



Ken Cheveldayoff

From a Provincial Point of View

January 20, 2012

MORE PROGRESS ON SURGICAL WAIT TIMES

Saskatchewan is meeting its goal of treating the province's longest waiting surgical patients, as the overall number of patients waiting continues to decline.

New surgical data updated to November 30, 2011, shows that just over 1,400 patients in Saskatchewan have waited more than 12 months for surgery - a 65 per cent drop since the Saskatchewan Surgical Initiative began in April 2010. Saskatchewan has completed about 55,900 surgeries since the start of this fiscal year (April), 7.2 per cent more (about 3,780 cases) than during the same period last year.

"It's very encouraging to see the health regions' progress in reducing surgical wait times," Health Minister Don McMorris said. "Patients and families clearly told us this area should be a priority. This complete, current data shows that Saskatchewan's carefully planned 'sooner, safer, smarter' approach is paying off."

The surgical data also shows that about 21,870 patients are waiting for surgery in Saskatchewan, the fewest since the current measurement system was introduced in 2004.

By the end of 2011-12, the province's goal is to provide all patients with the opportunity to have surgery within 12 months of specialist referral. Provincially, 99 per cent of all surgeries are completed within 18 months and 96 per cent within 12 months. Of the 10 health regions that provide surgical services, six are currently achieving the 12 month goal for 100 per cent of surgeries they provide.

Since November 2007, the number of patients waiting longer than 18 months for surgery has dropped 87 per cent, the number waiting more than 12 months has dropped 73 per cent and the number waiting more than six months has declined 52 per cent. These figures represent improvements of four, five and three percentage points respectively since the previous monthly data update.

The Saskatchewan Surgical Initiative (SkSI) is the province's four-year plan to improve the surgical patient experience and provide more timely access to surgery. Its goal is to provide all patients with an opportunity to have surgery within three months by 2014. Among the projects it supports are an online directory of surgeons that helps doctors and patients choose an appropriate surgeon, surgical safety checklists in all hospital operating rooms, and new "patient pathways" for patients with hip, knee, spine, gynecological and prostate problems.

More information about the SkSI can be found at www.health.gov.sk.ca/saskatchewan-surgical-initiative. Wait time data is available at www.sasksurgery.ca.

SASKATCHEWAN TO PURSUE PATIENT FIRST TRANSFORMATION AND INNOVATION

Better Care, Better Health, Better Value

Premier Brad Wall said his message on health care at the Council of the Federation meeting is simple; the health system needs to provide better care, better health and better value for Canadians.

"We all need to explore innovative approaches, to set bold targets, and to examine new ways of delivering health care for Canadians," Wall said. "Targets and timeframes are needed to change health care and ensure Canadians see real progress and improvements to health care issues that have faced our country for too long."

Wall is asking the federal government to commit to the increased investment required to ensure the innovation agenda moves forward. Saskatchewan is seeking the establishment of an Innovation Fund that would allow a federal/provincial partnerships targeted at health system improvements for Canadians.

"In Saskatchewan, we have looked internationally and have seen health care systems that provide same-day access to a care team," Wall said. "We have seen systems that have a one week wait to see a specialist and obtain diagnostics. We have visited emergency rooms with no waits. We have seen the value to patients when health care professionals work together as teams to provide co-ordinated patient care. We have seen systems that have improved access, improved care and dramatically reduced harm to patients."

Wall said he believes it is very important to develop and achieve bold targets and innovations to ensure better health, better care and better value for the health system, including:

- All people receive necessary surgery in less than three months (Sask on track to reach this goal in part due to use of private clinics within public system);
- All people are connected to a care team that includes a family physician;
- All people will have access to a specialist and diagnostics within one week;
- No one will wait to receive emergency room care;
- Seniors will have access to supports that will allow them to age within their own home and progress into other care options as their needs change;
- Individuals with severe and complex mental health issues will have access to supportive housing in or near their home community;
- A five per cent decrease in the rate of obesity in children and youth; and
- Health care spending will not outpace growth of the economy.

Wall noted provinces can achieve much of the transformation; however, there are areas where partnerships with others are welcome and needed:

- A strong federal partner in First Nations, Inuit and Veterans health care;
- Transformational investments in technology for electronic health records and diagnostics;
- An end to competition between provinces and regions for health care providers; and
- A co-ordinated approach to better manage cost and wage escalation while ensuring the right mix and number of health providers are being trained and deployed in Canada.

