New digital dental x-ray unit improves patient care

Young surgical dental patients in KTHR will have fewer trips to the operating room (OR) and improved treatment as the result of the addition of a new digital dental x-ray unit for the Nipawin Hospital surgical suite.

Nipawin Hospital is the site of all dental surgeries in the Kelsey Trail Health Region. The $21,748 x-ray unit was partially funded by the Saskatchewan Surgical Initiative with additional funding provided by KTHR to upgrade to a digital unit.

“The primary benefit of having the x-ray unit in the OR is we can properly diagnose cavities between teeth and abscessed teeth that would otherwise be missed,” explained dental surgeon Dr. Greg Little of the Tisdale Dental Group. “It reduces trips to the OR, OR time and extra treatment.”

It can be difficult for dental staff to x-ray young children or patients with special needs. Without x-rays, dental issues that were not visible

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(Continued from page 1) to the naked eye were often not diagnosed or treated, requiring additional trips to the OR. Having a digital dental x-ray unit in the OR suite allows the dentist to make more informed decisions about the extent of dental work that should be done.

According to Renee Simoneau, KTHR Director Diagnostic Imaging, with the new x-ray unit a digital sensor is placed inside the patient’s mouth. An x-ray machine is used to take the exposure and the image is sent electronically to be viewed immediately on a monitor located in the OR suite. The dentist can merge these images with the patients’ file back in their home clinic. Previous x-rays can also be viewed at the same time.

“Digital images are superior to film images in quality. They have higher resolution and can be magnified and manipulated so the dentist has more information at hand. This is a much improved process for the OR staff, the dentist but most importantly, the patient,” Simoneau explained.

Improvements such as the purchase of the new digital x-ray unit for the Nipawin Hospital are possible thanks to Surgical Initiative funding. The provincial government invested $70.5 million in the Surgical Initiative in 2013-14. The funding is enabling additional surgeries and related home care and therapy services, while continuing to support quality and safety improvements.

The Surgical Initiative’s goal is to improve surgical patients' care experience and ensure that by 2014, all patients have the option of receiving their surgery within three months. It was the first major initiative arising from the Patient First Review in 2009, which identified surgical wait times as a key concern for patients and families.

**KTHR scholarship recipients announced**

The Kelsey Trail Regional Health Authority recently announced the names of the recipients of the 2013 Kelsey Trail Health Region Scholarship Program.

**Maggie Nickel** of Carrot River and **Danielle Shmyr** of Melfort were each awarded a $1000 scholarship through the 2013 Kelsey Trail Health Region Aboriginal Scholarship program. Nickel is enrolled in her second year of the Nursing Education Program of Saskatchewan (NEPS) at the University of Saskatchewan. Shmyr is in her fourth year of Pharmacy at the University of Saskatchewan.

**Amie-Lee Rusk** of Melfort and **Dominique Berger** of Bjorkdale were each awarded a $1000 scholarship through the 2013 Kelsey Trail Health Region General Scholarship program.

Rusk is enrolled in the Nursing Education Program of Saskatchewan (NEPS) at the University of Saskatchewan. Berger is enrolled in the Continuing Care Assistant (CCA) program through Cumberland College in Tisdale.

The purpose of the annual scholarship program offered by the Kelsey Trail Health Region is to encourage individuals to enter into educational programs which will help them gain entrance into health care employment opportunities.

In making the announcement, KTHR Chief Operating Officer Shane Merriman extended his sincere congratulations to all four deserving scholarship recipients and offered his best wishes for their studies and future plans.

“Working together to improve the health of people”
Kelvington staff lead quality improvement work in KTHR

Between September 2013 and January 2014, seven 5S projects have been completed at either Kelvington Hospital or Kelvindell Lodge. 5S is a week-long strategy for organizing the workplace to minimize waste of time. Having everything clean, neat and in the proper location enhances quality and productivity by making things easier to find and problems more visible.

