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Successful Single Instance Transition



DR. ROBERT HAUPTMAN ENJOYS BENEFITS OF ALBERTA NETCARE PORTAL.

On January 29th all users of Capital Health netCARE moved to Alberta Netcare Portal. This significant step increased users of Alberta Netcare Portal by more than 10,000 people, putting user numbers at nearly 25,000 across the province! Congratulations to everyone who worked hard throughout the fall of 2007 to get it done, and welcome Capital Health users to Alberta Netcare Portal.

One of the physicians that participated in this transition is Dr. Robert Hauptman. Before this migration, his office, Saulbus Family Medical Clinic in St. Albert, was using both Capital Health netCARE and Alberta Electronic Health Record (EHR) to access patient lists and information.

"Alberta Netcare Portal is more integrated," says Dr. Hauptman. "One of the issues with Capital Health netCARE information was that it was localized, so we wouldn't have the access we do now. The other thing the new system has allowed is easier access to the Pharmaceutical Information Network (PIN). Before we'd have to go onto Alberta's legacy EHR, Alberta Wellnet, whereas now it's part of the integrated system."

Dr. Hauptman finds that Alberta Netcare Portal has become an extension of the system he used before. "I can now access my patients' information and test results, that I may not have been copied on, if my patients were admitted to the hospital. Now I can go on Netcare and get that information right when the patient is with me, which is vitally important."

This not only saves time for the physician, but also provides better and timely patient care. By being able to see the results of lab tests or imaging, there is no duplication of tests requested. "Furthermore, if you have the best information possible you can make the best diagnostic and therapeutic decisions," says Dr. Hauptman. "In the past, you might order more tests which were unnecessary and caused the patient to wait two or three weeks for the results, when those tests might already have been done. It's important to stress that having records online allows us to provide better patient care."

The transition was seamless and successfully completed as a result of everyone's efforts. There is now one instance of Alberta Netcare Portal province wide, being accessed by nearly 25,000 users, Dr. Hauptman being one of them.

"I had a patient come in the other day for a follow up on a lab test, and for whatever reason it wasn't downloaded into my current electronic medical record, but all I had to do was go onto Alberta Netcare Portal and I could tell the patient what their results were." Dr. Hauptman also appreciates the ability to look up records after-hours. "I work weekends and evening hours, and a lot of times the radiological office is closed during that time. Now I can just go onto Alberta Netcare Portal and get that information."

Dr. Hauptman recommends Alberta Netcare Portal to other physicians. "I think there's no question that it allows you a quick, efficient way of accessing information at point-of-care, which is one of those key phrases that has entered our language in medical care. Timely access in front of the patient is so vitally important for diagnostic and therapeutic intervention." He adds that the system is easy to use, with very little to learn, especially if the physician already has a computerized office. "It's a win/win situation for the physician and the patient, with virtually no down side."

By using the technology available today, Alberta continues to build Canada's best electronic health information system. "It's an exciting world, and it's really made what I do as a physician much more efficient," says Dr. Hauptman.

Again, congratulations to all for this wonderful accomplishment!



ALBERTA NETCARE MEETS WITH PHARMACISTS

Alberta Health and Wellness teamed up with the Alberta College of Pharmacists and the Alberta Pharmacists' Association to present a series of meetings across the province about Alberta Netcare. Called "Straight Talk on Alberta Netcare", meetings were scheduled in every region from mid-April to mid-May.

The purpose of the meetings was to help pharmacists find out what is going on in Alberta Netcare, what's in it for both pharmacists and patients, and how pharmacists can participate in and benefit from these changes. The world of pharmacists is changing and they play a vital role in the process of innovation of which Alberta Netcare is a part.

Pharmacists were invited to attend these meetings and be part of an open conversation about key issues. Topics included the support available for deployment of Alberta Netcare Portal and data cleansing, new simpler PIA and p-ORA processes for pharmacists, and where Alberta Netcare is headed. The meetings also covered development of system enhancements that work for pharmacists.

