

# Connected Care

In 2017-18, government has invested \$12 million to support the Connected Care Strategy.

Connected care focuses on a team approach which includes the patient and family and extends from the community into the hospital and back again. It is about connecting teams and providing seamless care for people with multiple, ongoing health care needs, with a particular focus on care in the community.

The initial emphasis is on Regina and Saskatoon, where hospital overcrowding causes lengthy emergency department wait times.

## Accountable Care Units in Saskatchewan

The first major outcome of the Connected Care Strategy is the adoption of Accountable Care Units in major hospitals. Patients and their families receive more consistent care and often go home sooner, thanks to the coordinated work of physicians, nurses, therapists, pharmacists, social workers, dietitians and others working side-by-side in the unit.

The teams are led by a joint physician/nurse manager team. There are defined processes to ensure the safest care, a strong sense of team membership and improved communication. Having a physician present with the team throughout the day helps remove barriers to the patient's prompt return home.

One key element is a daily bedside meeting where the patient's care team, including the physician, meets with each patient and their family members to answer questions and discuss the care plan and the plan for discharge.



*A daily team meeting with a patient at Pasqua Hospital's Unit 4A.*

By December 2017, a total of **five** hospital teams will be operating as **Accountable Care Units**, or in the process of implementation:

- Unit 4A, Pasqua Hospital – began implementation in January 2016
- Medical Surveillance Unit, Pasqua Hospital – January 2016 (for patients who need extra observation)
- Unit 4B, Pasqua Hospital – January 2017
- 7th Medicine, St. Paul’s Hospital – April 2017
- Unit 3D, Pasqua Hospital – December 2017

Other teams are preparing to adopt Accountable Care processes:

- 5th Medicine, St. Paul’s Hospital – to begin implementation by February 2018 (includes a Medical Surveillance Unit)
- 6th Medicine, St. Paul’s Hospital – by February 2018

**Results:**

Patients are happier with their care. When surveyed, they said they felt treated with more courtesy, consideration and respect.

Staff and physicians are more satisfied, too. Because Accountable Care encourages teamwork and communication, staff feel more informed about patients’ care needs and better supported by their physician colleagues in the care they provide.

**Positive results:**

- ▲ Patient and staff satisfaction increased
- ▼ Overtime reduced
- ▶ Clear communication about medications

Staff have a greater sense of belonging and, as a result, are more likely to stay with Accountable Care Units. Orientation and overtime costs have dropped on Regina’s Unit 4A and Medical Surveillance Unit. Surveys show staff feel they are providing a higher quality of care and have a better relationship with their manager.