The 5S’s are: Sort (separating the necessary from the unnecessary); Simplify (creates a place for everything & everything in its place); Sweep (defines how to maintain a clean, safe, organized working environment); Standardize (involves developing standard work to ensure consistency); and Self-discipline (striving to maintain the 5s gains, adhere to standards and agreements).

5S is one of several tools involved in Lean quality improvement. 3P (Production Preparation Process) was the first Lean tool utilized in the design of the new integrated facility. The 3P was a week-long event held in March 2013 that involved participants that included patients and families, frontline staff and administration in the initial development and design of the new integrated facility. Over the course of the past year, additional 30, 60 and 90 day reviews by the 3P participants have refined the design to a point where it is almost finalized.

Through the 3P process, opportunities for improvement in current processes and procedures at both Kelvington Hospital and Kelvindell Lodge were also identified. In addition to 5S, staff have also been involved in two Rapid Process Improvement Workshops (RPIW’s), which is a week-long process involving a team of patients and family members, staff, and clinicians. The team focuses on one problem, identifies the root causes, creates and tests solutions and, by the end of the week, implements a solution. The team checks the solution at 30, 60, and 90 days to see if the results and new procedures have been sustained and makes adjustments as necessary.

All of these kaizen events are designed to eliminate waste, improve flow and change the way staff in each facility work. When the new integrated facility is operational, staff, equipment and processes will function to the maximum benefit of the patient.

It has been through the dedicated efforts of Kelvington staff that this important quality improvement work has been achieved.

Kelvington Hospital employee Penny Murray, a member of a Kelvington Hospital 5S team Member, sorts inventory during an Outpatient Room 5S held last April. Kelvington Hospital and Kelvindell Lodge have been involved in several 5S projects since then and have scheduled several more.

Kelvindell Lodge medication room pre-5S (left) and post-5S (right). During the 5S, the team exceeded their target to reduce the inventory count by 50 percent by achieving a 99 percent reduction. Overall, the team improved staff safety, created a more organized and improved work environment & saved their colleagues time that can be redirected to patient care.
Melfort’s Hello Parents supports families to succeed

Submitted by Rhonda Teichrob KTHR Community Wellness Coordinator/ Early Childhood Development Facilitator

Hello Parents is a program for new parents and their babies in the Melfort area. Created in 2000 by Public Health in Melfort, this long standing parent group gives participants the opportunity to connect with each other, and to share useful information as they strive to meet the physical, social, emotional, language and cognitive needs of their children.

The program is supported by health care professionals including Public Health Nurses, Public Health Nutritionists, Dental Health Educators, and Early Childhood Services. Families are offered 4 to 5 sessions focusing on topics such as baby massage, safety, nutrition, oral health, and healthy development.

During the most recent Hello Parents group, a professional photographer donated her time to take a holiday-themed photo of the babies. The group has received generous support from the Prairie North Co-op (snacks/beverages) and from Catz n’ Jammers.

With the help of the Early Childhood Facilitator in KTHR, Hello Parents is currently piloting an expansion of services to include monthly events with the goal of supporting families to stay connected and to welcome new parents with their newborns. Parents are involved in deciding what activities they would like to engage in (i.e. library tour, Walk and Talk at the Palace, etc.). Hello Parents plans to run the weekly group a couple times throughout the year and should there be interest, to continue supporting the monthly groups.

For more information about Hello Parents, please call 306-752-6310 or 306-812-8447.
Family Day festivities held at Nipawin Centennial Arena

Submitted by Jessica Chorney, KTHR Dietitian/Nipawin Primary Health Care Provider Team

Approximately 350 people came out on February 17th to enjoy and participate in the Family Day festivities at the Nipawin Centennial arena.

This marked the seventh year that the Nipawin Primary Health Care Provider Team has organized the event. Through previous Community Wellness Assessments it was identified that families in Nipawin wanted more free family-based activities and this was one way the Nipawin Primary Health Care Provider Team believed they could reach out to the community to meet that need.

