



# Ministry of Health

## Annual Report Highlights from 2010-11

### Message from the Minister



*The Honourable Don McMorris  
Minister of Health*

I am pleased to present the Ministry of Health's 2010-11 Annual Report Highlights, which detail the Ministry's most notable accomplishments in support of Government's vision and goals.

The Ministry's Annual Report and Highlights also demonstrate how the Ministry has contributed to the progress of our *Government's Direction for 2010-11: Balanced. Forward-Looking. Responsible.*

The Ministry of Health provides quality health care to the people of Saskatchewan through stewardship of a responsive, integrated, efficient, patient- and family-centered health care system. We have made significant progress in achieving our mandated commitments, as well as health sector priorities, which include reducing surgical wait times, retaining and recruiting health care professionals, improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the health system, and improving access to health care.

For more information please see the Ministry's 2010-11 Annual Report or visit the Ministry's website [www.health.gov.sk.ca](http://www.health.gov.sk.ca).

### Ministry Overview

The health care system in Saskatchewan is multi-faceted and complex. To ensure the provision of essential and appropriate services, the Ministry establishes provincial strategy and policy direction, sets and monitors standards, and provides funding.

The Ministry oversees a health care system that includes 12 regional health authorities (RHAs), the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency (SCA), the Athabasca Health Authority, affiliated health care organizations, and a diverse group of professionals, many of whom are in private practice.

There are 26 self-regulated health professions in the province, and the health system as a whole employs more than 38,000 people who provide a broad range of services. The Ministry supports the RHAs, SCA, and other stakeholders to recruit and retain health care providers, including nurses and physicians.



# VISION

*A secure and prosperous Saskatchewan, leading the country in economic and population growth, while providing a high quality of life for all.*

## Our 2010-11 Significant Achievements

### Securing Saskatchewan...

- Increased provincial physician training seats and physician residency opportunities, as well as piloting a Saskatchewan-based assessment process for International Medical graduates, to help recruit and retain more physicians.
- Implemented an on-line specialist directory, so physicians can help patients be more involved in decisions about their care and how long they wait for treatment.
- Provided better quality and safety outcomes for patients and providers through the introduction of Lean and Releasing Time to Care™.
- Expanded emergency medical services by introducing helicopter service in cooperation with STARS, the Shock Trauma Air Rescue Service program.
- Launched a framework and action plan for frontline therapy and respite services for individuals with autism spectrum disorder, and added new funding to enhance autism services.
- Worked with stakeholders to complete the Tobacco Reduction Strategy, including amendments to *The Tobacco Control Act* to help reduce tobacco use. New legislation introduced in October helps protect people against exposure to environmental tobacco smoke by banning all tobacco on school grounds, prohibiting smoking in vehicles with children under the age of 16, around doorways, windows and air intakes of public buildings and in the common areas of multi-unit residential buildings. A ban on the sale of tobacco and tobacco-related products in pharmacies came into effect on April 1, 2011.
- Improved patient outcomes by piloting an Integrated Stroke Strategy project based at Yorkton Regional Hospital that focuses on secondary stroke prevention and rehabilitation, and a Colorectal Cancer Screening Program in the Five Hills Health Region.
- Exceeded target of 800 additional nurses working in the province. There were 823 more full-time nurses working in 2010-11 than in 2007-08.
- Funded 60 additional medical residency seats, creating a total of 120 medical residency seats, so more physicians can be trained in the province.
- Exposed medical students and residents to more rural employment opportunities. The College of Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan began providing training opportunities outside of Saskatoon. In 2010-11 training seats were opened in Regina, Prince Albert and Swift Current.
- Supported the Office of the Provincial Ombudsman to further develop the role of a Health Care Ombudsman who will independently mediate patient concerns or complaints.

## The Ministry of Health: Reducing Surgical Wait Times

Efforts to provide sooner, safer, smarter surgical care are translating into shorter wait times for patients and improved surgical care experiences.

Since the Surgical Initiative was launched in March 2010, the number of patients waiting more than 18 months has dropped 57 per cent. The number waiting more than 12 months has declined 37 per cent.

Some current initiatives include:

- patient pathways that streamline care for patients;
- quality and efficiency improvement programs (Releasing Time to Care™ and Lean);
- expansion of the Surgical Information System in hospitals;
- third party delivery, to speed up access for patients;
- efforts to improve patient safety such as using surgical safety checklists, preventing surgical site infections, and preventing falls; and,
- training more operating room nurses.

More information is available at  
[www.health.gov.sk.ca/saskatchewan-surgical-initiative](http://www.health.gov.sk.ca/saskatchewan-surgical-initiative)



### Financial Summary

2010-11 Budget (000s)	2010-11 Actual* (000s)	Variance (000s)
\$4,202,106	\$4,547,794	\$345,688

\* Actuals include \$163 million in Special Warrant funding and \$202.6 million in Supplementary Estimates funding.

Actual FTEs: 609.7