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# Pharmacy Community Efforts Make Pharmacy Batch System Provincial Reality

Because of the dedicated efforts of Alberta's pharmacy community and pharmacy system vendors, Pharmacy Batch has been implemented and dispense events are now routinely reported across the province.

Alberta Netcare and Alberta Health and Wellness (AHW) thank and congratulate all pharmacists and vendors who have worked hard since the spring to put the Pharmacy Batch System in place and meet their legislative responsibility for reporting data.

This was truly a collaborative effort. The program involved all pharmacists and pharmacy staff who managed this process successfully within their operations, as well as pharmacy system vendors and the Alberta College of Pharmacists and the Alberta Pharmacists Association. There continues to be tremendous effort and commitment towards better patient care through the continual development of the electronic health record.

The results speak for themselves. The availability of this prescribed dispense data has added significantly to the utility and benefit Alberta Netcare is able to deliver not only to pharmacists, physicians and other healthcare providers, but also to the benefit of patients. Dispense data is a substantial and viable data category within the EHR, and a valuable source of information for health care providers in serving patients. The next focus will be maintaining accurate and high quality information.

Alberta Netcare recognizes the consistent and strong effort that pharmacists are contributing to this cause. Matching dispense events to the correct unique PHN is very important to the integrity of the information and the work that pharmacists are doing today will pay off in the long-term integrity and usefulness of the EHR.

Pharmacies are leading the way for health providers in this data quality work. The standards and processes established by pharmacists have established a model which will be useful as Alberta Netcare grows in the future to handle information from other providers.

Pharmacists have also received assistance in dealing with public inquiries about the need to provide a PHN. A brochure was developed by AHW to help pharmacists explain the need to identify a patient's PHN when filling a prescription. Copies of this brochure are available from your local pharmacist, or through AHW by calling the **780-415-1866** or for toll free, first dial **310-0000**, then dial **780-415-1866**.

Pharmacists who have questions about their Pharmacy Batch software should call their vendor. General questions about deployment, reporting and information quality processes can be directed to the Alberta Netcare Deployment Team at **1-866-756-2647** or e-mail [health.ehrdeployment@gov.ab.ca](mailto:health.ehrdeployment@gov.ab.ca).

## ALBERTA NETCARE PORTAL 2006 IS NOW ALBERTA NETCARE PORTAL

As of November 15, 2007, Alberta Netcare has officially changed the name of Alberta Netcare Portal 2006 to Alberta Netcare Portal.

You will now see all new information and materials using the new brand identity Alberta Netcare Portal, and all existing training material and publications will eventually be converted over to the new brand.

If you have any questions, contact the Alberta Netcare Deployment Team at **1-866-756-2647** or e-mail [health.ehrdeployment@gov.ab.ca](mailto:health.ehrdeployment@gov.ab.ca).

## PHARMACY S2S:

Work has already begun on the pharmacy system-to-system (S2S) application, which will work with Alberta Netcare Portal. The full rollout is planned for early 2009. S2S provides seamless behind-the-scenes interaction between the pharmacy vendor systems and the EHR, with the result being an automated data capture between the pharmacy vendor system and EHR.

## Watch Your Login Pages and the Web Site

Alberta Netcare is keeping you informed of news in two ways.

**First**, check your login pages for news. Alberta Netcare is now posting emergent news about changes, updates and outages right on the newly designed login page.

**Second**, Alberta Netcare has improved its website. [Albertanetcare.ca](http://Albertanetcare.ca) is currently under construction – watch for an update to the website in early January 2008.





## DISPENSE DATA HELPS PHYSICIANS AND IMPROVES PATIENT SAFETY

The availability of dispense data within the provincial EHR is making a difference for physicians and their motivation to access the Alberta Netcare. Access to more data is also helping Alberta Netcare achieve its goals of improved patient care and patient safety.

Many health care providers have supported Alberta Netcare development, and it is gratifying for them to see the system delivering the benefits that have been promised.