Alberta Netcare also wants to acknowledge the entire pharmacist community for the tremendous achievement on the reporting of dispense data. The reality is that health care professionals need access to information on dispensed medications to provide effective patient care, and the work in 2007 went a long way towards achieving that goal. Alberta Netcare Portal is no longer just a vision, but a functioning reality that is working well for a large number of regions, physicians, and pharmacists.

There is more work to do to complete the integration of data, maximize the benefits, and develop a system that works as well as possible. Working together can enhance the system to benefit everyone involved.



Alberta Netcare has enabled new tools and processes that will help pharmacists, improve patient care, and position Alberta as a 21st century leader in effective and secure use of electronic health information. The meetings will help to continue this progress.

Meetings were scheduled in every region:

- April 14 Camrose – Norsemen Inn
- April 15 Red Deer – Black Knight Inn
- April 16 Edmonton – Ramada Inn
- April 29 Westlock – Westlock Inn
- May 1 Grand Prairie – Quality Hotel
- May 6 Fort McMurray – Quality Hotel
- May 12 Lethbridge – Lethbridge Lodge Hotel & Conference Centre
- May 13 Medicine Hat – Callaghan Inn
- May 14 Calgary – Delta Airport

Data Availability Growth Supports Patient Care

As the Alberta Netcare EHR continues to develop, the availability of various types of information grows. More and more data systems are now linked with the provincial EHR, allowing for an increasingly complete interface with Alberta Netcare Portal which is then able to deliver more patient data to health providers in all regions.

Alberta Netcare is pleased to see the positive results, especially resulting from increases in data availability. The benefits for health care providers and patients are considerable. An overall picture of the patient's health history allows for better diagnosis and treatment, and helps ensure the safety of patient prescription use.

Thanks to these results, more health care providers are keen to access Alberta Netcare Portal, and Alberta Netcare is delivering the benefits as promised.

Here is a summary of current data availability.

Patient Demographics: ID numbers and demographic data for anyone registered with AHW with a Personal Health Number (PHN) or Unique Lifetime Identifier (ULI). Data may go back to 1993.

Drug Information: Approaching 80 per cent of information on all dispensed drugs province-wide. Information on prescriptions, allergies and intolerances may go back to March 2002.

Lab Data: General, microbiology, and pathology data is now available for all regions. Note that there are many regional variations in how far back certain specific categories of data are available. For many regions, lab data reporting was initiated in 2007. Capital Health data, however, dates back to April 2002.

Diagnostic Imaging Reports: Now available from all regional facilities across the province. For most regions data goes back to mid-2007. Capital Health data dates back to August 2003.

Reports from many private facilities are still in development.

Transcribed Reports: Alberta Cancer Board reports are available back to May 2006 and include Physician Progress Notes, Admission Histories, Discharge Summaries, and Initial Consultations. Capital Region reports are available back to July 2003 and include Consultations, Histories, Letters, Discharge Summaries, and Operative Procedure Reports.

Work is continuing to bring additional data into the EHR, including more transcribed reports, diagnostic imaging digital images, immunizations, event history, emergency room discharge summaries and electrocardiograms. Some of this data is already available for Capital Health.

For detailed information about the data within a specific category or region, contact the Alberta Netcare Deployment Team at 1-866-756-2647 or email health.ehrdeployment@gov.ab.ca.

THE P-ORA

A NEW SECURITY ASSESSMENT STANDARD FOR ALBERTA HEALTH SECTOR

Alberta Health and Wellness (AHW) rolled out a new security assessment standard for Alberta Netcare and regional clinical systems on April 1, 2008, called a Provincial Organizational Readiness Assessment (p-ORA).

The p-ORA is a minimum set of administrative, technical and physical security requirements that community sites (clinics, pharmacies, doctor offices, etc) must meet before they can get access to Alberta Netcare and/or regional clinical systems. The assessment mitigates the risks to health information when it comes to access to these systems and to standardize security assessments within Alberta health sector.

