



January 21, 2013

Colorectal Cancer Screening Program Launches in Sunrise Health Region

More than 95 per cent of the province now has access to colorectal cancer screening, as the program has now expanded to include Sunrise Health Region. Through the program, residents can be screened for colorectal cancer with an easy-to-use in-home test.

“Early detection offers the best outcomes for patients and their families,” Health Minister Dustin Duncan said. “As this screening program continues to expand, it demonstrates our commitment to strengthening cancer care and providing excellent care to all residents of the province.”

The Screening Program for Colorectal Cancer is a population-based screening program of the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency. It is estimated that the entire screening program will cost approximately \$3.5 million annually once it is available province wide.

Colorectal cancer is the second most commonly diagnosed cancer and the second leading cause of cancer deaths. However, the disease is over 90 per cent preventable and easily treated when found in the early stages.

“We have worked closely with the health regions to expand the Screening Program for Colorectal Cancer across the province, and we are already seeing positive results,” said Scott Livingstone, CEO of the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency. “Approximately 70 per cent of the individuals with an abnormal test have had cancer, advanced adenomas, adenomas or polyps detected. Detecting colorectal cancer in its earliest stages means less invasive treatment.”

The program uses a fecal immunochemical test (FIT), which looks for blood in the stool that is not visible to the naked eye. There are no dietary or medication restrictions, and only one sample is needed. The test kits are mailed or delivered to eligible residents aged 50-74. Once the in-home test is completed, the sample is mailed by the participant to the Provincial Laboratory for analysis in the supplied postage-paid envelope.

“The FIT is a simple test yet it has tremendous potential to save lives,” said Suann Laurent, President and CEO Sunrise Health Region. “Having seen the impact it has already had around the province, we are very pleased to now have this screening program available to residents within our region.”

The Screening Program for Colorectal Cancer is now available in 12 health regions and will be province wide by March of 2013. Since the program launched in September 2009, more than 130,000 residents have been invited to participate in the screening program.

In 2012, approximately 730 new cases of colorectal cancer were diagnosed in Saskatchewan and an estimated 280 died from the disease.

For information on the Screening Program for Colorectal Cancer or the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency visit www.saskcancer.ca.

- 30 -

For more information, contact:

Jennifer Anderson
Public Affairs
Saskatchewan Cancer Agency
Regina
Phone: (306) 791-2153

Tyler McMurchy
Communications Branch
Saskatchewan Health
Regina
Phone: (306) 787-4083

Sharon Tropin
Communications
Sunrise Health Region
(306) 786-0144