Physicians can now quickly look up their patient's recent drug dispense data by accessing the patient's record in the Alberta Netcare EHR. They can reference not only medications they prescribed, but also the drugs prescribed by other physicians caring for the patient, such as specialists or hospital staff.

The benefits for patient safety are significant. By seeing a patient's complete recent drug history, physicians can prevent medication duplication as well as avoid potentially adverse drug reactions and interactions.

In most centres, especially in rural communities, physicians can have a high level of confidence that their patient's recent drug dispense records will be available.



The depth and quality of this information will continue to increase. While the province will not be adding historical data, it will only take a few months for physicians to have a time record for active patients, which will show trends and relationships using the EHR's analysis and reporting functions.

This development proves the benefit of the provincial EHR in terms of supporting and improving physicians' ability to provide fast, effective and informed care for their patients.



## DATA AVAILABILITY CONTINUES TO GROW

The availability of various kinds of information within the Alberta Netcare EHR continues to expand and benefit patient care across the province.

Data is made available by interfacing existing local clinical information systems to connect with Alberta Netcare and feed the data into the provincial EHR. The fact that information is not yet available within the Alberta Netcare EHR means regions and health providers are collecting it in local clinical information systems and EMRs, but these systems are not yet linked with the provincial EHR.

For detailed information about the information within a specific data category or region, contact the Alberta Netcare Deployment Team at **1-866-756-2647** or e-mail [health.ehrdeployment@gov.ab.ca](mailto:health.ehrdeployment@gov.ab.ca).

## NEW INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT (IMA) AND INFORMATION EXCHANGE PROTOCOL (IEP) FORMS REQUIRE YOUR SIGNATURES

New IMA and IEP documents were released in October 2007. Although many users have already signed previous versions of these documents, the new version addresses some emergent new issues, and requires new signatures.

The new versions require signatures from all EHR custodians by the Electronic Health Record Data Stewardship Committee. When you receive these forms, please review and sign both copies and return one copy to the address provided on the last page of the agreement.

The **IMA** establishes the rules governing electronic access to and information exchange within Alberta Netcare. It must be signed in order to participate in Alberta Netcare. Version 2.2 replaces version 1.0.

The **IEP** is contractually linked to the IMA, and has gone through a major revision to make it more user-friendly, and to address issues related to masking and the secondary use of health information for research purposes. Version 2.0 replaces version 1.0.

If you have questions, or if you are a custodian participating in Alberta Netcare and you have not received a copy of the new versions of the IMA and IEP, please contact AHW, the HIA Helpdesk at (toll free 310-0000) then dial **1-780-427-8089** or e-mail [hiahelpdesk@gov.ab.ca](mailto:hiahelpdesk@gov.ab.ca).



# THE NEXT WAVE

## FIRST INDEPENDENT PHARMACIES IMPLEMENT ALBERTA NETCARE PORTAL

Alberta Netcare Portal is coming on stream for pharmacies. As of this fall, two independent pharmacies are now on Alberta Netcare Portal and a major chain will be using the provincial EHR by early 2008.

The first independent pharmacy to sign on was Turtle Mountain Pharmacy in Bellevue, a small community in the Crowsnest Pass about 30 minutes west of Pincher Creek on Highway 3.

"Having access to the lab data is a huge benefit," says pharmacy owner Darsey Milford. "Having worked in a hospital pharmacy where lab data was always available, it's very helpful to have access to it again in a community setting."

Bekki Anderson, a transition co-ordinator with the Alberta Netcare Deployment Team, worked with Milford on the transition. "Darsey was keen and fantastic to work with. She took care of getting her Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) and Organizational Readiness Assessment (ORA) herself."

Milford says that though the PIA took time and effort, it was not difficult for someone with an institutional pharmacy background where policy and process assessments are routine. Both Anderson and Milford said the transition from Portal 2004 to Alberta Netcare Portal was seamless.

