BRHC redevelopment project proceeding – The Brandon Regional Health Centre (BRHC) medical bed expansion/redevelopment project is moving forward. The renovation project will see 12 new medical in-patient single rooms created bringing the total number of beds in the unit to 60. At the official announcement on October 9, 2015 are, from left, PMH CEO Penny Gilson, Brandon NDP MLA, and Minister of Municipal Government Drew Caldwell and PMH VP of Finance and BRHC Chief Operating Officer, Brian Schoonbaert.

Prairie Mountain Health (PMH) and Manitoba Health, Healthy Living and Seniors, are moving forward with the Brandon Regional Health Centre (BRHC) redevelopment project.

The redevelopment will include the renovation of 46,500 square feet of space at the facility and create 12 new medical in-patient single rooms with washrooms, along with expanded and improved areas for storage, staff work and family support. This will bring the total number of beds in the unit to 60.

"The redevelopment project reinforces our strategic directions around health system sustainability and improving access so our health-care professionals can provide the right care in the right place at the right time," said Penny Gilson, Chief Executive Officer, of Prairie Mountain Health. "We continue to look at ways to provide more integrated, co-ordinated and high-quality care within our health-care sites and our programs and services across the continuum of care."

The medical unit is for the complex care of patients with acute cardiac, respiratory, neurological, renal and gastrointestinal disorders. Other patients served in the medical unit include oncology patients, those exhibiting symptoms of confusion or other physiological needs, and patients requiring alcohol or drug detoxification.

"Built in 1961, the patient wards of the facility formerly known as the Brandon General Hospital have essentially remained unchanged and are outdated," said Brian Schoonbaert, Chief Operating Officer, Brandon Regional Health Centre.

"This update is needed to help improve patient care and comfort, and in response to increased demand for in-patient stays."

(Continued on Page 2)
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The existing six-bed pediatric unit will be relocated to the second floor to accommodate the medical bed expansion on the fourth and fifth floors. Construction will be completed in stages so there is limited disruption and bed closures will be planned and scheduled to ensure ongoing access to beds while accommodating the work.

Health Minister Sharon Blady says patients at the BRHC will receive even better front-line services thanks to the redevelopment and renovations.

“We are always looking to improve the comfort of care for patients when they are staying at a medical facility,” said Minister Blady. “These improvements will mean that patients can receive the high-quality care they need even more efficiently and effectively.”

A tender for the project is expected to be released later this fall with construction scheduled to begin in the new year.

Grandview X-ray services update

Grandview District Health Centre is undergoing a planned renovation and equipment replacement for X-ray services. Diagnostic Services of Manitoba (DSM) anticipates that work to install the new diagnostic equipment should be completed during the week of November 10th. As a result of renovations, X-ray services have been temporarily suspended.

Patients who require either non-urgent or emergency X-rays will be referred or transferred to Dauphin Regional Health Centre, Roblin Health Centre or Swan Valley Health Centre in Swan River.

The renovations do not impact lab services or emergency services at Grandview District Health Centre. Funding for the project comes from DSM and Manitoba Health, Healthy Living and Seniors.

Newborn Hearing Program set to launch

Manitoba continues to expand newborn hearing screening to create a universal program, with teams in development in every regional health authority including Prairie Mountain Health (PMH).

“Each year, a small number of the 16,000 to 17,000 babies delivered in Manitoba are born with some hearing loss said Manitoba Health Minister Sharon Blady.

The minister noted the quick diagnosis and treatment of children with hearing loss can be key in helping them develop cognitive, speech-processing and learning skills, adding the biggest gains are made if hearing loss is detected and diagnosed before a baby is three months old.

Hearing screening services are currently offered at the Brandon Regional Health Centre and in Winnipeg neonatal intensive care units for infants at high risk of hearing loss. In addition, Thompson Hospital provides hearing screening services to most babies born there.

The minister indicated as part of the universal program, hearing screening services will expand to an additional 11 regional facilities with more than 75 births per year, bringing the total number of sites to 14.

Within PMH, services will become available at the Dauphin Regional Health Centre and Neepawa Health Centre. Infants born at facilities with fewer than 75 births per year or at home will be referred to their nearest outpatient hearing centre for screening. A common database will help ensure babies are supported no matter where they are born or live in the province.

