

Patient Centred Community Designed Team Delivered

Highlights from Saskatchewan's new framework for
primary health care



Primary Health Care
putting the Patient First



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Introduction

By transforming the way the system operates today, we can ensure quality services are there when we need them tomorrow.

Saskatchewan has embarked on a process to strengthen our primary health care system to better serve the needs of the patients, health care providers and communities who rely on it. This process builds on current successes, adopts best practices from other jurisdictions, and engages patients, providers, administrators, and community leaders in developing better everyday health services. The strengthening of primary health care represents a fundamental shift in how our health system works.

By transforming the way the system operates today, we can ensure quality services are there when we need them tomorrow.

The following document contains highlights from Saskatchewan's new framework for primary health care. A copy of the complete framework can be found at www.health.gov.sk.ca/primary-health-care.

What is primary health care?

Primary health care is the day-to-day care needed to protect, maintain or restore our health. For most people, it is both the first point of contact with the health care system and the most frequently used.

Visiting a family physician, discussing a prescription with a pharmacist, or speaking with a registered nurse via a telephone healthline – all are examples of how Saskatchewan residents access primary health care every day. In fact, these types of exchanges account for 80 per cent of all interactions in our health care system, making the delivery of effective primary health care critical to the success of our health care system as a whole.

Primary health care accounts for 80 per cent of all interactions in our health care system.

Why change?

Through a number of public consultations, including the *Patient First Review* (2009), Saskatchewan has identified the areas where improvement is most needed. Patients want to be more informed and involved with their own care. Communities would like a greater say in the design and delivery of health care services for their residents. First Nations and Métis peoples need a culturally responsive system. The First Nations system, which is federally funded, and the provincial system need to work more closely together. Family physicians and other health care providers seek more flexible funding options, greater work life balance, and more teamwork.

To become a high-performing patient and family-centred system, primary health care in Saskatchewan should:

- Offer every person access to a primary health care team that meets his or her everyday health needs and helps navigate the rest of the system. Every team will include, or be connected to a family physician;
- Be rooted in community and designed in collaboration with patients and communities;
- Reflect the communities it serves, with specific attention to First Nations communities and Métis communities;
- Be flexible in designing teams and service delivery, in order to match community need with resources and assets;
- Include independent family physician practices, primary health care services managed by Regional Health Authorities, and federally-funded services delivered on First Nations;
- Use a flexible funding approach, with decision-making located closest to the patient and community and Regional Health Authorities;
- Have clear aims, accountabilities, and expectations for everyone including patients, communities, providers and Regional Health Authorities;

Creating a system that focuses on the patient will improve each individual's primary health care experience and better meet the needs of our communities and health care providers.



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Patient Centred

A patient focused primary health care system will ensure timely access to appropriate care with assistance to navigate services and supports for maintaining good health.

- Use a continuous improvement approach to ensure progress towards aims related to access, patient and family experience, health outcomes and sustainability.

Ultimately, creating a system that puts the focus on the patient will not only improve each individual's primary health care experience, but it will also better meet the needs of the entire community and health care providers.

What will our new system look like?

Our vision is a primary health care system that is sustainable, offers a superior patient experience and results in an exceptionally healthy Saskatchewan population.

Healthcare stakeholders in Saskatchewan have identified four aims that are essential to delivering top-quality primary health care:

Everyone in Saskatchewan – regardless of location, ethnicity, or underserved status – has an identifiable primary health care team they can access in a convenient and timely manner.

A model of patient and family centred care has been implemented to achieve the best possible patient and family experience.

The primary health care system has contributed to achieving an exceptionally healthy population with individuals supported and empowered to take responsibility for their own good health.

We are achieving reliable, predictable and sustainable delivery of primary health care.

The strengthened primary health care system will provide a new foundation for health care in this province. It will ensure that everyone has access to a team that meets his or her unique health care needs.

Benefits to:

PATIENTS AND FAMILIES

- Patients and families are true partners in their health care.
- Patients and families are assisted in managing and maintaining their own health to the greatest extent possible.
- Patients living with or at risk of chronic disease are supported and empowered to manage their conditions and given timely access to care when needed.
- Patients can choose their primary health care team and understand and appreciate the benefits of being connected to a team as their home base for health services and improved access.

COMMUNITIES

- Primary health care development in every community begins with the community's involvement in assessing its needs and planning how to meet those needs.
- Community engagement is essential to building the trust and relationships required to successfully implement and evaluate effective primary health care.
- Community engagement will lead to an on-going exchange of information and ideas with health care leaders, providers, and planners.

