



HEALTH CARE NEWS

JULY 2010

HEALTH CARE AIDE PROGRAM AT CROCUS PLAINS THIS FALL

Graduating with a grade 12 diploma in hand is a great accomplishment but imagine graduating with dual certificates and stepping right into a job as a Health Care Aide. Thanks to a new partnership between the Brandon Regional Health Authority (RHA), the Brandon School Division, and Assiniboine Community College (ACC) this will be possible for Brandon high school students. Starting this September students in the three high schools will be able to take

the Comprehensive Health Care Aide program that will be offered at Crocus Plains High School. Students will then graduate with a high school diploma and a Comprehensive Health Care Aide certificate.

There are over 500 Health Care Aides (425 Health Care Aides and 90 Home Care Attendants) working for the Brandon RHA at various locations. Whether it's in the hospital, a long term care facility or Home Care the need for qualified people is ongoing. It is a constant challenge for the Brandon RHA to recruit Health Care Aides, so discussion began 2 years ago on how to make the Health Care Aide program more accessible. Ron Cruickshank, Vice-principal of Crocus Plains High School, thought it was a perfect fit as they were looking to expand their vocational programs.

"This would get some of our students who may otherwise not be able to afford to go onto

ACC to take these courses," says Cruickshank. "This program gives them the opportunity in high school to get their grade 12 diploma and a Health Care Aide certificate."

ACC offers this course at their Brandon and Dauphin campuses as well as two rotating sites per year. For the 2010/2011 year Crocus will be one of their rotating sites providing the curriculum and instructors. The Brandon School Division is covering the cost of tuition and books. Students enrolling will have to finish their grade 12 academic diploma in the first semester in addition to a couple of theory courses related to the Health Care Aide program. ACC Comprehensive Health Care Aide program coordinator Jodee Cobb-Adair says the second semester is strictly devoted to the ACC program.

"If the program is successful, and I have no doubt that it will be, it's a win-win situation for everybody," Cobb-Adair says.

"Not many high schools students can say they have their high school diploma and a college certificate."

For many of the graduates, the certificate will come in handy because the Brandon RHA interviews roughly 100 new Aides a year. Human Resources Manager Eileen Trott says participating in this joint partnership only made sense.

"We have offered practicum placements required of the course, as well as some equipment to use in the classroom like beds, wheelchairs, and night stands."

There are currently 12 students registered for the program. Whether you will work in a hospital, develop relationships with clients in long term care facilities or one on one as a Home Care Aide the options are varied. What is for sure is that you will be making a difference having the satisfaction of working in an environment to help assist with direct care.

Health Care News

Your feedback is encouraged and appreciated.

Please send feedback to:
Annette Wiebe, Communications Coordinator
Monica Truffyn, Communications Liaison