“This expanded program will help ensure no child with congenital hearing loss falls through the cracks when the Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Act comes into effect on Sept. 1, 2016,” Blady stated.

The province is investing more than $3-million in new funding to develop and implement the program, including funds for capital equipment, staff training and ongoing operating costs.

New ambulance units starting to arrive

The first of 12 new ambulances provided by the Province for Prairie Mountain Health have begun arriving in the region. The region’s first new unit was placed in Swan River during the third week of October 2015, and PMH EMS District Manager for Swan River and area, David Moriaux, got a chance to discuss the benefits of the vehicle with Swan River MLA, and Agriculture Minister Ron Kostyshyn.

Distribution of the remaining new ambulance units in the coming weeks will be rolled out based on the region’s ongoing operational requirements.
New laser eye surgery equipment at BRHC

A Brandon ophthalmologist and Prairie Mountain Health (PMH) have partnered to introduce an innovative piece of laser surgery equipment, which is being used in cataract surgery procedures at Brandon Regional Health Centre (BRHC). Dr. Guillermo Rocha is the first physician in Manitoba to use the 'ultra-fast and precise' laser which prepares the eye for cataract surgery and the cornea for transplantation.

Dr. Rocha says the Victus Femtosecond Laser Platform will add additional levels of precision, efficiency and safety for cataract surgery and corneal procedures.

"Right now, this is the only equipment of its type being used in the province. Now that we have this capability we are able to use this 'laser light' to assist cataract surgeries on candidates that are best-suited for it. In essence, we do 45-50 per cent of the procedure with this laser and the rest of the procedure still by conventional methods—which includes the use of ultrasound waves to remove the cataractous lens, followed by manual implantation of an artificial lens," Rocha stated.

BRHC received the equipment in August 2015 and after a month of testing, calibrations and certification the first procedure with the new 'Laser Platform' took place September 10th.

In 2014, Dr. Rocha was the recipient of the prestigious Lt. Governor iCARE award, which recognizes the eye care professional who demonstrates innovative and/or unique contributions to eye health in Manitoba.

Family Medicine Residents’ Retreat 2015

The annual Family Medicine Resident Retreat was hosted this year by Southern Health/Santé Sud in Winkler/Morden on September 18, 2015. The weekend retreat started with a job fair on the Friday evening for sponsors of the event.

There were 111 residents from all of the residency programs in Manitoba (Parkland, Brandon, Northern, Boundary Trails, Urban KMC, Urban FMC, Portage, Bilingual and Steinbach). RHAs, as well as private clinics, electronic medical record (EMR) vendors, banking institutions, financial consultants and Doctors Manitoba were all represented at the retreat.

Prairie Mountain Health (PMH) met with many in attendance and discussed practice opportunities with residents and their spouses. PMH will continue communications with those that expressed an interest in rural medicine.

The rest of the weekend had the residents taking part of group/family activities that were planned by the chief residents and their committee as well as a Saturday night supper, provided by the host RHA.

More health statistical information online

The Province is enhancing transparency by making more key health statistical information available online.

New data available online will include emergency medical services response times for rural Manitoba such as information on how long ambulances take to arrive after a 911 call is placed from within a community.

Other information that will be posted online (as it becomes available) will include:

- An archive of wait-time information for procedures such as hip and knee surgeries, and diagnostic tests such as MRI and CT scans;
- Population counts including births and deaths;
- Updates on how many people have been connected with a family doctor or nurse practitioner through the Family Doctor Finder service;
- The number of visits to QuickCare Clinics;
- The prevalence of chronic illnesses such as hypertension and diabetes;
- The number of hospitalizations for injuries;
- The numbers of physicians, nurses and nurse practitioners;
- The number of pediatric dental surgeries;
- The total number of clients in home care;
- The number of influenza immunizations; and data on pharmaceutical use.

To find the newly available health information visit: www.gov.mb.ca/health/statistics/index.html.
**Board Highlights**

**PMH Program Educator recognized**

Prairie Mountain Health (PMH) congratulates Jennifer Newitt, Program Educator for Community Services within the region.