The 2014 partnerships included: Town of Nipawin; Lakeland District for Sport Culture & Recreation; Parent Mentoring Program; The Nipawin HAWKS; KidsFirst and SK Lotteries.

To start the afternoon off there was an exciting shinny game with the Nipawin Hawks, followed by chili and a bun, excellent children's activities, and a free skate! Scooter the Squirrel was present to skate with the families and promote his message to "Get Up, Get Out, and Get Active"! This year there were several prizes given out such as hockey helmets, hockey sticks and hockey skates, Family Swim Pass, water bottles, sleds and toques.

Be sure to mark your calendar for next year’s Family Day festivities!

It was fun for all at the Nipawin Primary Health Care Provider Team’s 7th annual family fun day festivities at the Nipawin Centennial Arena on February 17th. Pictured (clockwise, from top left) Scooter the Squirrel was on site to encourage everyone to “Get Up, Get Out & Get Active!”; the Nipawin PHC Provider Team paused for a moment to have their picture taken with Scooter; the Geisbrecht Family were the proud winners of a family swim pass; and Heidi Bergen enjoyed one of the many family-oriented activities featured during the day – face painting.
Welcoming Kelsey Trail Health Region’s newest employees

January
Brooke Trippel, HR Coop Student, Regional
Michael Lummerding, Director Support Services, Regional
Gillian Heibert, RN, Nipawin
Jani Burgess, Administrative Assistant, Nipawin
Gisele Valois, Administrative Assistant, Tisdale
Carol Stone, CCA, Tisdale
Joan Santos, CCA, Kelvington
Heather Hendry, CCA, Carrot River

February
Terri Margolis, Food & Nutrition Services, Melfort
Charlene Campbell, Grad RN, Melfort
Frances Rye, CCA, Porcupine Plain
Sarbjeet Assi, CCA, Tisdale
Taylor Thorpe, Environmental Services/Laundry Services/Food & Nutrition Services, Kelvington
Joanne Penner, Safety Officer, Regional
Ashley Bloski, Combined Lab/X-Ray Tech, Kelvington

March
Joanne King, CCA, Nipawin
Mary Pongco, CCA, St. Brieux
Theresa Mattice, CCA, Kelvington
Ayodeji Alakija, Scheduling, Nipawin
Rene Shearer, CCA, Melfort
Alice Moose, CCA, Kelvington
Tara-Dawn Welch, Food & Nutrition Services/Laundry Services, Melfort
Jacqueline Decker, CCA, Nipawin
Jennifer Crone, Food & Nutrition Services, Melfort
Lina Ralph, LPN, Arborfield & Carrot River
Veronica Pegg, CCA, Porcupine Plain
Kelvin Gessner, CCA, Tisdale
Iona Burns, CCA, Melfort
Kyra Grisdale, Recreation Worker, Kelvington
Shayla Williamson, CCA, Hudson Bay
Lisa Hawley, CCA, Hudson Bay

Welcome to Dr. Ricky K. Ilunga, Dr. Onose Lawani, and Dr. Okezie Nweze who all began practicing family medicine in Kelsey Trail Health Region in January. Dr. Ilunga began providing physician services at the Hudson Bay Medical Group on January 6th. He is originally from Johannesburg South Africa and received his Bachelor of Medicine at the University of Mbujimayi, Mbujimayi, Eastern Kasai, in the D.R. Congo. Dr. Lawani began providing physician services from the Nipawin Medical Group on January 13th. He moved to Nipawin from Calgary Alberta. Dr. Lawani received his Bachelor of Medicine at the University of Lagos, Nigeria. Dr. Nweze began providing physician services at the Tisdale Medical Clinic February 5th. He comes to Tisdale from Mississauga, Ontario and spent the last four years working in the Caribbean nation of Trinidad & Tobago. Dr. Nweze received his Bachelor of Medicine at University of Jos, Nigeria. On behalf of Kelsey Trail Health Region, we would like to extend a warm welcome to Dr. Ilunge & his family, Dr. Lawani & his family, and Dr. Nweze.

