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## Alberta Netcare integrated with your system ...download and update patient records in one seamless operation

As Alberta Netcare evolves to its full potential, it is enabling physicians to download patient information and update provincial patient records through their existing office software system.

This integrated version is commonly called "system-to-system," as it allows two computer systems to exchange information through a secure network. Currently this link allows providers to download key patient information including recorded medications, allergies, intolerances, laboratory test results and patient demographics directly to their office computer. When a physician creates a prescription in an electronic patient medical record, it is immediately stored in Alberta Netcare provincial records.

using the system. "Alberta Netcare allows us to download patient identification information from Netcare into our own software system instantly, saving us important time and ensuring there are no errors."

Doctors at both health facilities agree that using Alberta Netcare saves time and is particularly helpful for patients with complex medical problems who use more than one prescription drug. "I could be seeing a patient recently discharged from hospital with many prescriptions," explained Dr. Tilley, lead physician at the Allin Clinic. "I open the patient charts on my computer system and, through the existing software, connect and download recent prescription history of my patient from Alberta Netcare. The upside is getting to know medications given elsewhere, and the perk is getting a drug monograph (drug usage, contraindications, side effects, patient tips and dosage) too." Alberta Netcare has built-in features to assist physicians to manage conflicts in multiple drug prescriptions and resulting contraindications making the process safer and less prone to errors.

Kevin Friese, administrator at the University Health Centre, is pleased with the system's efficiencies. "Today we are light years ahead in a short span of a year. Staff at Jonoke (office system vendor) and Alberta Health have worked around the clock to ensure that the system works, and we get the information we require to do our business with minimal disruption to our workflow."

University Health Centre staff also use Alberta Netcare to register new patients by downloading patient contact information from Alberta Netcare into the physician office system. This procedure speeds up the registration process, and saves time for returning patients who may have seen other physicians. "With hundreds of new students joining the university every year from different parts of the province it will be wonderful to have their key information like prescription history and laboratory test results instantly on our file," said Dr. McInroy. "When all physicians and pharmacists in the province are using the system, then we will realize the true benefits, a fully-integrated system is the future of patient care."

Alberta Health and Wellness continues to work with physician office system vendors to deploy the integrated version in physician offices across the province. We will bring you updates in future issues of the newsletter.



DR. TILLEY, LEAD PHYSICIAN AT  
THE ALLIN CLINIC.



KEVIN FRIESE, ADMINISTRATOR OF THE UNIVERSITY HEALTH CENTRE (STANDING)  
AND DR. GORDON MCINROY, DIRECTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY HEALTH CENTRE

The University of Alberta Health Centre is the first clinic to go live with this integrated version of Alberta Netcare. Staffed by more than 10 physicians, the centre started with the first version in 2004. "The system works in the background and I don't even notice it," said Dr. Gordon McInroy, director of the University Health Centre.

The Allin Clinic in downtown Edmonton was the second clinic to test the integrated solution, with eight of the Allin's 28 physicians participating in the pilot project. Mel Snihurowych, clinic manager, sees many benefits to



# ALBERTA NETCARE DEPLOYMENT TEAM LAUNCHES FULL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The next few months represent an exciting time for Alberta Netcare with the full-scale deployment of Alberta Netcare Portal 2006.

With the successful limited roll-out in place, the deployment team can now focus on bringing the best Electronic Health Record (EHR) system in Canada to health care professionals throughout Alberta.

Over the next six months, transition coordinators from the deployment team will be working across the province managing campaigns to migrate existing EHR users onto Alberta Netcare Portal 2006. The overall deployment strategy includes deployment of Alberta Netcare Portal 2006 to health care providers throughout Alberta by March 2008.

"The transition coordinators are committed to helping physicians, pharmacists and other health care professionals use Alberta Netcare Portal 2006," says Fran Shields, senior delivery manager, Alberta Netcare Deployment. "Each geographic area is divided into smaller campaigns to ensure personal service."

*"The transition coordinators are committed to helping physicians, pharmacists and other health care professionals use Alberta Netcare Portal 2006"*

Alberta Netcare Portal 2006 will help health care providers to provide better patient care by having access to lab results, prescription information and diagnostic imaging text results.

To reach this province-wide goal, a four-step process to assist Alberta Netcare users is being implemented.

The first step will create awareness by introducing the application and explaining how it can help in providing patient care.

Secondly, the team will work with health care professionals on a step by step enrolment process. The user and transition coordinator will work together to determine site readiness and requirements. In the larger centres, "a train-the-trainer" approach will be used.

The third step is preparing to "go-live" using Alberta Netcare. You, as the user, will receive free, comprehensive training using the application. Once you complete the training and implementation, your site will "go-live".

Finally, help will never be far away. The transition coordinators and the Provincial Help Desk will continue to support you as you use the application. We will also have surveys that will provide an opportunity for you to evaluate the EHR and contribute to its continued improvement.

