



Heartland Health Region

Healthy People, Health Communities and Service Excellence in an Enduring System

HealthLine
1-877-800-0002
healthlineonline.ca

MEDIA RELEASE

Date June 27, 2011

IMPROVED ACCESS TO DIAGNOSTICS FOR RURAL RESIDENTS

Patients in Heartland Health Region will now benefit from reduced waits and improved access as result of a secure computer system for the storage, retrieval and display of diagnostic images such as x-rays and CT scans. The eHealth system is called the Picture Archiving and Communication System (PACS).

PACS will securely connect the diagnostic imaging tools of Heartland Health Region with radiologists and specialists and other users of the PACS system in Saskatchewan.

Today's PACS announcement addresses recommendations in the Patient First review by improving access to diagnostic and specialist services for residents of Saskatchewan. Authorized health care providers will be able to access digital images such as x-rays, CT Scans and MRIs done in their region, and in other centers, through their electronic medical record systems (EMRs).

Health Minister Don McMorris said, "PACS is a tool that makes health care safer and faster. I am very happy to introduce PACS to Heartland Health Region to help reduce the need for residents to travel long distances to receive health care."

Heartland CEO Greg Cumming said, "Using PACS, our providers can provide care to patients sooner, which directly impacts patient care."

In total, five facilities in Heartland Health Region have access to the PACS system, joining numerous other health facilities, province-wide, that have adopted this ehealth system. It is anticipated that by the end of 2012 the system will serve every health region, connecting and strengthening provincial digital imaging capacity and response times.

Heartland Health Region was part of the Provincial phase two of the Radiology Information System (RIS) and Picture Archiving Communication System (PACS) project. RIS and PACS went live in five Heartland sites (Kindersley, Rosetown, Biggar, Unity and Kindersley) this month. RIS went live the week of June 6th and PACS went live the week of June 13th. This implementation brings Heartland one step closer to an Electronic Health Record.

Approximately 5 million images are added to the provincial PACS system every month. This secure eHealth tool currently securely stores over 124 million images from 1.12

Corporate Office ❖ P.O. Box 2110, Rosetown, SK S0L 2V0

Tel: (306) 882-4111, ext 233 ❖ Fax: (306) 882-1389 ❖ Email: leanne.paproski@hrha.sk.ca

Visit Heartland's website at www.hrha.sk.ca!

million studies such as x-rays, CT scans, mammography, MRIs, nuclear medicine, and ultrasounds.

Safeguards are in place to ensure that only health professionals involved in patient care access personal health information. Policies, procedures, and electronic security protect the information from unauthorized use, error or loss.

PACS and the Pharmaceutical Information Program (PIP) are the first components of a provincial electronic health record. More information is available at www.health.gov.sk.ca/pacs



Sandy Hodgins, Medical Imaging Supervisor
Demonstrates the new technology



Richard Anderson, Board Chair, Amanda Pangman,
Director of Information Services, Sandy Hodgins,
Dr. Johnson, Greg Cummings, CEO and Tom Geiger,
Kindersley Foundation Member

-30-

Media:

For more information or to arrange interviews contact
LeAnne Paproski
Communications Coordinator (306) 882-4111 ext 233

Corporate Office ❖ P.O. Box 2110, Rosetown, SK S0L 2V0

Tel: (306) 882-4111, ext 233 ❖ Fax: (306) 882-1389 ❖ Email: leanne.paproski@hrha.sk.ca

Visit Heartland's website at www.hrha.sk.ca!