at the system used to provide clean laundry to SCHR's facilities and programs to find ways to make it easier for the staff to do the job so they can do it quicker and with fewer injuries.

"Laundry work, like lifting those heavy wet sheets and towels, is very heavy work," says Regional Housekeeping Director, Shirley Wheeler.

"It wears down the staff. They tire quickly," she says.

"So if the process can be changed and less heavy work is involved, they will be less tired when the day is done, resulting in better job retention and fewer injuries. That was our hope," she says.

After a careful examination, the staff found a way to save steps. Previously, they put the laundry into the washers, dryers, then they fold it, and transfer it in many rolling baskets to a third location to fill the multiple rolling closets that are then trucked to 20 different hospital and long term care facilities.

They changed the last part of the process and saved many steps.

Now they move each rolling closet to the folding stations and fill it completely there. All the towels, sheets, facecloths, gowns, blankets, etc that are to be delivered to Wawota Health centre, for instance, are filled at one time from the folding station.

Then Wawota's rolling closet is moved all in one piece to the truck.

The same thing happens with each of the other facilities' laundry needs.

"It's much more efficient. Instead of handling each item two or three times, from the folding station to the rolling wagon to the rolling closet, we only handle it once," says Mrs. Wheeler.

"We took out a whole lot of unnecessary steps."

"We know it's a better process because the work goes a lot faster with less walking and there's a smoother work flow around the folding room," she says.

Other changes were made at the same time.

They turned around one huge folding machine so they could fold while they are watching when the dryers stop. That made a huge difference, too, because they can't hear the dryers with the hearing devices they are required to wear while working to block out the worst of the constant noise.

"It sounds like all this should be so simple but anyone who has ever designed an industrial system knows that it isn't," says Mrs. Wheeler.

"Whole companies work on design changes of systems, and whole university departments teach people how to think about these kinds of things. It isn't simple and it takes time. We probably will never be completely satisfied or quit trying to make changes."

In SCHR's main laundry, 24,000 lbs. of laundry are cleaned each week by 10 staff members most days. Each person handles about 54 pounds of laundry each hour, a higher standard than the commercial industry average at 50 pounds/hour.

Bouquets for our staff . . .

To all the staff at Fillmore Health Centre
Words can't express how grateful we are for
the care and kindness you showed our mother,
Barb, during her stay at your centre.

You are some of the most selfless, caring
and spiritual women one could ever have the
privilege of knowing. The care and
compassion you provided our mother
with was unparalleled - we couldn't have
asked for anything more. We are
so fortunate to have had you in Barb's
corner, every inch of the way... and
we will never forget it.

The Kleiningers.

My sincere thanks to everyone working on Saturday night in the Emergency at Weyburn
General Hospital and those awesome people on the 3rd floor.

My daughter Makayla (5 years old) was violently ill on Saturday and after several hours of
her not getting better we were told to take her to WGH. The excellent care and speed of the
RNs, clerks and physician was beyond any expectation I had.

She was admitted to the 3rd floor for the night, with my wife and I taking turns staying with
her. The nurses and housekeeping were so nice to Makayla that she told me this morning that
she missed them. I am happy to say that Makayla is fine, acting like a 5-year-old and not
afraid of the hospital thanks to the dedication of those professional health care workers.

I cannot express my thanks for a job very well done!!

Mark Arthur, CHRP

Regional Director, Recruitment / Retention

SCHR

CEO explains concept of “Shared Services” in staff memo



“Shared services” is a name to describe activities where organizations work cooperatively in order to improve the cost and quality of services to their customers.

Payroll and group benefits administration in the health system are already a shared service.

The power of group buying for supplies in health facilities has existed for a number of years, and we are increasing that power by partnering with a national organization called HealthPRO.

The health regions, Saskatchewan Cancer Agency, SAHO, and the Ministry of Health are looking at options for additional shared services. This will result in cost savings and making health care a better value for taxpayers.

But it is not just about cost savings. We also expect to enhance customer service to benefit the patients, clients, and residents served by the health sector.

In our health sector there are administrative departments whose customers are the front line, or clinical departments.

To enhance the customer service provided to clinical departments, administrative departments in the health regions and the Cancer Agency will be looking at ways to work together to provide even more efficient and effective customer service.

These departments include IT, human resources, finance and administration and materials management.

Change can create uncertainty, but we are using a thoughtful approach over many months to design future health services delivery. It is an exciting and challenging time that also has opportunities for all employees to contribute ideas, cooperation and leadership in shaping the future of Saskatchewan health care.

