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Good progress on the provincial Enterprise Resource Planning project

The healthcare system requires a better, more integrated technology to support human resources, finance, supply chain, business intelligence, scheduling, benefits, and payroll functions. Right now the Saskatchewan health system has a very complex information technology infrastructure to support those functions. For example, there are a total of 82 different applications currently in use provincially just to meet the human resources, finance, and supply chain needs of the health system. With so many applications, integration of processes and systems is low (which results in data inconsistencies, added maintenance and support costs, and other operational challenges). Numerous activities are done either manually or in a non-standardized manner. Currently the health system lacks real-time, accurate and integrated information for effective decision-making.

That's why the province is moving towards implementing a single software solution, known as enterprise resource planning (ERP) tool, for the whole Saskatchewan health system. An ERP solution provides integrated enterprise resource planning functionality to meet the needs of a single or multiple organizations. An ERP system provides a single suite of modules or functionalities to integrate these multiple organizational functions. This will result in across the board savings due to economies of scale, efficiencies, and reduced integration issues.

Transitioning to a new solution provides significant business opportunity for RHAs/SCA. In coordination with standardization of processes potential benefits that could be achieved through the implementation of an ERP include:

- Availability of integrated, strategic information to aid in effective decision making;
- Opportunities to develop consistent policy and processes through standardized infrastructure that will continue to improve efficiency and effectiveness resulting in cost savings across the sector;
- Improved data accuracy, reliability, and integrity to plan, forecast and report;
- Better ability (through business intelligence) to provide sector wide consolidated financial reporting and the greater ability to benchmark both internally and externally to similar healthcare organizations;
- Improved alignment with strategic objectives including the provincial strategy, Lean initiatives, and shared service opportunities;

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- Resource optimization, minimization of overtime, and improved quality of administrative services as a result of timely availability of information; and
- A consistent and positive experience for healthcare professionals that consume ERP standardized services, will free up staff and translate to a more consistent and positive experience for patients.



Pictured above: ERP workshop participants at the first event on May 27, 2014

An ERP project is now underway. By March 31, 2015, the project team (which includes participants from RHAs and SCA) will have finished determining what kinds of features and functions should be present and available in any future provincial ERP system; issued an RFP to the marketplace looking for submissions from prospective vendors; finalized a shortlist of potential vendors; selected a preferred ERP vendor; and recommended a preferred vendor to senior level decision-makers for review and approval.

After senior healthcare leaders have approved an ERP vendor, contract negotiations between the health system and that chosen vendor will then get underway.

To date, the ERP project team has performed market research, learned about ERP consulting services and talked to other organizations that have been through ERP procurement. A series of requirement-gathering workshops took place throughout the summer. At these workshops, subject matter experts from across the province (who work in the fields of payroll, staff scheduling, benefits, finance, human resources, reporting and supply chain) identified various functional requirements needed in a future ERP system for the entire Saskatchewan health sector. The information gathered from these

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workshops was then used by the project team to help draft a Request for Strategic Partnership (RFSP) that was issued to pre-qualified vendors on October 1.

Later this fall, the project team will meet to assess the relative merits of each RFSP submission. Shortlisted candidates will then be given the opportunity to demonstrate the capabilities of their solutions. These demonstrations will help the project team select a preferred vendor. Their recommendation will then go before senior officials in the spring of 2015 for review and consideration.