Jennifer is the recipient of the "Power of One" award presented by the Canadian Patient Safety Institute (CPSI).

Once a year, the Patient Safety Education Program-Canada (PSEP-Canada) selects patient safety trainers from health care organizations around the country and presents them with the ‘Innovations in Patient Safety Education (IPSE) Award.’ This award recognizes organizations (Power of an Organization), groups (Power of a System) and individuals (Power of One) that demonstrate exemplary practices in patient safety and quality improvement work using the PSEP - Canada program.

Jennifer was nominated by Kristi Chorney, PMH regional manager Patient Safety/Risk/Accreditation, for her use of the program within the region over the past three years.

"Jennifer embodies the ideal educator. She has a positive attitude, is enthusiastic with students and willing to try different approaches to activities. She sees the opportunities in others to improve the safety of care,” Chorney stated.

“Jennifer’s desire to improve, and keen interest in patient safety, have been keys to her ongoing involvement in the PSEP- Canada curriculum and its success in the Region.”

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**Brandon nurse captures ‘Award of Excellence’**

Prairie Mountain Health congratulates Olwen Burr, the recent recipient of this year’s College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba (CRNM) “Award of Excellence” for Clinical Nursing Practice.

The CRNM awards are presented annually to Manitoba nurses who are recognized as outstanding in their profession.

Olwen (RN) works in the Intensive Care Unit at Brandon Regional Health Centre. Her co-workers filled out the nomination.

Olwen has spent 40 years caring for critically ill patients at bedside. She brings more than 25 years of experience to the intensive care setting. She has the uncanny ability to put clients at ease in a very stressful environment.

Olwen has willingly served as an avid preceptor to many critical care students and senior practicum nursing students over her years at bedside, and all remember her guidance with fondness.

To see complete details about the awards and the write-up on Olwen’s accomplishment, follow the links through: www.crmn.mb.ca/about/professional-nursing-awards

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**Deadline for PMH Board Nominations: December 15, 2015**

In accordance with the provisions of The Regional Health Authority Act, the Minister of Health will appoint directors to the Prairie Mountain Health (PMH) Board of Directors. These appointments will represent a broad cross-section of geographical areas, interests, experience and expertise. Nominees should all share a strong sense of commitment to achieving the provincial vision of healthy Manitobans through an appropriate balance of prevention and care. Any resident of PMH may nominate a person or persons, including himself or herself, for appointment to the Board of Directors. Nominees must:

- Be eighteen (18) years of age as of the date of appointment;
- Have a strong commitment to improving the health system, to supporting PMH and to improving the health of Manitobans;
- Have time to prepare for and be able to attend board meetings on a regular basis.

For more information or to receive a nomination form:

- Visit the Manitoba Health website at: www.gov.mb.ca/health/rha/forms
- Contact Prairie Mountain Health: Email: pmh@pmh-mb.ca  Phone: Toll-free: 1-888-682-2253
Keeping communities, partners and stakeholders informed

Cancer Navigation Services and Hubs

The Cancer Navigation Services Team model and Cancer Care Hub collaborative approach is working. When cancer patients use Cancer Navigation Services provided by the ‘Hubs’ they get from suspicion to treatment faster, plus they have a better patient experience.

One of the seven Cancer Patient Journey Initiative deliverables agreed to in Manitoba in 2011 was enhancing community cancer program services. As a result of the project, between January 2013 and December 2014, eight Cancer Navigation Teams began serving Manitobans through 17 cancer treatment programs located in communities throughout Manitoba.

Within Prairie Mountain Health, these communities include Brandon, Dauphin, Deloraine, Hamiota, Neepawa, Russell and Swan River. Brandon and Dauphin have been the designated “Cancer Care Hubs” in the region that further coordinate care.

In each ‘Hub’, the Cancer Navigation Team includes a Family Physician in Oncology, a Surgical Lead in Oncology, Nurse Navigators and a Psychosocial Oncology Clinician. These cancer experts guide and support patients and their families and work with the entire health care team, including the primary care provider, to coordinate the patient’s care from suspicion of cancer through diagnosis to treatment.