Congratulations to Dr. Adewole Omolambe who recently opened a new physician practice in Melfort through the Family Physicians Group. Previously, Dr. Omolambe was providing locum physician services for Dr. Tamzyn Levendall while she was on maternity leave. Dr. Levendall has returned to her practice. Dr. Omolambe’s office is located at the Melfort Mall.

Best wishes to Helen Wiebe, KTHR Director Environmental & Laundry Services, as she prepares to begin her official retirement at the end of this month. Helen joined KTHR in March of 1984 and will have logged a total of 30 years with the organization when she retires. Thank you for your dedication and service to KTHR over the past three decades and all the best as you embark on your new journey!

Thank You to all KTHR staff that participated in the Employee Engagement Survey. Employees are vital to the success of Kelsey Trail Health Region and the entire provincial healthcare system. Your opinions about your work environment are important to us. Listening to what you have to say—both good and bad—is an essential part of our continuous improvement work. Thank you for taking the time to share your opinion.

“Working together to improve the health of people”
Newmarket Manor residents move into their new surroundings

With the construction of the three new cottages designed to replace the existing Sasko Park Lodge now complete, residents of Newmarket Manor found themselves on the move on Monday, March 17th.

To facilitate renovations to the existing Newmarket Manor, current residents of the long term care facility made the move into the newly constructed cottages in a well-orchestrated process that took just one hour and five minutes to complete. Renovations to Newmarket Manor are expected to be complete by mid-October and the residents of Sasko Park Lodge will move to their new surroundings soon after.

Residents of Newmarket Manor began relocating at 9 a.m. the morning of Monday, March 17th. With the help of family, staff, and numerous volunteers, all residents were moved into their new surroundings well in advance of the three hour timeframe the move was originally expected to take. “It was a group effort,” explained Ronda Donald, Newmarket Manor/Sasko Park Lodge Facility Administrator. “We moved our residents into one cottage at a time and were all in the new facility to enjoy an Irish stew lunch with the families and all of the volunteers at noon.”

The construction project began in August 2011. The three new resident cottages and link were completed at the end of January 2014. Decommissioning, cleaning and staff orientation to the new cottages took place during the month of February.

The capital costs of the long term care replacement project have been covered through an 80/20 funding split between the provincial government and local municipal governments. Fundraising efforts are continuing in an effort to raise the $300,000 remaining to cover the equipment and furnishings for Newmarket Place. A generous $410,000 bequest from the estate of the late Lorne & Gizella Carson and an additional $140,000 donation from the Tisdale Trust Committee has already generated more than half of the total funds.

KTHR is still accepting donations toward the furnishings and equipment in the new long term care facility. All donors will receive formal recognition for their contribution on a donor wall on permanent display in the facility as well as a tax deductible receipt. Donations are accepted at Tisdale Hospital, Newmarket Manor, Sasko Park Lodge or KTHR Regional Office. They can also be mailed to Newmarket Place Equipment & Furnishings, c/o Kelsey Trail Health Region, Box 1780, Tisdale, SK S0E 1T0.

(L-R) Each of the three resident cottages features a central living area and kitchen. Pictured on the right is the inside of one of the new resident rooms.
White Fox residents involved in physician recruitment visioning session

Participation in a two day visioning session for Rural Physician Recruitment and Supply last fall proved to be an enlightening experience for a White Fox resident.

Paul L’Heureux joked that it was his big mouth that initially got him involved in the visioning session, which was held November 13th and 14th in Saskatoon. The two day session involved high-level discussion about the process of rural family physician recruitment from the identified need for a physician to having the physician in place. Participants included those involved with rural physician recruitment and supply, stakeholders such as the College of Medicine and College of Physicians and Surgeons, medical residents and students, regional recruiters as well as patient and family representatives.

L’Heureux was recruited to participate as a patient to provide his personal perspective on the impact of physician vacancies in rural Saskatchewan. The patient and family member participants that attended the session were recruited to share their stories and perspectives in an effort to maintain a patient focus during the visioning session.