## REGIONAL NEWS

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

### RSHIP Milestone

RSHIP, the Regional Shared Health Information Program, has good reason to celebrate. In July, a major Netcare milestone was achieved when the RSHIP member regions went "live" with an integrated enterprise medical record. RSHIP is a shared service of Aspen, Chinook, David Thompson, East Central, Northern Lights, Palliser and Peace Country health regions. The health facilities in the seven RSHIP regions are now linked in one electronic health records system which ultimately feed critical information into Netcare.

To celebrate the milestone, RSHIP management, dignitaries and guests gathered in Red Deer on September 25 for a ceremonial ribbon cutting at the Dana Soltes Auditorium in the Red Deer Regional Hospital. Iris Evans, Minister of Health and Wellness, and Red Deer MLAs Mary Anne Jablonski and Victor Doerksen represented the Government of Alberta. The ceremony was carried via a web cast to more than 70 RSHIP locations throughout Alberta.

Health and Wellness Minister Evans, who presided over the celebration, said "1.2 million Albertans will now receive much better health care. It represents a great virtual network of health care professionals and is another step toward Netcare's goal of an electronic health record for every Albertan by 2008." She said that critical milestones of this nature, further reinforce that the provincial EHR represents safer and more cost effective health care.

"What today's celebration means," said RSHIP executive director Pat Ryan, "is that if someone from Lethbridge presents at an emergency department in Fort McMurray, that person's medical record will be available there. The

decision-making information that health care professionals need will be right there."

Tom Seaman, RSHIP board chair, explained that RSHIP's enterprise medical record contains all of a patient's medical information, and critical RSHIP information will be available for viewing in the provincial Netcare EHR and in the physician office system electronic medical record, including patient demographics, lab test results, and diagnostic text reports. "In effect, Netcare is enhanced by the increased depth of information RSHIP gathers and provides to Netcare to assist physicians to provide even better quality patient care."



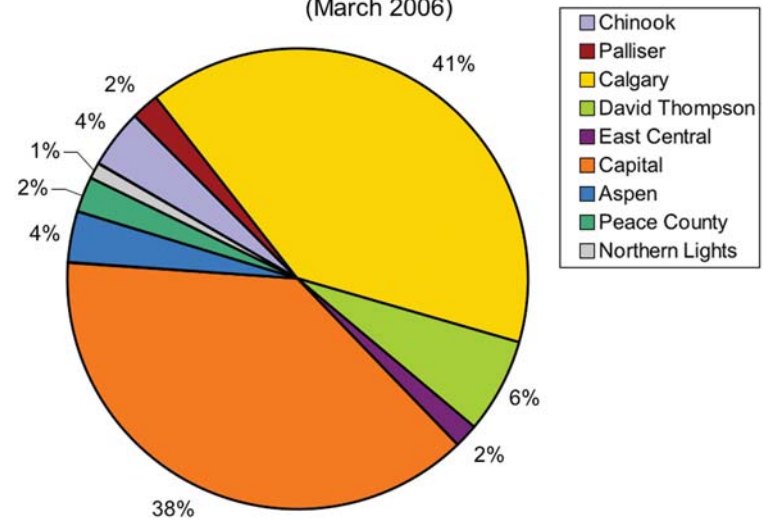
## POSP BY NUMBERS

More Alberta physicians use automation in a clinical setting than physicians in any other province. An analysis of the 3,369 physicians enrolled in the Physician Office System Program (POSP) shows that physicians who decide to incorporate information technology into their practices are a diverse group.

Taken as a whole, the 61% of physicians who are in POSP largely mirror the distribution of Alberta physicians by region, age, specialty and gender. However, when the program penetration within these categories is analyzed, a different perspective appears:

- In the metro health regions (Calgary and Capital) 40% of eligible physicians are enrolled in POSP, while in the non-metro regions the percentage rises to 65%.
- 82% of eligible physicians in the Aspen Health Region are participating in POSP; the highest participation rate of any health region.
- Physicians who are 25 to 41 years of age are overrepresented in the POSP population, while physicians who are over 60 are under-represented.
- Close to 2,000 or 67% of Alberta's general practitioners are enrolled in POSP and of these, 84% are using electronic medical records.
- The participation rate by specialty ranges from 73% for diagnostic radiologists to 18% for psychiatrists.

**Distribution of POSP Physicians across the Regions**  
(March 2006)



- 83% of physicians participating in a Primary Care Network are POSP participants.

If you are interested in finding out more, please visit the POSP website [www.posp.ab.ca](http://www.posp.ab.ca) or contact POSP at 1.866.817.3875 (toll free) or [posp@albertadoctors.org](mailto:posp@albertadoctors.org).

Asked what is in the future for RSHIP, executive director Ryan said the partnership is looking to strengthen and build on the foundation of the existing network infrastructure.

"The next 12 months is important to strengthen our position, and build a plan for the next plateau." Ryan said. "The foundation is being reinforced in support of the next set of physician and clinical initiatives."