Cancer Hubs created through In Sixty are working

For patients who were referred to a Cancer Hub because of a new diagnosis or suspicion of cancer from January 2013 to March 2014, two-thirds of these patients went from suspicion to treatment within 60 days. For breast cancer, 85 per cent of patients received treatment within 60 days.

In the past two and a half years, 3,100 cancer patients have connected with the Cancer Navigation Teams in the Hubs; 2,900 of these patients were rural and northern cancer patients. There are an average of 2,728 rural cancer patients each year, so these Navigation Teams are currently reaching 45 per cent of all rural cancer patients.

Patients are referred to Cancer Hubs for many reasons: suspicion of cancer, information, new diagnosis, education, psychosocial assistance, recurrence of cancer, transition of care and pain management being the top reasons.

Of all the patients who were referred (for any reason) to Cancer Hubs at the Boundary Trails, Selkirk, Dauphin and Brandon Hubs, the percentage of patients who went from suspicion to treatment within 60 days jumped from 25 per cent before the Cancer Navigation Teams were established to 37 percent after they were in place.

At right, is a chart which details how much travel for patients and their families have been saved by having the Community Cancer Care Programs and Hubs coordinate service within Prairie Mountain Health region.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Cancer Program (CCP)</th>
<th>Total OutPt Visits (nursing visits)</th>
<th>Return to Wpg (KMs)</th>
<th>CCP KMs Saved</th>
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<tr>
<td>Brandon</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total OutPt Visits:</strong></td>
<td><strong>15396</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

PMH Cancer Care Program Hubs

Kilometres (kms) saved in 2014/2015 fiscal year

Formulas: **CCP KMs Saved:** Total Outpatient Visits per CCP x Return KMs from Wpg to CCP. Inpatient visits not included. Also not included are Radiation Oncology Treatment visits at the Brandon Western Manitoba Cancer Centre (WMCC). Return-trip kilometers based on data extracted from the ‘Manitoba Distance Guide’ and provincial highway maps, return trip to and from CancerCare Manitoba’s (CCMB) MacCharles location.
ACC Practical Nursing Grads– The first Practical Nursing (PN) Graduation Class of the Assiniboine Community College (ACC) Parkland Campus in Dauphin graduated in June 2015.

Of the 20 students who successfully completed the course, all but two are working within Prairie Mountain Health.

Once a student graduates from a PN program, they take an exam to become a Licenced Practical Nurse (LPN). Practical Nurses graduate from a diploma program while Registered Nurses graduate from a degree program.

The second intake of PN students at Parkland Campus began September 8th and the class was at capacity with 26 students.

Touch Quilt Project: Grandview/Gilbert Plains

Residents of the Grandview Personal Care Home and the Gilbert Plains Care Home recently participated in the Alzheimer Society's "Coffee Break" along with its 'Touch Quilt Project.'

In Grandview, the Coffee Break fundraiser was held on September 23rd. Grandview Personal Care Home Activities Coordinator Jackie Plawicki (pictured, left) accepted the Touch Quilts and recognition plaque from Wanda Sime (pictured, at right), Parkland Coordinator for the Alzheimer Society of Manitoba.

On October 2nd, the Alzheimer Society of Manitoba’s Touch Quilt Project donated 30 quilts to the Gilbert Plains Personal Care Home- in conjunction with a tea to support “Coffee Break” in Gilbert Plains. The Touch Quilt Project provides individuals who live in personal care homes the opportunity for sensory stimulation, which can increase happiness, enjoyment and relaxation as well as lessen sadness and fear.

Sime says that their goal is to “give a Touch Quilt to every Manitoban living in a Personal Care Home and to provide a sense of community giving”. The quilts are crafted by numerous volunteers in the community who help the Project by donating fabric, assembling quilting kits, and making the kits themselves.

To date, over 5,000 Touch Quilts have been distributed to residents of personal care homes in Manitoba.

Visit the website at www.alzheimer.mb.ca for more information on the Touch Quilt Project.

(with files and photos from Jennifer Carniel, Grandview Exponent).
A very successful Creating a New Legacy, Aboriginal Mental Health & Wellness Conference was held on October 6 & 7, 2015 in Brandon, with 350 delegates from across Canada in attendance. Distinguished Provincial, National and International speakers presented new and innovative approaches, along with proven and effective programs for mental health and wellness.

