Alberta

Netcare

ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORD

Alberta Netcare EHR Newsletter **www.albertanetcare.ca**   Vol. 2, No. 4,   August/September 2006

Alberta

First Pharmacy Chain Goes Live

Looking to create a revolution in the practice of pharmacy.

In its finished form, the Alberta Netcare EHR will be "a revolution in the practice of pharmacy," says Tom Curr, District Manager of DRUGStore Pharmacies, Alberta.

Are we there yet? Almost.

"We saw (early on) the benefits of having access to key patient information at the point of care," says Curr, "helping not only pharmacists, but also other health care providers, with access to a patient's complete history in critical conditions like emergency. Every pharmacist can give you a story on how this tool has helped make a difference in a patient's life and also in doing their job better."

With 180 pharmacists located in the 61 Loblaws-owned real Canadian Superstore, Extra Foods and the real Canadian Wholesale stores all over Alberta, DRUGStore Pharmacy was the first pharmacy chain to go live in the spring of 2005 with the Alberta Netcare pharmacy batch solution. This allows pharmacists to send their dispensing information to Netcare once a day through their pharmacy software system.

Netcare links all the pharmacies within the chain so if a patient fills his/her prescription at a DRUGstore pharmacy in Bonnyville it can be viewed at the pharmacy in St. Albert. "Today we have the ability to look up a patient's prescription history and their lab test results. A big advantage, due to physician participation, is printed prescriptions. There are no more phone calls to clarify handwriting. I have a prescription that I can easily read," says Curr.

So what is next?

Tom Curr looks to a time when health care providers can talk to one another in a collaborative manner in real time. "What we have today is a building block to the system-to-system solution that will allow us to connect to Alberta Netcare through our pharmacy software system, making patient information available in real time, in one view, and on one screen." To access Alberta Netcare today, pharmacy users have to leave their existing software system and access Netcare through the Internet. "Today I can access patient information if I need it, but it is time consuming and not practical to use for every patient." Alberta Health and Wellness is working to make this real time connection a reality by working closely with pharmacy software vendors to integrate Alberta Netcare with existing pharmacy systems. "This solution is being developed in collaboration with the pharmacy software vendors now and we will keep you updated on our progress," says Stewart Ingram, Senior Delivery Manager, Drug Information Systems at Alberta Health & Wellness.

Starting this fall, pharmacies across the province are getting ready to receive the latest version of Alberta Netcare – Portal 2006. The province successfully completed a pilot of Portal 2006 in May. The Alberta Netcare Deployment Team will help health providers prepare to receive this tool. More information on PIA requirements is covered in this issue.

It seems that Tom Curr and his team of dedicated pharmacists are well on their way to getting their revolution…

PREPARING TO ACCESS THE NEWEST VERSION OF ALBERTA NETCARE

As you're thinking about connecting to the Alberta Netcare EHR, now is a good time to get started. There are a few steps you will need to take before you are able to connect to the information in Alberta Netcare.

The process is not difficult, but may take a few weeks in duration to complete. Members of the Alberta Netcare EHR deployment team are available to help you through each step.

First, there are two security assessments which must be carried out before a pharmacy or physician office can connect to Alberta Netcare. The assessments are straightforward and require the health provider to fill out existing templates.

The first is a Privacy Impact Assessment or PIA. Under the *Health Information Act*, pharmacies and clinics are required to submit a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) to the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner (OIPC) before implementing any information system to support the collection, use and disclosure of personal health information.

SUPERNET CREATES HEALTH CARE CONNECTIONS ACROSS ALBERTA

The spread of SuperNet, the province's high-speed, high-capacity broadband network, across Alberta is a bonus for Alberta Netcare.

SuperNet is already up and running at thousands of facilities in 429 communities across the province. This gives health regions and health care professionals in rural and urban Alberta communities access to faster, more reliable, high-speed Internet.

The majority of the 4,200 learning and health facilities, libraries and government offices scheduled to be connected by SuperNet are already live on the network. As of April 30, more than 200 of the province's approximately 380 health facilities were already using the network. SuperNet is a fibre optic/wireless backbone broadband infrastructure. It makes bandwidth available to local commercial Internet service providers who will in turn offer high-speed services, especially important in rural Alberta communities where previously only slower dial-up internet connections were available.

Doctors, nurses and pharmacists in these rural communities can more easily plug into the Alberta Netcare Portal and share important health information far faster than they could before.

SuperNet also brings additional benefits to health care professionals in rural communities. The high capacity of the system also means they can further their professional development by participating in online learning sessions, instead of having to travel to urban centres.

To see the progress of SuperNet across Alberta, visit **http://www.albertasupernet.ca/**. To find out which Internet service providers are planning to offer Internet access in your community, visit **www.axia.com/documents/networks/SuperNet_ISPs.pdf**.

REGIONAL NEWS

ALBERTA NETCARE INCLUDES INITIATIVES LED BY THE REGIONAL HEALTH AUTHORITIES. EACH ISSUE, WE WILL BRING YOU UPDATES FROM ACROSS THE PROVINCE.