The p-ORA replaces the Organizational Readiness Assessment (ORA). Unlike the ORA, the p-ORA is presented in terms of risk to health information if appropriate security controls are not in place to protect this information. In addition, less technical terms have been used in the document as much as possible to facilitate the understanding of the security requirements by users of the document who, in most cases, have limited technical knowledge. The new assessment is also more flexible than the ORA. It recognizes the fact that there could be a number of different ways to mitigate a particular risk to health information.

The p-ORA is currently composed of three sections: the portal (web access), system-to-system and wireless sections. All community sites that request access to Alberta Netcare Portal must go through the portal section. In addition, sites requesting Electronic Medical Record system-to-system connection to Alberta Netcare Portal must also go through the system-to-system section. The wireless section is reserved for sites implementing wireless technology.

AHW administers, conducts, reviews and approves the p-ORA for Alberta Netcare Portal access after the security requirements have been met as appropriate. Each approved p-ORA is good for two years.

The p-ORA document was developed by the AHW Information Policy and Compliance Unit, in collaboration with representatives from all the regional health authorities, Cancer Board, Physician Office System Program (POSP) and Office of the Information Privacy Commissioner. The document was piloted in August 2007.

Due to this collaborative effort by all parties, the p-ORA is a tremendous step towards improving the security controls needed to safeguard health information.

DEPLOYMENT UPDATE

As of March 31, 2008, Alberta Netcare is pleased to announce there are approximately 25,000 registered Alberta Netcare EHR users.

To further improve the user's experience, a learning centre is currently in development for the Alberta Netcare Portal. Several key strategies are being implemented, actively involving the end user in the training process and relating the instructional style to the needs of the learner.

The training will also have a specific structure based on the role of the learner. In this way, the Alberta Netcare Deployment Team can establish a working training network for all users of Alberta Netcare Portal that will focus on the unique needs of the user.

To date, the Deployment Team has heard some great feedback from Portal users:

"The system works in the background and I don't even notice it. When all physicians and pharmacists in the province are using the system, then we will realize the true benefits of a fully integrated system to the future of patient care." (Edmonton physician.)

"A patient had medications mixed up, and I was quickly able to find out what the person was on. In numerous cases, I have been able to have completed bloodwork, with less time spent." (Calgary clinician.)

With growing numbers and enhanced training, Alberta Netcare continues to be a benefit to all users.



CLINICAL WORKING GROUP DELIVERS HEALTH CARE PROVIDER PERSPECTIVE

The Alberta Netcare Portal Clinical Working Group is a group of clinicians including practicing physicians, pharmacists, and other health care providers who meet once a month to bring a practical perspective to the Alberta Netcare initiative. Dr. Nigel Flook is one of the participants, and he actually represents two different positions in the group.

"I'm the physician representative for the Capital Health Authority, and I'm also the Chair of the Patient Safety and Usability Panel for the Pharmaceutical Information Network (PIN)," says Dr. Flook. "So I bring a special understanding of PIN, and a clinician's perspective to the meetings."

Dr. Flook is a pioneer of EHR, PIN, and patient safety. He has a community practice and a large hospital practice at the University of Alberta Hospital, and also does geriatric in-patient work at the Misericordia Hospital in Edmonton. "I live in several different medical worlds, and as a result of that the clinical perspective I can bring is helpful in different environments where physicians might deliver care."

The Clinical Working Group is dedicated to ensuring that the final results and the on-going developments and improvements to Alberta Netcare Portal are useful and efficient, and that the product can be used in a way that is sensible. "Ultimately we want a product that is widely used throughout the province because we are convinced that it will help us provide better care for our patients."

Dr. Flook feels the intention is to create a system that is fully accessible, efficient in every way, and intuitive so that a potential user wouldn't have to take extensive training to figure it out.

"What we're trying to do is make sure that what is available through Alberta Netcare Portal should be usable, and that it is presented in a way that is meaningful and appropriate," says Dr. Flook. "We are also finding ways to reach out and get feedback about whether it's working, whether it's logical, whether it's helpful in various practice environments. So we're talking to clinicians and getting feedback from people using Alberta Netcare Portal in a variety of different ways in order to help inform some of the decisions being made."