The purpose of this event was to enhance knowledge and skills to create culturally safe services with and for Indigenous people. From the Creating a New Legacy Planning Committee: “Our intention was to promote the creation of culturally safe services, with both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities working together using their head, heart and hands.”

This conference provided an opportunity to be self-reflective and create understanding of cultural difference, analyze power imbalance, and enhance awareness and sensitivity towards the needs of others (using your heart). Through presentations and discussion, delegates’ knowledge and skill base was augmented to encourage responsiveness in providing equitable, quality care to all people, based on evidence-based approaches (using your head). It is anticipated that the information learned at this conference will act as a catalyst to enrich relationships with Indigenous people built on collaboration and teamwork, and founded in respect and dignity (using your hands). We believe by working together using our head, heart and hands we can create culturally safe services in which all people feel valued and important.

Conference feedback we have received included comments like: “inspirational, life changing, something I can use with my clients, absolutely fantastic in every way, from the moment I walked in the front doors and received the warm welcome from the registrations folks, to the decor, art work, keynote speakers, and break-out sessions, registrations materials, food, music... the attention to detail was perfect”.

It is hoped that all participants went home with a greater understanding of the importance of providing culturally safe services, and had awareness of innovative programs and services that could be replicated in their home communities and a renewed commitment to move beyond cultural awareness and sensitivity, to cultural competency and safety. Both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities working together will restore relationships founded in respect and built on strengthened, resiliency and hope.
Prairie Mountain Health (PMH) is pleased to announce that a Nurse Practitioner recently joined the team of staff at the Birtle Medical Clinic. Shannon Emerick began her new role at the health clinic in May 2015. Shannon will be helping to provide primary care services at the Birtle clinic, along with other health-care providers in the unit. She will also be a part of the team providing service via the PMH Mobile Clinic (Primary care bus) and Teen Health Clinics.

“After I returned to Birtle five years ago, I quickly became aware of the need in Birtle and surrounding rural communities for consistent primary care services and decided to advance my education in order to help with the provision of health care services including access to primary and continuing care,” Emerick stated.

“I wrote my Nurse Practitioner exam in May 2015 and became fully licensed in June 2015.”

Emerick graduated from the University of Calgary with a Bachelor of Nursing Degree in 1999. She obtained a Master’s Degree in Advance Nursing Practice from Athabasca University in May 2015.

A Nurse Practitioner (NP) is able to provide many of the services that are currently offered by a family physician. The scope of practice from a Nurse Practitioner includes tasks such as completing assessments and physical exams; diagnosing and managing common issues and diseases; performing minor procedures; prescribing medications and therapies; ordering diagnostic tests; and referring to other providers. NPs work in collaboration and consultation with physicians and other health-care providers, and are a relatively new health care addition seen by patients in Canada. NPs can be found working in a variety of settings including primary care clinics and personal care homes, areas in which Emerick will be providing services.

In order to apply to become a Nurse Practitioner, one must be a Registered Nurse with a Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing, and a minimum of two (2) years post-degree nursing experience. You can then apply to the University of Manitoba for the Nurse Practitioner (Master of Nursing) Program, which is another two years of graduate education, including a practicum. There are also other programs available through various other universities in Canada including Athabasca and University of Saskatchewan.

Emerick has worked as a Registered Nurse in a variety of nursing areas, including medical/surgical/trauma along with Intensive and Critical Care Units. She has also worked in outpatient neurorehabilitation, labour and delivery (obstetrical) and long term care.

To inquire about or to book an appointment with Shannon, contact the **Birtle Medical Clinic** at (204) 842-3990.

In the PMH region there are currently 12 NPs on staff. They are based in Birtle, Boissevain, Carberry, Erickson, Glenboro, Minnedosa, Roblin, Russell, Wawanesa, and the 7th Street Health Access Centre in Brandon.

NP’s also provide service on the PMH Mobile Clinic, which has seen patients in the region since February 2014. The Mobile Clinic now visits five locations in PMH region. The schedule is available on the PMH website at [www.prairiemountainhealth.ca/index.php/mobile-clinic](http://www.prairiemountainhealth.ca/index.php/mobile-clinic).