Determining which services can be more effectively provided by a new shared services organization is expected to be completed by March 31st. We are currently in the information gathering phase as we determine the best way to move forward.

Over time we anticipate changes in the requirements of some jobs that provide administrative services; however, there is still much work to be done before the exact nature of the move to shared services is better understood. Over time, there may be fewer jobs in certain areas, and we commit to trying to manage changes through attrition where possible. We also commit to share information with you throughout the process. If you have questions or want more information, please work through your supervisors to pass the feedback to us. A web site will be launched soon (www.shc-ssso.info) that will have additional information and give you the tool to ask questions. We look forward to working with you in the months and years to come.

**Marga Cugnet, Interim
President and CEO**

And what does that mean?

Terms you need to know

Accreditation – Ongoing process to assess the quality of care and services provided in SCHR, based on national standards. As part of this, we are surveyed every three years by Accreditation Canada.

ROP = Required Organization Practice: an essential practice to enhance patient/client safety and minimize risk. Each ROP has a specific set of tests used to measure compliance.

Strategic Plan – document that outlines the long term goals and objectives of the region. This incorporates the strategic directions of the Ministry of Health Strategic and Operational Directions. (SOD).

Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Team – A team made up of a variety of professionals to identify and take action on areas for improvement, promote standardization of processes and forms. There are 11 CQI teams in SCHR.

Patient Safety Culture Survey – A survey from Accreditation Canada to measure staff perceptions of patient safety and the commitment of the health region to patient safety.

Worklife Pulse Survey - A survey from Accreditation Canada to measure the quality of the staff's work life. These findings will be used to identify strengths and gaps, and to plan interventions to improve the work place.

Performance measures – Information that assesses the processes and outcomes of a particular treatment or service. Example: infection rates measure the number of infections in a facility and highlight the need for

improvement. Example: number of falls and fall-related injuries, to highlight the need for a change in service to reduce the number of falls.

Med Red = Medication Reconciliation. A system that ensures an accurate and complete list of all medications accompanies the patient wherever (s)he goes.

The Superbugs – MRSA –(Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus aureus); VRE (Vancomycin resistant Enterococci)

A.R.O. = Antibiotic Resistance Organisms: both MRSA and VRE are resistant to treatment with normally used antibiotics

Other high risk organism – C. Diff (Clostridium difficile) – this infection occurs in the large colon and can be spread through spores that are very hard to get rid of

HACI = Health Care Associated Infection (an infection that develops when the patient/client/resident is in a setting where health care is delivered and the health care they received causes the infection).

Includes **HAI** = Hospital Acquired Infections – sometimes also referred to as “nosocomial”

SDCL = Saskatchewan Disease Control Laboratory where testing is completed provincially. For example, genetic testing for typing the organisms found (formerly referred to as Provincial Lab)

P.O.C. = Point of Care: this is where hand hygiene must be performed. It includes where patient contact and contact with the patient environment occurs. There are four points when hand hygiene is essential.

SCHR staff member receives provincial award

Sun Country Health Region's new Regional Director of Public Health received the Premier's Award for Excellence in the Public Service in November for work she performed to October, 2009 while she was Vaccine and Policy Consultant in the Saskatchewan Ministry of Health. Shirley was a member of the six-member team that developed three new processes for handling all of the routine and specialized vaccines used in the province. The first process was a change in the way vaccine was distributed. The old way saw the Ministry of Health (Population Health) divide up all the vaccines for each health region and send them to one regional depot, where staff had to divide it up again and repack it for individual facilities and locations. The new method eliminated the second step. People in the Population Health Branch made the packages up for each public health office right from the start and sent them to the correct office. "It's more efficient," says Shirley. It eliminated the need for all Regions to have staff to divvy up the vaccine a second time. The second process change reduced vaccine losses. "We looked at the reasons for vaccine loss



**Shirley Blyth,
Regional Director
of Public Health**

and found that one of the main issues was excess heat or cold during transportation," she says. So the department contracted a temperature controlled refrigerator truck for deliveries.

The third process changed the ordering and inventory management system to create a faster automatic ordering system, one that also reduced the stockpiling of vaccines that often results in waste.

All of these changes were in place last year during the H1N1 outbreak and the Ministry was very grateful for a better distribution system that ensured timely delivery of that vaccine and helped slow the spread and severity of H1N1 in Saskatchewan.

The changes also resulted in significant savings in the vaccine delivery process. The cost of wasted vaccine dropped from \$185,000 in 2008 to \$2,200 in 2009. Shipping costs dropped from \$243,000 to \$56,000 in 2009.

Janice Giroux VP Community Health, says it is important to acknowledge and recognize this accomplishment for Shirley.