FIRST NATIONS AND MÉTIS PEOPLE

- Saskatchewan's First Nations and Métis communities can participate in building a system that provides their members with access to the best possible care and patient and family experience; a system based on cultural awareness and respect that builds on strengths and assets of First Nations and Métis people.
- There will be increased collaboration between the federally funded First Nation system and the provincial system.

HEALTH CARE TEAMS

- Practitioners can enjoy the benefits of team-based care, including better job satisfaction and increased information sharing between health care professionals.
- Health care policies and funding can focus more on promoting health, managing chronic disease, and developing teams and innovative programs that reflect patient and family centred care.
- Opportunities for input and joint problem solving can exist at all levels of the primary health care system, and may include representatives from all stakeholder groups: patients and families, community leaders, First Nations peoples and Métis peoples, and health care providers.

PHYSICIANS

- Physicians can work to the full scope of their practice while enjoying a better work-life balance through improved team work.
- Physicians can be better linked to support services from the Regional Health Authorities – quality improvement supports like patient experience survey's or reorganizing the clinic (Clinical Practice Redesign) to improve patient access or team based supports such as team facilitation or new team members like dietitians and social workers.
- Physicians will have improved partnerships with their Regional Health Authorities, their communities, each other, and other health providers.

Community Designed

The community plays a new role by having a voice in the design and delivery of health services and supports needed to best address local needs.

Team Delivered

Primary health care makes better use of a full range of health professionals, working to full scope of practice, with a physician as a key team member.



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Our vision is a primary health care system that is sustainable, offers a superior patient experience and results in an exceptionally healthy Saskatchewan population.

How do we do this?

Several steps must be taken to achieve our vision for primary health care in Saskatchewan.

Long-Term Relationships at the Patient and Healthcare Provider Level can create numerous benefits including more coordinated and comprehensive care, reduced hospital and emergency room usage, and better engagement of vulnerable populations.

Increase Patient and Family Self-Reliance by providing them with the information, supports and tools to better manage their own health.

Engage Communities in the Service Model Design by inviting community members to participate in assessing, planning, implementing and evaluating responses to their communities' needs and interests.

Engage First Nations Communities and Métis Communities to build a system that provides the best possible care, access and patient and family experience.

Enable Primary Health Care Teams to Flourish by:

- Allowing teams to design their practices and measure their own results in achieving primary health care's major aims;
- Achieve quality of life and job satisfaction for all team members;

- Clarify responsibilities and commitments through agreements that delineate each team member's role and limitations, which enable team members to work collaboratively at the top of their scope;
- Use community working groups to bring all the stakeholders together periodically – patients, families, communities, physicians and other team members, and Regional Health Authorities – to ensure a collaborative approach; and
- Ensure funding is flexible and encourages team-based care that meets the needs of patients, families and the community.

Take a Proactive Approach to Chronic Disease Prevention and Management

by coordinating efforts with population health programs and other intersectoral partners to prevent, reduce and manage chronic disease and by developing a province-wide vision, setting measurable goals, and focusing on modifiable risk factors and social determinants of health to develop a healthier Saskatchewan population.

Engage in Building Models that Work by incorporating the perspectives of patients and families into the design and delivery of primary health care services and establishing a formal patient/family advisory role, and by ensuring all partners in the system – the Ministry of Health, Regional Health Authorities, health care providers and communities – understand and fulfill their role and collaborate their efforts.

Policy and Accountability reflect a shift to health promotion, chronic disease management, team development, and innovative programming that reflects patient and family-centred care.

Support through the Transition including listening to patients, community and providers to identify changes required to meet the aims. Collective problem solving to identify sustainable solutions, build teams and measure progress must be supported at the regional and provincial levels. Tools and other supports will be created to support the transition.

The strengthened primary health care system will provide a new foundation for health care in this province. It will ensure that everyone has access to a team that meets his or her unique health care needs.





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What are the next steps?

These ideas are the basis of our enhanced primary health care system. The next step is to develop a number of team and service delivery models that meet the individual and unique needs of Saskatchewan's diverse communities. We learn by doing through testing these models and developing best practices that can be applied throughout the province. We will be sharing these successes with all stakeholders and encouraging them to take the steps that are necessary to achieve the collective vision of exceptional health for patients and families in Saskatchewan.

The next step is to develop a number of team and service delivery models that meet the individual and unique needs of Saskatchewan's diverse communities.

For more information, contact:

The Saskatchewan Ministry of Health

T.C. Douglas Building

3475 Albert Street

Regina, Saskatchewan S4S 6X6

General Inquiries: (306) 787-0146

Toll-free: 1-800-667-7766 (Saskatchewan only)

www.health.gov.sk.ca/primary-health-care



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