Addressing sustainability of the health sector through innovation and efficiency will ensure it is there for the people who need it into the future. An enhanced pan-Canadian approach to purchasing and pricing will improve value-for-money when the health system obtains drugs, products and supplies used in the delivery of care. A continued focus on Lean and appropriateness in the health system will increase value and eliminate inefficiencies.

The needs of the patient, sustainability, and best practice and not ideology must guide the future of health care. Public funding will always be at the foundation of ensuring Canadians have access to health care. Expanding on the successes with private delivery in Saskatchewan's surgical initiative, further expansion of private sector involvement in the health system will occur.

"Our priority has to be innovation in health care delivery and sustainability in order to ensure our coveted health system is available for all Canadians into the future," Wall said.

CONGRATULATIONS MARTIN!

I was thrilled to read the news release issued by Sunchild E-learning Community announcing their CEO Martin Sacher was the recipient of the 2011 prestigious International SITE Outstanding Service in Digital Equity Award. Winning candidates for this award must show outstanding evidence in service to and impact on teacher education, scholarly leadership, overall initiative and vision and work as an Innovation Catalyst.

Martin was one of my teachers in Blaine Lake. A teacher, like many in our province that made a significant impact in my life. He is a very worthy recipient of this award!

ANOTHER YEAR TO YEAR DECREASE IN THE NUMBER OF EI RECIPIENTS IN SASKATCHEWAN

The number of Saskatchewan people receiving regular Employment Insurance benefits has dropped year-over-year for the 20th consecutive month.

There were 9,600 beneficiaries receiving regular EI benefits in Saskatchewan in November 2011, a decrease of 3,250 compared to a year ago. Saskatchewan had a 2.2 per cent decrease in the total number of claims from a year ago, the fourth largest decrease among provinces.

"The latest drop in the number of EI recipients from Saskatchewan reflects the continued strength of our province's labour market," Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration Minister Rob Norris said.

[Click here to read more . . .](#)

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Congratulatory Messages

Do you have a family member celebrating a milestone birthday or anniversary?
Our office will co-ordinate congratulation messages from various officials.
Qualifying birthdays and anniversaries are as follows:

	Wedding Anniversaries	Birthdays
Her Majesty the Queen	60th - 69th at 5 - year intervals 70th & Over every year	100th - 105th one message between 100 & 105 106th & Over every year
Note: Greetings from the Queen require proof such as a copy of a marriage/birth certificate, letter from a Minister of Religion or Old Age Security number.		
The Governor General	50th & Over at 5 - year intervals 70th & Over every year	90th & Over at 5 - year intervals
The Lieutenant Governor	50th & Over at 5 - year intervals 65th & Over every year	80th - 99th at 5 - year intervals 100th & Over every year
The Prime Minister	25th & Over at 5 - year intervals	65th & Over at 5 - year intervals
The Premier	25th & Over at 5 - year intervals 50th & Over every year	50th & Over at 5 - year intervals 100th & Over every year
Leader of the Opposition	All requests	All requests

2011 A GREAT YEAR FOR OIL WELL DRILLING IN SASKATCHEWAN

Saskatchewan has just posted its second-best year for drilling of oil wells and has broken a record, only a year old, for drilling of horizontal oil wells.

Year-end statistics from the Ministry of Energy and Resources show that 3,528 oil wells were drilled in 2011. That represents a 29 per cent increase over the figure for 2010 and is just shy of the record figure set in 1997.

That activity contributed to the new record for horizontal oil wells drilled last year. There were 1,992 of these wells drilled in 2011, a 30 per cent increase over 2010's previous record. Horizontal well drilling has become the standard in the Canadian oil industry and Saskatchewan was a pioneer in the application of these drilling technologies

"Our oil industry continues to be one of Saskatchewan's economic drivers, and these numbers speak to the confidence the industry has in our province and the valuable oil resource we have here," Energy and Resources Minister Bill Boyd said. "Early on, the industry had the challenge of a wet spring, but obviously rebounded from that in impressive fashion."

Click here to read more. . .

WHOLESALE TRADE TRIPLES THE NATIONAL INCREASE

Saskatchewan's wholesale trade in November 2011 jumped 22.3 per cent over last November, more than triple the 6.5 per cent rise nationally and the highest increase among the provinces.

