

*April 10, 2014*

## **New hemodialysis equipment improves the patient experience**



New hemodialysis machines are quickly transforming the quality of patient care for the better. “The machines are the newest technology on the market and they are helping us do a much better job of determining the efficiency of dialysis treatments in real-time,” said Shelley Stamm, Clinical Nurse Manager in the Renal Unit at the Regina General Hospital. “Staff can now monitor and adjust blood flow rates during treatment like never before. This means we can better gauge how well the dialysis is working. Patients have also been telling us how much they love the comfort of the new machines and how much better they feel coming off them compared to the equipment we used to use.”

The machines are in place at two Saskatoon healthcare facilities – St. Paul’s Hospital and the Cameco Community Renal Health Centre. In Regina the machines are being used at Regina General Hospital and will be fully operational at the Wascana Rehabilitation Centre by June 2014.

Overall the rollout of the new equipment went relatively smooth and employees who operate the machines have been saying the technology is very easy-to-use. According to Stamm, “the procedure for processing patients has also been streamlined while the turnaround time for servicing the machines between patients is now only five minutes, down from an hour with the 11-year-old relics we worked with previously. Ultimately this frees up time that can be re-directed to patient care.”

# spotlight

“The nephrologists (physicians who specialize in kidney care) are saying lab results indicate patients’ blood is being cleaned better using this new equipment,” added Diane Shendruk, Director of Renal Services and the Saskatchewan Transplant Program in the Saskatoon Health Region. “We’re really encouraged by these results.”

Over the next two years Regina Qu’Appelle Health Region, Saskatoon Health Region, and all the satellite locations will be equipped with the same hemodialysis machines, blood volume monitors, accessories and consumables (such as needle blood lines).

“Once this work wraps up, we will have established a truly provincial program that will be the first of its kind in Canada. It will allow for the movement of equipment from one location to another, and it will assist healthcare leaders with emergency preparedness and planning,” said Stamm. “Above all else the whole approach, even now, puts patients first.”

The 3sHealth Materials Management staff led the negotiations that landed a provincial contract that will save the healthcare system a staggering \$1,150,869 in capital expenditures and an additional \$568,165 (over five years) in consumables and accessories.

“The collaboration between the health regions, the Ministry of Health, and 3sHealth was impressive, and culminated in better care for patients,” said Shendruk.

And Stamm echoed “I’ve never participated in a contract tendering process like it. The clinical engagement team was composed of patients, front-line staff, managers, directors, clinical engineers, Ministry of Health staff, and nephrologists. We used a formal evaluation tool to ensure the selection process truly was fair and unbiased.”

Acknowledging the effort required to put this contract in place, Dr. Joanne Kappel, Head, Division of Nephrology at the University of Saskatchewan concludes with, “We appreciate 3sHealth in all these negotiations.”

“I’m thankful to the province for allotting the money needed to purchase these machines. The real winners are the patients who benefit from the life-saving support of this state-of-the-art hemodialysis equipment,” added Stamm.

# spotlight

The provincial fleet of hemodialysis machines is presently 183 units:

Southern Saskatchewan

Regina General Hospital and Wascana Rehabilitation Centre (Regina)

Satellite locations: Yorkton, Estevan, Moose Jaw, Swift Current

Northern Saskatchewan

St. Paul's Hospital and Cameco Community Renal Health Centre (Saskatoon)

Satellite locations: Prince Albert, Tisdale, North Battleford