

Progress Report Highlights:

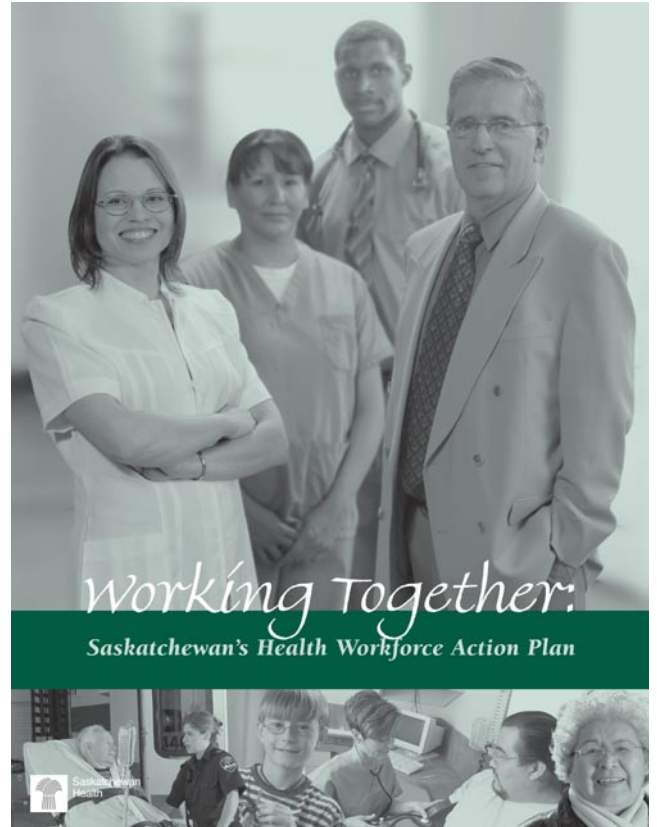
Saskatchewan's Health Workforce Action Plan

February 2007

Saskatchewan's Health Workforce Action Plan, which was released in December 2005, set out a plan to improve health care in Saskatchewan by keeping and attracting health care professionals. The plan reflects government's commitment to:

- Recognizing and retaining the health professionals that Saskatchewan has and supporting them in the work they are doing;
- Improving our self-sufficiency in educating and training our own health professionals, within available resources;
- Recruiting from outside Saskatchewan to supplement our own supply; and
- Finding innovative ways to keep Saskatchewan youth in our province by providing them with training and employment opportunities in the health care field.

The plan has guided our work over the past 14 months, and will continue to set the course for future initiatives. The *Health Workforce Action Plan* builds upon the *Action Plan for Saskatchewan Health Care*, released in 2001.



Goals of the Workforce Action Plan

- #1:** The health care system has a sufficient number and effective mix of health care professionals who are used fully to provide safe, high-quality care.
- #2:** The health system has safe, supportive, and quality workplaces that help to retain and recruit health care professionals.
- #3:** Aboriginal people fully participate in the health sector in all health occupations.

- #4:** The education and training supply of Saskatchewan health care professionals is aligned with projected workforce requirements and health service needs.
- #5:** The health workforce is innovative, flexible and responsive to changes in the health system.

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The Plan Is Working!

Since the plan was released, a number of new projects to attract and retain health professionals have been implemented. Here are some highlights.

- Announced funding to increase the number of licensed practical nursing seats by 56 in the fall of 2006.
- Established a licensed practical nurse training program in the Kawakatoose First Nation. All students received a Saskatchewan Health bursary to offset their training costs.
- Hosted a western conference of Aboriginal health human resources – the first of its kind in Canada.



- Launched a provincial recruitment agency and website – HealthCareersinSask.ca – in October 2006. Since then, agency staff has connected directly with about 2,100 students. In addition, more than 370 health care workers have applied for opportunities posted on the website.
- Provided funding to Nursing the Future, an organization which supports new graduate nurses as they transition into practice. The group supports and connects new nursing graduates to their more experienced peers.

- Announced a \$25 million retention and recruitment fund in September 2006. Initiatives developed under this fund include:

- *A \$6 million grant program that provides a relocation grant to health providers moving into Saskatchewan, and northern, rural and hard-to-recruit grants for both Saskatchewan-based providers and those from outside the province to fill vacancies in northern and rural Saskatchewan. The hard-to-recruit grant is available only to those outside Saskatchewan.*

- *A \$6 million retention grant program that provides up to \$75,000 for employees, employers and provincial organizations to develop and implement programs focused on keeping health providers in Saskatchewan.*

- *\$500,000 to enhance clinical training opportunities for select health professions; and a mentorship program, currently under development.*


- Established two provincial advisory committees: the Provincial Nursing Committee and the Provincial Health Workforce Steering Committee, comprised of health provider stakeholders from across the province. The committees provide advice and direction to the government about retention and recruitment needs for the province and oversee the allocation of the \$25 million retention and recruitment fund.
- Continued to provide support to projects developed under the Internationally Educated Health Providers (IEHPs) project, funded through the federal government. Projects focus on reducing the barriers faced by IEHPs who wish to work in Saskatchewan.

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- Provided funding to health partners to establish pilot projects focusing on effective staff mixes and professional development. These include:
 - A SUN/Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region 80/20 project where senior nurses can use up to 20 per cent of their work time to engage in professional development focused on patient-centred care.
 - A Cypress Health Region project that focuses on implementing an innovative patient-centred care framework based on an Ottawa Hospital Model.
- Provided funding to the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region for a pilot project on patient streaming in emergency departments. The project looks at ways to improve the flow of patients through emergency departments to improve upon safety and satisfaction of both patients and employees.
- Supported the Saskatchewan Academic Health Sciences Network in implementing the Health Sciences Clinical Placement Network to allow for a better coordinated system of clinical placements in the province.
- Provided over \$200,000 to the College of Pharmacy and Nutrition for enhanced clinical placement capacity.
- Developed an electronic survey tool to gather information on employee satisfaction and retention issues.



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The government is running a retention and recruitment campaign consisting of TV, billboard and transit advertising in Saskatchewan and Alberta. The campaign began mid-February.

Did You Know?

- Saskatchewan Health announced a \$25 million fund to retain and recruit health professionals over the next three years.

This commitment is in addition to the \$75 million annually that our government commits to the recruitment, retention and training of health care workers, excluding physicians. As a result, our government will spend in excess of \$250 million over three years, beginning in 2006.

- Eight respiratory therapists are coming to Saskatchewan who have received recruitment grants, and six respiratory therapist graduates will have completed their program in 2007 who have return-in-service bursaries and will be able to work in our province.
- The provincial recruitment agency has connected directly with about 2,100 students.
- 35% of new recruitment grant applicants are health professionals moving from Alberta to Saskatchewan, and 38% are new graduates taking a job in our province.
- In addition to recruitment grants, Saskatchewan Health provided funding for almost 500 new and continuing return-in-service bursaries for health care professionals in 2006/07.
- In 2005/06, 94% of nursing graduates who received a bursary had confirmed employment in Saskatchewan.
- Saskatchewan has the highest Aboriginal enrolment rate (17%) in its nursing programs in Canada.
- Over 17,000 Saskatchewan health sector employees have participated in the representative workforce training program.
- The number of accepted lost-time claims per 100 full-time equivalent (FTEs) for all health regions declined by 22% between 2004/05 to 2005/06.



Myth

Saskatchewan-trained nurses cannot find jobs in Saskatchewan.

Mythbuster

89% of new nursing graduates in 2004 found employment in Saskatchewan.