"With an economy that continues to quickly expand, wholesalers have to make sure the supply is there to meet high consumer and business demand," Enterprise Minister Jeremy Harrison said. "With that high demand comes more jobs, higher wages and new businesses in our province."

The November wholesale trade totals are the highest on record for the month of November. Wholesale trade has increased on a year-over-year basis for the last 18 consecutive months.

"Record-setting wholesale numbers definitely support the economic momentum that our province has," Harrison said. "The fact that wholesale trade has grown for such an extended period is encouraging and points to 2012 being a strong year as well."

THOUGHT OF THE DAY

"Make it a habit to tell people thank you. To express your appreciation, sincerely and without the expectation of anything in return. Truly appreciate those around you, and you'll soon find many others around you. Truly appreciate life, and you'll find that you have more of it."

Ralph Marston

DID YOU KNOW

- Debt has been reduced by 44 per cent and the budget is balanced
- We have 820 more nurses and nearly 200 more doctors working in Saskatchewan than in 2007
- Our post-secondary system is seeing record investments, student loan limits have been increased and new student housing is being built
- Saskatchewan is the only province with entirely artificial boundaries
- The University of Saskatchewan is the only university in Canada to house all five health science colleges and a major teaching hospital on the same campus

JUST THE HEADLINES – www.gov.sk.ca/news

Jan. 20, 2012 - GOVERNMENT ACCEPTS PROVINCIAL COURT COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS

Jan. 20, 2012 - SASKATCHEWAN SEEKS STRENGTHENED TIES WITH EUROPE

Jan. 20, 2012 - PLEASE FISH RESPONSIBLY ON SASKATCHEWAN LAKES

Jan. 16, 2012 - WORK CONTINUES TO REDUCE TOBACCO USE IN SASKATCHEWAN

SOME UPCOMING EVENTS IN SASKATOON

[\(If you would like your event listed in Provincial Point of View, please contact ken.cheveldayoff.mla@sasktel.net\)](#)

Please check my website at www.cheveldayoff.com for additional information.

Habitat for Humanity Event

When: January 26, 2012

Where: Delta Bessborough

Time: 7:00-10:00 pm

Details: Habitat for Humanity Saskatoon is hosting its first ever "Partner in Time" evening. It will operate as a silent art auction with a twist: bid time, not money on local artwork. Whoever bids the most volunteer

hours on a piece, wins. For more information please on this event please call Graham Dickson at 343-7772.

Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan Walk for Memories 2012

When: January 29, 2012

Where: Saskatoon Field House

Details: Registration takes place from 12:30 – 1:30 pm. The walk is from 1:30 – 3:00 pm. Register online at www.alzheimer.ca/sk; by phone at 1-877-651-0260 or by email to events@alzheimer.sk/ca

PotashCorp Wintershines

When: Jan 28, 2012 – Feb 12, 2012

Where: Market Square at River Landing

Details: Featuring an ice park with climbing wall, zipline and luge. Visit <http://www.postashcorpwintershines.ca>

Saskatoon Wellness Expo 2012

When: Feb 10, 2012 – Feb 12, 2012

Where: Prairieland Park, 503 Ruth Street

Details: Visit <http://saskatoonex.com>

Saskatoon Family Expo

When: February 17-19, 2012

Where: Prairieland Park

Details: Over 100 exhibitors, events, entertainment, food and more! \$8.00/adult. Kids under 16 are free! For more information click FAMILY EXPO.

Tim Horton's Brier

When: Mar 3, 2012 – Mar 11, 2012

Where: Credit Union Centre

Details: Visit <http://www.curling.ca>

Homestyles

When: Mar 22, 2012 – Mar 25, 2012

Where: Saskatoon Prairieland Park

Time: Mar 22 – 5:00-9:00 pm; Mar 23 – 12:00 pm – 9:00 pm; Mar 24 – 10:00 am – 9:00 pm; Mar 25 – 10:00 am – 5:00 pm.

Details: Visit <http://www.homestylesonline.com>

KEEP IN TOUCH

I appreciate the many opportunities to make a positive difference in my constituency. Your phone calls, letters and emails make a big difference in keeping me informed on the issues that matter to you. If you would like to recognize anyone or have your event mentioned in this newsletter, please don't hesitate to call me.



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“From a Provincial Point of View” is a weekly message from Ken Cheveldayoff, MLA Saskatoon Silver Springs. Your opinions are important and your letters, emails and phone calls on any issues relating to the provincial government are welcomed.

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