FROM LEFT: BRIAN KROEKER, RSHIP DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS; TOM SEAMAN, RSHIP BOARD CHAIR; MARY ANNE JABLONSKI, MLA RED DEER NORTH; IRIS EVANS, MINISTER, HEALTH & WELLNESS; VICTOR DOERKSON, MLA RED DEER SOUTH; PAT RYAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RSHIP; BRYAN JUDD, RSHIP VICE PRESIDENT AND COO; AND RICHARD CARTWRIGHT, PROJECT MANAGER.



## ALBERTA NETCARE BENEFITS EVALUATION PROJECT LAUNCHES

Everyone says Alberta Netcare, the provincial electronic health record (EHR), is beneficial; now we're out to prove it.

Alberta Health and Wellness has launched the Alberta Netcare benefits evaluation project to identify and measure the benefits that the province will realize from its EHR, both immediately and in the future.

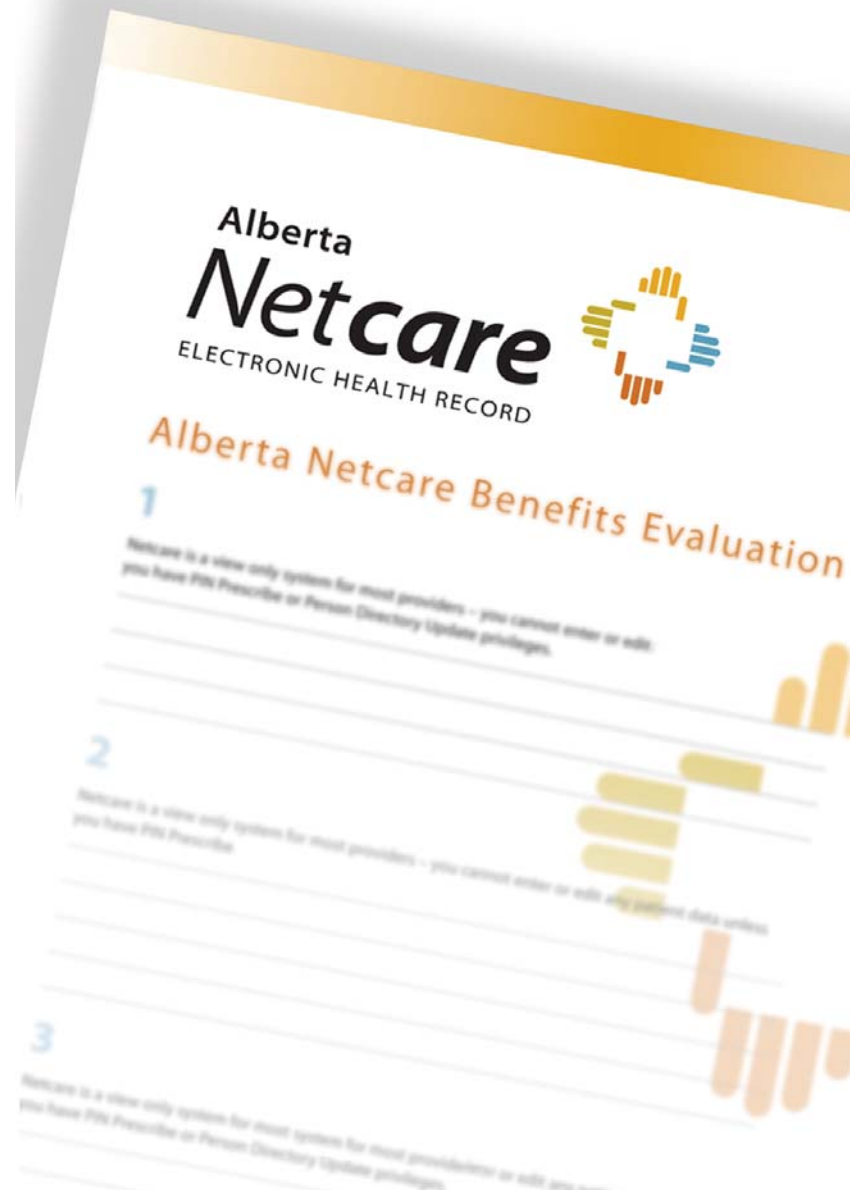
The first step is developing a framework to identify the benefits. Netcare is expected to improve patient safety, increase the efficiency of the health system, support team-based care and improve patient health outcomes. Accurately measuring the positive impact of the EHR in these areas is important to Netcare's ongoing development. Input from the current stakeholders with experience from across Canada and around the world, will provide a benchmark.

The Provincial Information Management Committee will be the executive steering committee for this work. Representatives from the key stakeholder organizations have also been appointed to help with the evaluation.

The first phase of work has already started. The first draft of the framework and an interim report are scheduled for December 2006. Work in the first quarter of 2007 will validate the initial framework and develop plans for pilot implementations.

Alberta is leading Canada in the development and implementation of the EHR. This evaluation project will not only help show Netcare's value, but will also help demonstrate the benefits from this major investment.

For more information on this project, contact Betty Loree (betty.loree@gov.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](http://www.albertanetcare.ca)



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**Better Patient Information.  
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