

NEWS RELEASE  
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**For release at 2 p.m.**

## **SUNRISE HEALTH REGION APPROVES BUDGET**

Sunrise Health Region has approved a balanced budget of \$186,986,521 for the period April 1, 2010 to March 31, 2011. The budget includes some changes to programs and services but no facility closures.

Five facilities in Sunrise Health Region have double occupancy long-term care rooms. The elimination of double occupancy rooms will improve personal space and privacy for residents. Double rooms will be eliminated in Canora, Melville, Kamsack, and Esterhazy which will reduce the total number of long-term care beds by forty-five. After this change 854 long-term care beds will remain.

“The removal of double occupancy rooms will improve living conditions for the residents and the reduction will be carefully managed so that admissions to long-term care can continue,” says Chief Executive Officer, Joe Kirwan. “As in the past, the health region will continue to do what we can to accommodate couples or other persons requesting to share a room.”

The budget sets an administrative expenditure reduction goal of \$653,000. Five administration positions have been eliminated to date and restructuring has started to occur. Restrictions on employee travel and minor capital purchases will continue through the year.

“In recent years we have trimmed all non-salary areas and it is increasingly difficult to affect budget reductions without affecting staffing,” says Kirwan.

The regional chaplain position was eliminated. Sunrise Health Region was the only health region of similar size with a regional chaplain position. The health region will continue to work with the community and affiliate spiritual care providers to offer access to spiritual care in health care settings.

The health region has a total of 2,948 employees. Salaries and benefits account for 77.8 percent of the budget expenditures. The contemplated changes in staffing have the potential to affect 40 full-time equivalents. Notifications to unions and employees affected by this budget will follow the terms of the collective agreements. Targeted sick and premium payment reductions of \$1.353 million are included in the budget and the

health region has pledged to work with employees and their unions to reduce sick-time, overtime and injuries.

Initiatives already underway and funded separately will continue to enhance services and improve facilities. The integrated stroke strategy, provincially funded infrastructure projects and Phase II of the energy retrofit project will all continue. Last year, the health region was funded by the SUN partnership agreement for 40 full-time equivalent registered nurse positions.

Sunrise Health Region will work with its provincial partners to improve the experience of patients, residents and families. The provincial priorities of the Saskatchewan Surgical Initiative, Releasing Time to Care™ and development of strategies for mental health, senior care, immunization, infection prevention and control will all receive attention in 2010-11.

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