"The Region is fortunate to have her expertise in public health now working with us in SCHR. Please help in congratulating Shirley on her receipt of this distinguished Provincial award."

Sooner, safer, smarter. . .

The Saskatchewan Surgical Initiative is committed to keeping health providers and health sector organizations informed about progress being made in transforming the surgical care system.

The Initiative's Sooner, Safer, Smarter newsletter will be e-mailed to anyone who wishes to sub-

scribe: health care providers, patients and administrators who are interested in patient- and family-centred innovations occurring in Saskatchewan.

To subscribe, or to suggest story ideas about efforts to transform surgery in Saskatchewan, visit: <http://www.health.gov.sk.ca/sksi-newsletter>

CHRISTMAS TOURS

Schedule for Visits

November/December 2010

Facility	Date	Time
St. Joseph's Hospital (Estevan)	Nov. 29	10:00 A.M.
Estevan Regional Nursing Home	Nov. 29	2:00 P.M.
Gainsborough Health Centre	Nov. 29	10:00 A.M.
Sunset Haven (Carnduff)	Nov. 29	1:15 P.M.
Galloway Health Centre (Oxbow)	Nov. 29	2:30 P.M.
Redvers Health Centre	Dec. 9	10:00 A.M.
Wawota Memorial Health Centre/Maryfield Clinic	Dec. 9	2:00 P.M.
Coronach Health Centre	Dec. 13	10:00 A.M.
Bengough Health Centre	Dec. 13	2:00 P.M.
Pangman Health Centre	Dec. 13	11:00 A.M.
Radville Marian Health Centre	Dec. 13	2:00 P.M.
Mainprize Manor	Dec. 13	1:00 P.M.
Fillmore Health Centre	Dec. 13	2:30 P.M.
Lampman Health Centre	Dec. 14	9:30 A.M.
Arcola Health Centre	Dec. 14	11:00 A.M.
Moose Mountain Lodge (Carlyle)	Dec. 14	1:00 P.M.
New Hope Pioneer Lodge (Stoughton)	Dec. 16	10:00 A.M.
Willowdale Lodge	Dec. 16	1:30 P.M.
Kipling Memorial Health Centre	Dec. 16	2:30 P.M.
Weyburn Special Care Home	Dec. 20	2:00 P.M.
Weyburn General Hospital	Dec. 22	9:30 A.M.
Tatagwa View & CHSB	Dec. 22	2:00 P.M.

**** December 3, 2010 - Booked for Staff Christmas Party in Weyburn.****

**** December 10, 2010 Booked for Staff Christmas Party – St. Joseph's Hospital of**

Environmental News



Shirley Wheeler

Question:

A friend of mine works in laundry and says some odd things show up sometimes.

Answer from Shirley Wheeler, Chair, SCHR Recycling Committee:

We get other items arriving in the laundry on a daily basis besides our linen.

Every piece of linen coming into the laundry must be handled by the laundry staff. They wear full personal protective equipment but injuries can still happen.

Items found in the linen include, sharps, scissors, scalpels, wallets, keys, knives, dentures, glasses, broken glass, pens, rosaries etc.

A needle stick is something no one wants. Not knowing what you are exposed to is the worst thing. We must protect our laundry staff from this happening. We know for a fact that there are sharps containers located at many locations for the proper disposal of them.

When undressing a resident, staff

should go through their clothes to make sure that they have no items in the pockets.

Lots of items, like dentures and glasses mostly are in the bedding. Beds are often changed quickly with the staff just rolling up the bedding not knowing what the resident might have had in the bed.

The cost of replacing dentures and glasses is very high for the families. Generally the laundry staff will notice the items while sorting and before going into wash but some do get through.

Removing of autoclave tape found on the (OR) wrappers is another concern. If not removed properly when opening a bundle, the tape gets washed and dried and is very time-consuming to remove by a laundry staff. Staff need to use an adhesive and scrape with a tool. Then items need to be rewashed.

The incidence of foreign objects in the laundry can be reduced if everyone pitches in.

*Send your questions to
Shirley.Wheeler@schr.sk.ca*

Blog-watching

Check regularly for new information about staff and the Region
on Sun Country Health Region's Blog

at <http://suncountryblog.com/> or find it on the website at
www.suncountry.sk.ca



Kelly Beattie

IN PARTNERSHIP **ABORIGINAL AWARENESS TRAINING**

Aboriginal Awareness Training is a four (4) hour session. The goal is to create awareness and understanding of partnership agreements, the Representative Workforce Strategy and to prepare a welcoming workplace for Aboriginal peoples through education and training.

