

Background Information

Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford Building Replacement Project

Replacement psychiatric rehabilitation hospital: provincial government approval of \$8 million for detailed planning of a replacement building for Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford (SHNB), announced by Premier Brad Wall, August 18, 2011.

Conceptual Drawing of New Building

The new building will be designed and staffed to move from a custodial model to a rehabilitation model, with more active programs designed to help people return to their home communities. There will be private rooms and modern amenities, a big improvement from today.



Since its opening in 1914, Saskatchewan Hospital has been a provincial facility for treating people with mental health problems. It is a fixture in North Battleford and a focal point for the assessment and treatment of complex cases.

The replacement facility will be built adjacent to the current hospital, minimizing disruption to patients during construction.

Key Facts

Current capacity: 156 patients

Future capacity: 188 patients

Services: psychiatric rehabilitation, forensic appraisal and monitoring

Key Dates

August 1911	Construction started in August 1911 of the provincial "Asylum" at North Battleford
1913	Construction completed on six-ward building for 800 patients
February 4, 1914	347 patients transferred from "asylum" in Brandon, Manitoba
1918	Spanish Flu epidemic devastates staff and patients, causing 115 deaths.
1960s	Advances in therapies and drugs, and increased community and regional resources lead to fewer patients at both provincial psychiatric hospitals
1978	A major fire damaged SHNB auditorium, upper floors and roof. Roof was repaired, but fire-damaged areas were removed from service
September 1994	Forensic Unit added at SHNB
2005	Psychogeriatric Unit at SHNB closed
2006	Provincial approval for functional plan
2010	Revised functional plan completed
August 18, 2011	Approval to proceed with detailed plans for new building
Late 2012-early 2013	New construction expected to begin
Early 2015	New building expected to be ready for patients

The stately hospital building finished construction in 1913, housing temporarily or permanently a large number of patients with mental health problems. To provide patients with healthy activities, a sand-green golf course was added, maintained by patients and open to the public. The physical condition of the building has deteriorated over the years.

History

- Construction cost of original building: \$1 million
- Original staff, headed by Dr. J. W. MacNeill: 3 doctors, 100-150 attendants and maintenance workers.
- Dr. MacNeill immediately changed the atmosphere of the place from that of a prison with bars on the windows and mechanical restraints, and identified it as a hospital.
- Marking a change from past practices, patients were treated as human beings in need of help.
- There were shortages of nurses from the beginning of service, through World Wars I and II.
- SHNB has always been a community of staff and clients.



Saskatchewan Hospital front entrance

Capacity

1914: Built to accommodate 800 patients; 3 doctors, 100-150 attendants, plus maintenance staff

1946: As many as 1,700 patients

1955: Reached peak patient population of 2,043

1967: Numbers dropped to 960 patients due to advent of psychotropic drugs, introduction of outpatient and follow-up care, rural clinics and other services

2011: The facility can admit 156 patients at a time; 320 staff

Saskatchewan Ministry of Health – www.health.gov.sk.ca

Prairie North Health Region – www.pnrha.ca