The second independent pharmacy to go live with Alberta Netcare Portal was the Northern Lights IDA in the small town of Manning, about 70 km northwest of Peace River on the MacKenzie Highway.

Pharmacist Erin Albrecht is very pleased about the enhanced level of care she can give her patients. "I am providing an anticoagulation monitoring service at my pharmacy, and having timely access to INR values is great," says Albrecht.

Albrecht believes Alberta Netcare Portal will be very important for pharmacists who prescribe. "I am also in a pilot for advanced prescribing privileges with the Alberta College of Pharmacists and having access to Alberta Netcare Portal is a must," says Albrecht.

Albrecht says that although the process to get the appropriate privacy and security took some time, it was a worthwhile exercise. "The level of service and confidentiality I will provide my patients is wide open now," says Albrecht. Transition co-ordinator Darlene Meston supported and worked closely with Albrecht on the transition.

The deployment team is now getting numerous calls requesting access to the Alberta Netcare Portal, including requests from pharmacy chains. The DrugStore Pharmacy chain launched its first site recently and will be migrating more than 65 sites in early 2008.

Pharmacists needing information about migrating from Portal 2004 to Alberta Netcare Portal should contact the Alberta Netcare Deployment Team at **1-866-756-2647** or e-mail **health.ehrdeployment@gov.ab.ca**.



### *Numbers Keep Growing for Alberta Netcare Portal*

The number of physicians and health region users accessing Alberta Netcare Portal and migrating from Portal 2004 continues to grow. Early in 2008 the anticipated number will be approximately 22,000.



## New Clinical Working Group Starts Work

A new working group has been launched to give a clinical perspective to EHR development. The Clinical Working Group includes representatives from the Calgary Health Region, Capital Health, RSHIP, the Alberta Cancer Board, the Alberta Medical Association and the Alberta Pharmacists Association.

The group was created to provide clinical perspectives and guidance for Alberta Netcare Portal development and the Health Information Exchange project.

The clinical working group's role is to strike an effective balance between clinical and system development perspectives and to ensure the system achieves the desired outcomes.

Having direct clinical representation will help Alberta Netcare EHR work towards improving patient care and outcomes while at the same time meeting provider needs and workflow requirements. The focus of the group will be on quality, safety, access to services, and the ability to have health information at the point of care.

For more information contact Jena Magnus at [jena.magnus@calgaryhealthregion.ca](mailto:jena.magnus@calgaryhealthregion.ca), 403-819-3817.

## CAPITAL HEALTH NETCARE AND ALBERTA NETCARE PORTAL BECOME A SINGLE SYSTEM

The number of Alberta Netcare Portal users will double in early 2008 when more than 8,000 users in Capital Health will migrate from Capital Health netCARE to Alberta Netcare Portal. This is a positive and major milestone for both organizations. In addition to providing Capital Health users with access to all provincial data from a single portal, it will also allow for more effective use of EHR development resources.

For Capital Health netCARE users, the Alberta Netcare Portal will become their tool for accessing patient electronic health records. Users will see minimal change in their EHR system and access to patient records will not change.

Alberta Netcare Portal will operate the same as Capital Health netCARE with specific Capital Health functionality.

- The logo will change to show Alberta Netcare Portal.
- Users will see both Capital Health data and provincial data.
- Users will use the same user ID, passwords and fobs.

There is no impact for current Alberta Netcare Portal users.

Capital Health, Alberta Health and Wellness and the Alberta Netcare Deployment Team have been working together since October to ensure an easy and transparent transition. A limited production rollout is underway in preparation for a full migration in mid-January.

Capital Health users with questions should contact the Capital Health Information Centre at **735-HELP (735-4357)**. Capital Health will continue as a trusted EHR provider within the Capital Health region, working in partnership with Alberta Netcare Deployment to ensure seamless user support.

General questions about this transition can be directed to the AHW Alberta Netcare Help Desk at **1-877-931-1638** toll free or **412-6778**.

### 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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