Training is mandatory for all staff. Register to attend!

Estevan – St. Joseph’s Hospital – Auditorium 1

January 12 – 1230 – 1630

February 3 – 0800 – 1200

March 16 – 1230 – 1630

Weyburn – Tataqwa View – Conference Room 1

December 2 – 0800 - 1200

January 13 – 0800 – 1200

February 2 – 1230 – 1630

March 17 – 0800 - 1200

*To register, talk to your Manager or contact Kelly Beattie, Aboriginal Services Coordinator by email kbeattie@schr.sk.ca no later than **one week in advance of the session**. A minimum of 12 participants is necessary.*

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



Sharon Bauche,
Chair,
Sun Country
Regional Health
Authority



Marga Cugnet
Interim CEO

We would like to offer our very sincere thanks to all staff and physicians in Sun Country Health Region for your hard work during 2010.

We know you are being asked to explore ways to work differently, through programs like Releasing Time to Care, and are responding positively to that request. By working together throughout the year in more effective ways, you are helping to raise the standard of health care and improve patient safety.

We hope all staff soon can see the difference you are making to the most important people to whom we are providing health services - our patients, clients and residents. Real improvements are being implemented.

Staff should be proud to work at Sun Country Health Region. In spite of the many challenges we have encountered this year, we are providing a high quality of service to our communities.

We thank all staff in advance for your continuing commitment to our patients/clients/residents and to the values of the Health Region. We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and we look forward to working with you on the challenges ahead.



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**Healthy People in Healthy
Communities**

SCHR Administration

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Murray Goeres 842-8706

Vice President Community Health:

Janice Giroux 842-8652

Vice President Human Resources:

Don Ehman 842-8724

Interim Vice President

Finance

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Pam Haupstein

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Amy Ryan 637-3642

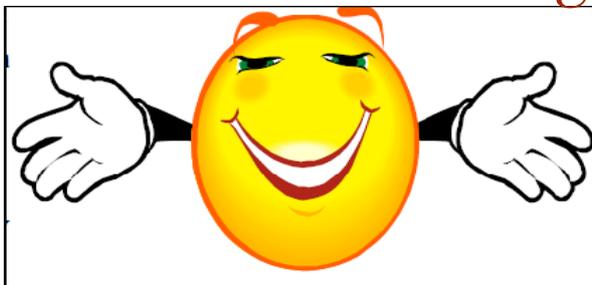
Welcome to new managers

Murray Goeres, Interim Vice President, Health Facilities, is pleased to announce that **Cyndee Hoium, RN** has accepted the position of **Community Health Services Manager for the Mainprize Manor, Midale and Lampman Community Health Centre**,

effective December 6, 2010. Cyndee has most recently been working as MDS Coordinator for the Region and a PART and TLR Instructor.

Pam Haupstein, Interim VP, Finance & Corporate Services, is pleased to announce the appointment of **Shelley Miller-Hertes as the Regional Director, Nutrition Services**, effective Jan. 6. Shelley has worked as the Manager, Food & Nutrition Services at St. Joseph's Hospital in Estevan since 1999. She has a degree in Home Economics (Dietetics) as well as a Certificate in Health Care Administration. Shelley's office will be located at St. Joseph's Hospital in Estevan. She can be contacted at shelley.millerhertes@schr.sk.ca

Janice Giroux, VP Community Health is pleased to announce that **Shirley Blyth** has accepted the position of **Regional Director, Public Health**, effective Nov. 25. Shirley has been working in Public Health as CD/



Immunization Coordinator and has a wealth of knowledge and experience specific to Public Health. She will be located in Wawota and will also have an office on the second floor in the Weyburn Community Health Services Building (CHSB). She can be reached at 739-5213 in Wawota and the

Weyburn office at 842-8643.

Felecia Watson, Regional Director, CQI and Strategic Planning, is pleased to announce the appointment of **Frank van der Breggen as the Regional Manager, Risk and Emergency Preparedness**, Oct. 1. Frank will be responsible to define and implement systematic processes for the identification, assessment, and prevention or management of clinical, administrative, property and occupational health and safety risks within the region. He will also coordinate the development and implementation of disaster and labor disruption contingency plans.

Pat Kessler, Regional Director Home Care, is happy to announce that **Brenda Freeman, RN, BSN** has accepted the position as **Regional Palliative Coordinator**. Brenda has held nursing posts in Radville, Weyburn and Estevan. Her office is in the Community Health Service Building, Weyburn, Office #228. Phone: 842-8206, Cell: 861-4374, Fax: 842-8637.