The Clinical Working Group works together with Alberta Netcare EHR Deployment, but Dr. Flook wants to stress that deployment is not enough. "What we also need is to find ways to help physicians to integrate this valuable asset into their practices so they can make optimal use of EHR without it being time consuming or cumbersome," says Dr. Flook.

"So we need two things: deployment, and a clinical integration strategy which helps the clinician make the changes that are needed when they begin to add this shared health information environment to their practice."

Dr. Flook admits that it is a big change to go from working in a closed environment, where the information that is directed there is either ordered or generated by that office, to working in the shared health information environment where all of a sudden there is access to as much information as is available on that patient. "How can you access the right amount of it? Or how can you access what it is you need right now from that vast body of information? So it comes down to learning how to access the information you need in order to provide care, and how to find it quickly and safely."

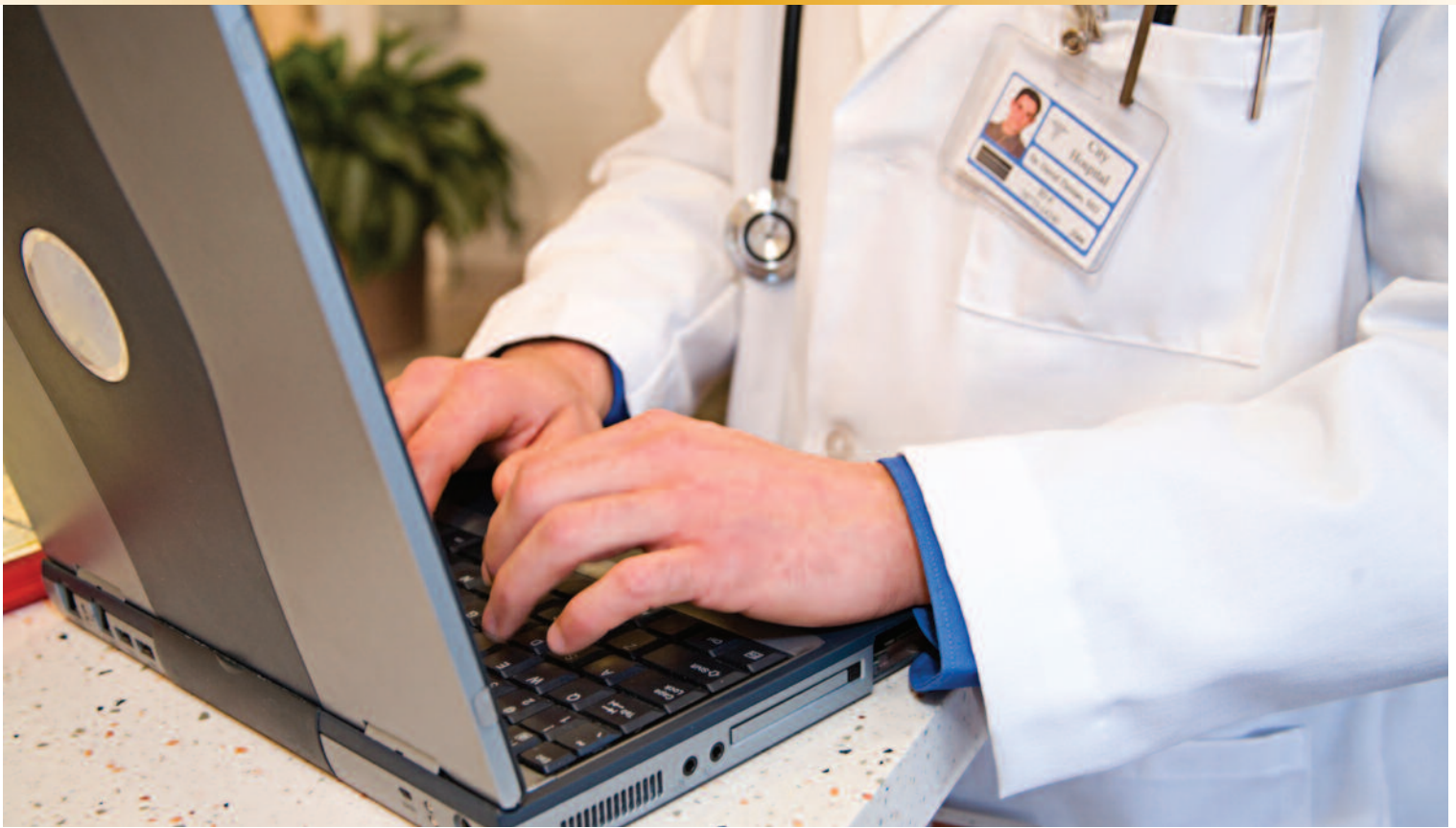
The Clinical Working Group is a province-wide assembly of urban and rural physicians, specialists, community and hospital pharmacists, and RNs. "We even have clinical decision support specialists that attend these meetings who can help us with decision support tools that might be available through the Portal," says Dr. Flook.

