



May 3, 2010

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Community Health Assessment Report Released

The Assiniboine Regional Health Authority (ARHA) has now released the findings of the Community Health Assessment (CHA) for the region.

“The CHA is an ongoing process that we go through every five years,” said Dean Dietrich, Board Chair. “It helps us to identify our strengths and the needs in our communities so we can set priorities as a region.”

Every five years, a comprehensive Community Health Assessment Report is produced to bring together information about the health of the population as well as how health care services are used.

“The ARHA Board of Directors will use this and other information to develop their Strategic Plan, which will guide the direction of the region for the next 5 years,” added Dietrich.

The report results from intensive community engagement over 18 months. Staff from the Assiniboine region approached local leaders from every rural municipality and town to invite a representative group of people to discuss health and health care. Then everyone who attended the first session were invited to return for a second set of meetings to validate the information gathered through the community health assessment and to identify priorities.

“In addition to being used for regional strategic planning, regional program managers and staff use information from the CHA Report to see how they can adapt their programs and services to better meet the needs of the community”, said Penny Gilson, Chief Executive Officer. “Our community partners may also be interested in the information for community planning and grant applications.”

-30-

Some of the highlights from Community Health Assessment Report include:

- ❖ The population of the region is changing, with an increase in immigration in many communities. The trend of declining population may reverse within 10 years, which could result in a 4% increase in population by 2036.

- ❖ There are new challenges to providing health care as a growing number of residents speak languages other than English.
- ❖ Communities identified the need for sustainable development, safe suitable housing and transportation.
- ❖ There is interest in improving lifestyles, especially among children and youth. Recreation opportunities and healthy eating, including food security, are among community priorities.
- ❖ Fewer residents are being treated for stroke, heart attack, and respiratory disease, while more residents are being treated for osteoporosis, diabetes, high blood pressure, and some mental health conditions.
- ❖ There are many initiatives to improve quality of care in the region, with safety remaining a prime concern. Community members emphasized the importance of access to health care providers. Innovative human resource recruitment efforts are ongoing in order to keep up with demand for services.

For more information on the Assiniboine RHA's CHA findings log onto the Assiniboine RHA website: www.assiniboine-rha.ca/.

For more information, contact:

Leah Cann, Regional Communications
Assiniboine Regional Health Authority
Tel: (204)534-6408 or email lcann@arha.ca