News From RSHIP

Celebrating Success

The Regional Shared Health Information Program (RSHIP) has reached an important and significant milestone. On July 8, Phase One of the RSHIP implementation was completed when Aspen Regional Health, the last of seven health regions, went "live" with the shared health information system.

In Phase One of RSHIP, 13 clinical applications and nine administrative applications were introduced to the partner health regions. Often referred to as the core system, these 22 programs provide the foundation for Phase Two of RSHIP.

RSHIP serves a geographic area that covers 92% of Alberta. It is the largest shared health information system of its kind in

Canada. RSHIP is an important component of the Alberta Netcare EHR.

"Instead of seven health regions using a variety of health information systems to feed clinical information to the province-wide electronic health record, RSHIP provides a single solution," commented Pat Ryan, the Executive Director of RSHIP.

"We could not have developed this system without the support of Alberta Health and Wellness. The department recognized the value of RSHIP and provided significant assistance and funding to ensure the project was a success," said Mr. Ryan.

In Phase Two, RSHIP will implement advanced clinical systems (ACS) that focus on patient safety.

ACS implementation will begin in the Spring of 2007. Leading up to

that time, physicians, nurses and other health care providers will receive education and training.

Please see the RSHIP website for details www.RSHIP.ca
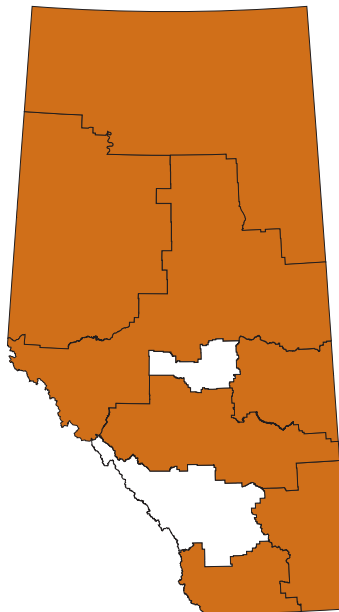
RSHIP SERVES A GEOGRAPHIC AREA THAT COVERS 92% OF ALBERTA.

News from Capital Health

Longtime users of Capital Health netCARE and the provincial EHR have the most reason to praise the new Alberta Netcare Portal 2006 piloted this spring. They know just how far the system has come over the past five years.

The Smyth Clinic in Leduc has been using Capital Health's netCARE since 2004 and the provincial EHR since the inception of PIN in 2001. With the new Portal 2006, piloted in the spring, clinic physicians are able to access everything from one system.

"We used to toggle between two systems. Now I log on once, to one system and get all the information I need," says Dr. Dwight Paras. He says Portal 2006 is very easy to use and has saved staff time locating lab and X-ray reports.

NETCARE DEPLOYMENT TEAM ANSWERS THE CALL

When health care professionals call the Alberta Netcare enrolment line to become part of Alberta's Electronic Health Record, they are connected with the Alberta Netcare deployment team. With the guidance of the team, providers can be assured they will receive the training and support they need to successfully make the transition.

The deployment team is currently comprised of 27 members from health care, systems and education backgrounds. They are located throughout Alberta and assigned to areas within health regions. The deployment team becomes your partner in implementing the Alberta Netcare Electronic Health Record at your pharmacy, physician clinic, home care or health region site.

THE ALBERTA NETCARE DEPLOYMENT TEAM – BACK ROW (L TO R): TRACY GANSON, DONNA MONTY, JOANNE SHAVER, BARB GOERTZEN, CECILIA YAWORSKI, BEAJAY LOUIE, JULIET IRWIN, TOM KELLER, JENNIFER GORODETSKY, BEKKI ANDERSON, JANITA BROERSMA, YVONNE STIEBRITZ, KAREN KOROTASH, NATHAN HAMALUIK, JEANETTE WHITTEN, MANUEL FRANCOIS ST. CYR
SITTING (L TO R): ROGER JASINSKI, DONNA PIPA, DENNIS WOYTAS, GAIL ALMOND, RAVI BHATNAGAR, LOIS WAN
MISSING: TOM CURRY, DIANE EDLUND, CHERYL LEWIS, DARLENE MESTON, KAREN REID, DEBBIE SAVAGE

Physicians at the Smyth Clinic have been using netCARE and the provincial EHR in both the hospital and the clinic. "Patients appreciate that we can view and compare lab results together in the examining room."

"With Portal 2006, there is more information and the access is easier. It's a good step towards office integration."

Planning is currently underway for all existing active Capital Health netCARE users to roll over to Alberta Netcare Portal 2006 in the fall. Inactive users and new users who want to access Portal 2006 can call the Information Centre for support at (780) 735-HELP (4357).

Alberta Netcare Portal 2006 will include a single sign-on to the PIN (Pharmaceutical Information Network) and PD (Person Directory) applications, a new search and sorting functionality for easier viewing of patient results, and improvements to user maintained patient lists.