A friend of L’Heureux's declined the opportunity to participate when she was approached and ended up recommending him instead. L’Heureux jumped at the opportunity to share his experience. “It was nice to have the opportunity to find out how things work and the process of finding doctors,” he said.

L’Heureux admits he has many ideas about the medical system in general and particularly, on the subject of prevention. “I’m big on prevention. There is a lack of prevention in Saskatchewan. In this province, we do crazy things like letting people drive 150 kilometres per hour on snowmobiles…”

He believes the government needs to spend more time developing and enforcing policies meant to deter people from destroying themselves and less time working on band aid solutions such as finding more doctors and nurses.

L’Heureux felt if more physicians said what they thought, more people would listen. “When I say something no one listens, when doctors speak to people, then they would (listen).”

L’Heureux has experienced some frustration in dealing with his own health issues and not being able to retain the services of regular family physician. He found the experience of the visioning session very enlightening, particularly with regard to what physicians actually want. A young physician from another rural community was in one of the White Fox resident's groups during the visioning session and helped him gain insight into physician recruitment from the physician perspective.

“It’s not the small towns that they don’t like, they don’t want to go alone,” he explained, adding new recruits are willing to go to small, rural communities as long as they have family or other friends to go with them as well as employment options for their spouses.

“Money talks,” he added. “They have huge bills when they are done school. If they could have their expenses paid, a house, something beyond their salary. Medical students like packages.”

L’Heureux was surprised to learn that only 40 percent of medical graduates from the University of Saskatchewan are retained in Saskatchewan. He also learned that the number of urban-based students that are admitted to medical colleges significantly outweighs the number of rural students. “I learned it isn’t that easy to recruit doctors,” he said.

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During the small group break-out sessions, participants brainstormed potential solutions to some of the issues impacting rural physician recruitment. Among the themes that emerged were increased communication with politicians, hiring more than one physician to a community at a time, and offering incentive packages to help address physician debt load.

As a result of his participation in the visioning session, L’Heureux feels better informed about the processes involved in physician recruitment. “I enjoyed the opportunity. You have fewer tendencies to phone and complain about your frustration once you understand there’s more to it. It was good not know everyone else is having the same problems. It’s not just one area,” he said.

“It was nice to have the opportunity to find out how things work and the process of finding doctors,” he concluded. “It’s good to hear the frustration of the administrators and what they go through too. Whether it’s health, education or crime, it’s always good to know what’s happening.”

April is Daffodil Month
Show your support for people living with cancer

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Free new vaccination app launched

Discover the new ImmunizeCA app! The Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA), Immunize Canada and the Ottawa Hospital Research Institute (OHRI) have collaborated to develop a free app for smart phones and other mobile devices that will help Canadians keep track of their vaccinations.

This app provides Canadians with the ability to: easily record and store vaccine information; access vaccination schedules; manage vaccination appointments for the entire family; access evidence-based and expert-reviewed information about recommended and routine vaccinations for children, adults and travellers; and receive alerts about disease outbreaks in their area. Visit http://www.immunize.ca/en/app.aspx

Career cruising with KTHR

High school students from throughout the northeast converged on the Kerry Vickar Centre in Melfort on March 5th to participate in a career fair. Kelsey Trail Health Region had a number of representatives on hand to discuss career options in healthcare including dietitians, public health nursing and public health inspection.

National Organ & Tissue Donor Awareness Week
April 20-26, 2014

Each year thousands of Canadians get a second chance to live life to its fullest, thanks to the kindness of people who have given the gift of life and donated organs and tissue. But many more are still waiting. All too often lives are lost because suitable donors are not found in time.

Many will spend months, and in many cases years, waiting for a second chance because the need for organs and tissue in Canada continues to outweigh their availability.

It doesn’t have to be this way. Register as a donor and talk to your family about your decision to give life. One conversation can make all the difference for the future.

Take a moment to consider organ donation, and learn how to register in your province. For more information, visit www.liveon.ca