Dr. Flook agrees that the group is looking to make Alberta Netcare Portal the best it can be, but that it is also in place to question what is meant by the best. "Alberta Netcare Portal needs to be something that can present complete information to the physician in a way where you can access the information needed in a clear and unambiguous way."

With approximately 20 members from various callings, the Clinical Working Group provides analysis and recommendations for the on-going improvement of the Alberta Netcare Portal.



DR. NIGEL FLOOK, A PIONEER OF EHR, CONTINUES TO PROMOTE THE BENEFITS OF ALBERTA NETCARE TO HEALTH PROVIDERS.



Mentoring Service Valuable for POSP Physicians

Alberta's Physician Office System Program (POSP) is proud of its success in providing Alberta doctors with mentoring services that help them get the most they can from their Electronic Medical Record (EMR).

Virtually all physicians who take advantage of the physician mentoring services rate it as "high-value" and recommend it to their colleagues.

"We consistently get rave reviews from physicians on our mentoring service," explains David Ulis, POSP Program Director. "Each year, our uptake has risen from the year before. We view this outreach work among our top services."

Mentoring services have been offered by POSP since 2002. They are free to any POSP participant, and repeat visits are allowed. The service is available to all POSP physicians—regardless of where they are located, the size of clinic or specialty.

Physician and clinic manager mentors go to a clinic to help. Sessions are arranged at a physicians' convenience, and many take place before or after hours.

Some physicians want to learn best how to use features in a particular product, while others want to know how to adjust workflow processes to integrate with the technology. Either way, mentoring objectives, which can vary widely from clinic to clinic, are identified in advance so the session is always focused on the specific needs of the doctor and their staff, and is tailored to their particular clinic.

POSP currently uses more than 30 physician resources and a half dozen clinic managers to deliver on-site guidance.

"We were thrilled to have the mentoring help," says Lucille Price, Clinic Manager at the Thickwood Family Medical Centre. "Our office is an interesting blend – we have a GP, a pediatrician, and an ophthalmologist. The mentoring helped take the mystery out of the EMR and showed us how to use it to our advantage. There were ways that we could save time that we didn't even know about – like with the immunization record – it was so simple. Now we see how the EMR as a tool really can be a practical help to our business. Now I'm sharing what I learnt with everybody at work."

To learn more, or to book time with a physician mentor, contact POSP Change Management at **1-866-817-3875** or email us at posp@albertadoctors.org.

Check Your Login Page

Please remember that regular updates about Alberta Netcare are posted on the Alberta Netcare Portal Login page. These include news, system changes, and advisories about outages. In addition, a number of training updates will be available soon.

Have a look next time you log in!





Contact us

To contact us for more information call **1 (866) 756 2647** or visit the Alberta Netcare website at www.albertanetcare.ca



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**Better Patient Information.
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