In June, following the conclusion of the pilot, lab results from Alberta Cancer Board/Cross Cancer Institute became available for viewing in netCARE. By the end of August, Alberta Cancer Board transcribed reports will be accessible on netCARE and Portal 2006.

Capital Health will keep netCARE in production, allowing dual access to both systems, until it is confirmed that all users have been successfully switched over to the new Alberta Netcare Portal 2006 system.

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Portal 2006

Our team's transition coordinators are responsible for helping community and regional health care facilities get connected to Netcare. This includes everything from product demonstrations, technical and organizational readiness assessments, training and support to working with health care providers to develop appropriate workflow for integrating the EHR into existing processes.

Transition Coordinators are available at your convenience throughout the implementation process. They supply the templates, forms and support materials that lead to your go-live date. The proven implementation process is straightforward and adapted to each site's needs. It generally takes four to six weeks to complete the process, so you should take this time into account in your planning.

You will be supported every step of the way by a dedicated member of the deployment team in the following ways:

• First steps include an information session, so you can see how Alberta Netcare fits into your existing workflow and see the potential benefits to your practice.

• Second, you and your Transition Coordinator assess the technical readiness of your operation to ensure that it will meet the security and system requirements of Alberta Netcare.

• Third, you register your users and identify the type of training best suited to your schedule and circumstances. We'll help you do this.

The team is currently working on implementing Alberta Netcare Portal 2006, the newest version of the application which will start being deployed across Alberta beginning in the fall of 2006.

To become part of Alberta Netcare call **1-866-756-2647** (or email **health.ehrdeployment@gov.ab.ca**).

Preparing to access…

The PIA applies to all systems, including pharmacy and physician office software systems, and the Alberta Netcare EHR. The PIA requires health care providers to examine their operation to identify and address any potential privacy risks. Specifically, the assessment covers general organizational practices, procedures and guidelines regarding the collection, use and disclosure of individually-identifying health information. A PIA is not something that is conducted only for the Alberta Netcare EHR – it has to be carried out whenever a new identifying information exchange system is installed (for example, a new pharmacy software system). This assessment will take about four to six weeks to process, so health care professionals should take this into account when they sign up for Alberta Netcare. Getting underway now will help to ensure access to patient information when it's needed.

There are two parts to the PIA, 'Part A' and 'Part B.' Initially, only 'Part A' is required. Once 'Part A' is reviewed and accepted it can be referred to for any subsequent PIA applications. In the future, once health providers are able to access Netcare through their own office software systems via an integrated (or system-to-system) connection, 'Part B' of the PIA will also need to be completed.

The requirements for pharmacy chains can be a bit different. "If all the systems within a chain are being installed and applied in exactly the same way then a pharmacy chain can submit one PIA. Each site pharmacy manager still needs to formally accept that the PIA being submitted applies to their location, this can be done by a letter addressed to the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner," says Dan Cameron, Portfolio Officer at the OIPC.

The second security assessment is called the Organizational Readiness Assessment. With the assistance of the Alberta Netcare deployment team, health providers can carry out this quick but thorough review of a practice to ensure the office and workflow is ready for Netcare. This assessment is followed by a three to four week transition period with the deployment team. Even after the training period, a 24/7 help desk is available.

For more information about Alberta Netcare, the Privacy Impact Assessment, and the Organizational Readiness Assessment, please contact the Alberta Netcare EHR deployment team at 1-866-756-2647, by email at health.ehrdeployment@gov.ab.ca, or visit the website at www.albertanetcare.ca. PIA templates and assistance are also available from the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner (www.oipc.ab.ca).

DOES YOUR PHYSICIAN OFFICE SYSTEM MEET THE LATEST SET OF POSP REQUIREMENTS?

The Physician Office System Program has issued a new set of Vendor Conformance and Usability Requirements and published a list of products that have been tested against these requirements. A total of 23 physician office systems, offered by 11 vendors (one of which is new to the Alberta market) are on the new Product List which is posted on the POSP website at www.posp.ab.ca.

Clinics receiving Level 2 funding through POSP must upgrade to a VCUR-compliant product in order to meet their outcomes and maintain their funding through the program.

Vendors are now in the process of ensuring their clinics are using the latest version of their software. If you are unsure whether you have received an upgrade, you should contact your vendor.

If your vendor does not have a physician office system on the new VCUR Product List, you will need to select and implement a new system by December 31, 2006. POSP has been in contact with all affected clinics to advise them of these timelines and to offer assistance with the selection process.

If you are changing vendors or making a major change to your procedures or policies, you will need to amend your Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) and provide it to the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner. You may also want to review your PIA after your system is upgraded to ensure it is still applicable.

Your POSP Change Management Advisor can help you with either the process of selecting a new vendor or amending your PIA. To find out more:

• Call **(780) 452-1616** or **1-866-817-3875**
• Email **posp@albertadoctors.org**
• Visit **www.posp.ab.ca**

Contact us

To contact us for more information call 1-866-756-2647, or visit the Alberta Netcare website at **www.albertanetcare.ca**

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Better Patient Information.
Better Care Decisions.

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