

Message from the Ministers



*The Honourable
Dustin Duncan
Minister of Health*



*The Honourable
Randy Weekes
Minister Responsible for
Rural and Remote Health*

This annual report highlights document provides an executive summary of the Ministry of Health's 2012-13 annual report and additional information about significant achievements in the health system.

It is a reflection of the Ministry and health system's efforts to deliver better health, better care, better value, and better teams, as well as support government's vision and goals, and contribute to government's direction for 2012-13: Keeping the Saskatchewan Advantage.

More information can be found in the 2012-13 Ministry of Health annual report.

Ministry Mission Statement:

The Saskatchewan healthcare system works together with you to achieve your best possible care, experience, and health.



Improving access to emergency care with STARS air ambulance -
Photo Credit: Glenn Thacyk

For more information on the Ministry, see
www.health.gov.sk.ca or call 306-787-0146.



Government
of
Saskatchewan

Ministry of Health

2012-13 Annual Report Highlights

Keeping the Saskatchewan Advantage



Photo Credit: Tourism Saskatchewan/Greg Huszar Photography

Government's Vision

...a strong and growing Saskatchewan, the best place in Canada – to live, to work, to start a business, to get an education, to raise a family and to build a life.



Photo Credit: Tourism Saskatchewan/
Greg Huszar Photography

Ministry Overview

Our Ministry supports a health care system that puts patients first and encourages leadership from health professionals at all levels. We are dedicated to achieving a responsive, integrated and efficient health system that enables people to achieve their best possible health.

Our Ministry priorities in 2012-13 were:

- Transforming the surgical patient experience;
- Strengthening patient-centered primary health care;
- Deploying a provincial continuous improvement system;
- Focussing on patient and staff safety; and,
- Identifying and providing services collectively through a shared services organization.

Additional Ministry activities include:

- Providing leadership on strategic policy and setting goals and objectives for the provision of health services;
- Allocating funding and leading financial planning for the health system;
- Administering public health insurance programs such as the Saskatchewan Medical Care Insurance Plan. Providing Prescription Drug Plan benefits and extended health benefits, including Supplementary Health, Family Health Benefits, and Saskatchewan Aids to Independent Living to eligible residents;
- Providing communicable disease surveillance, prevention, and control to identify, respond to, and prevent illness and disease in our province; and,
- Providing leadership on health human resource issues, via initiatives like the Physician Recruitment Strategy.

Reducing Surgical Wait Times

The health system has worked hard to improve surgical wait times and the result is improved access to sooner, safer, smarter surgical care. Our ultimate goal is that by April 2014 patient experiences are improved and patients receive their surgery within three months. (Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region by April 2015.)

This year, 90 per cent of the province's 82,047 surgeries were completed within the 2012-13 wait time target of six months.

On March 31, 2013 there were 7,058 fewer patients waiting more than six months for surgery than in November 2007, a 66 per cent reduction. There were 4,202 fewer patients waiting more than 12 months, an 82 per cent reduction. (See chart on this page.)

The Saskatchewan Surgical Initiative has helped patients by alleviating the uncertainties, scheduling conflicts and emotional distress caused by lengthy wait times for surgery. We recognize that we have more work to do; some patients still wait too long for surgery.

Initiatives underway to shorten surgical wait times include:

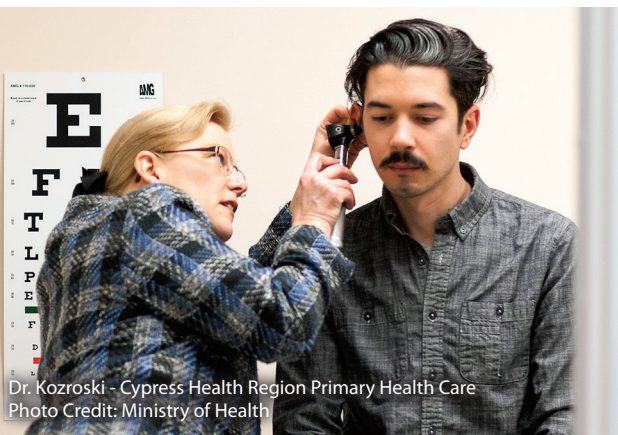
- Clinical "pathways" to help patients better navigate their care journey for joint replacement, bariatric surgery, back pain, prostate cancer, and pelvic floor conditions;
- Efforts to understand variations in diagnosis and treatment of some procedures and address any inconsistencies or concerns;
- Use of "pooled referrals" to give patients access to the next available specialist in a group;
- Provincial implementation of safety protocols;
- Reduction of surgical site infections; and,
- An online Specialist Directory at www.sasksurgery.ca.



Our 2012-13 Significant Achievements

Progress in these areas is helping to ensure residents are receiving improved access to quality health care:

- Reducing surgical waits - 90 per cent of the 82,047 surgeries in Saskatchewan were completed within six months.
- Enhancing access to care for critically ill and injured patients with the Shock Trauma Air Rescue Society (STARS) helicopter air ambulance service.
- Investing \$5.5 million to strengthen primary health care services in the province. To guide this work, the government also released *The Framework for Achieving a High Performing Primary Health Care System in Saskatchewan*.
- Making access to 24/7 health advice easier by changing the province's HealthLine number to 811.
- Recruiting more doctors - 300 more physicians are practising in Saskatchewan today than in 2007.
- Retaining more physicians in rural Saskatchewan - the new Rural Physician Incentive Program will provide \$120,000 in funding over five years to recent medical graduates who establish practice in communities of 10,000 or less.
- Establishing a 20-doctor rural locum pool to temporarily fulfill the duties of physicians who are away from their practice to help patients continue to receive care in their own communities.
- Using Lean and patient advisors to develop a design for the Children's Hospital of Saskatchewan.
- Opening a Level 3 Containment Laboratory at the Saskatchewan Disease Control Laboratory to provide a broader range of testing in-province.
- Launching the second phase of a youth anti-tobacco campaign called Smokestream with a strong anti-tobacco message from Saskatchewan youth.
- With our provincial and territorial partners, leveraging our combined purchasing power to save an estimated \$10 million annually on generic drugs.
- Opening a 15-bed facility in Prince Albert that provides a six-week residential substance-abuse treatment program for Saskatchewan youth.



Financial Summary

2012-13 Budget (000s)	2012-13 Actual (000s)	Variance (000s)
\$819,017	\$780,867	(\$38,150)

Actual FTEs: 534.1

PROGRESS: Surgical Wait Times