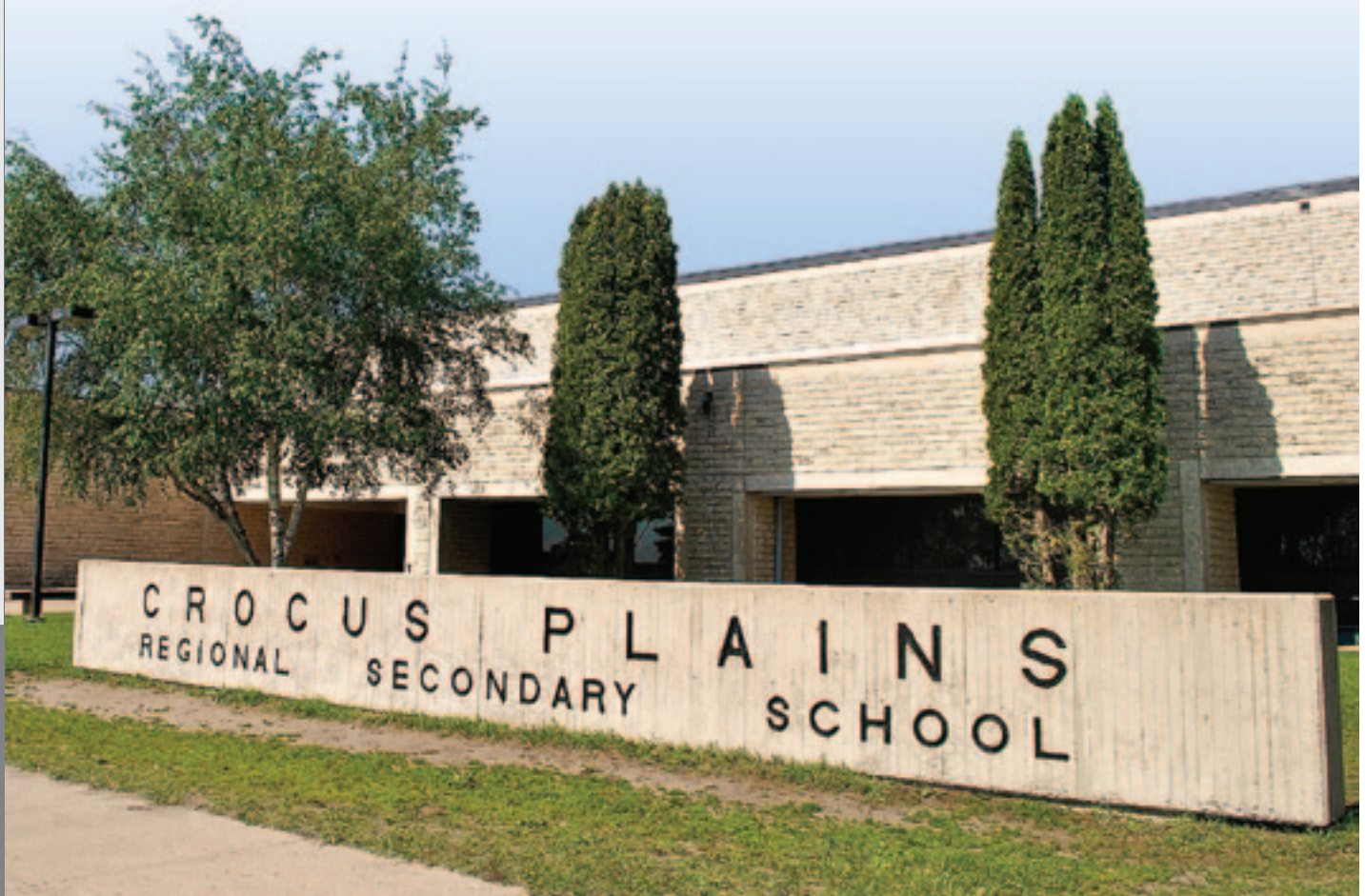
Brandon Regional Health Authority
150A - 7th Street
Brandon, MB R7A 7M2
Phone: (204)571-8410
Fax: (204) 726-8505
email: wiebeA@brandonrha.mb.ca
email: truffynM@brandonrha.mb.ca
www.brandonrha.mb.ca

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Have a comment or suggestion for the Brandon RHA?

Call the Comment Line at 578-2104 or 1-800-735-6596



An Air Quality Health Index for Brandon Helps Identify Health Risks

Brandonites, especially those with respiratory and cardiac problems will now be better able to manage their health, thanks to the introduction of the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) in Brandon. This additional health protection tool helps people understand how poor air quality can affect their health and provide information on how to manage it. Similar to the UV index, the AQHI will include Today, Tonight and Tomorrow forecasts online. Its launch date was June 3rd, a day after Canada's official Clean Air Day.

"The Government of Canada is pleased to support the expansion of the Air Quality Health Index across Canada," said Federal Health Minister Leona Aglukkaq. "With the addition of Brandon, the AQHI will now be available in 49 communities across the country."

The AQHI is measured on a color-coded scale ranging from 1-10+. The higher the number, the greater the health risk associated with air quality. The numbers are also grouped into risk categories – low, moderate, high and very high. These categories help you to quickly identify your level of risk.

Dr. Elise Weiss, Medical Officer of Health for Brandon and Assiniboine Regional Health Authorities says, "There is literature to support that there are some associated health

effects between air pollution and especially people with certain health conditions. While people in Brandon and surrounding area enjoy very good air quality, this is another tool to help them make decisions when it comes to their health."

Dr. Weiss says this may mean reducing or modifying your outdoor activity levels when the AQHI is above the low risk level. "The whole premise is for anybody, whether you have existing conditions like asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or not to help you be aware of what the current conditions or forecasted conditions are. Then people can make the right choices for themselves or their children depending on their health condition."

Whether or not individuals have a health condition that is worsened by air quality problems, they can still take action to reduce air pollution. According to the Canadian Lung Association, two common sources of pollutants are vehicle exhaust and wood smoke. Individuals can take action by reducing the amount they drive, or idle their vehicle, and by avoiding burning wood, whether in a wood stove or an open fire. These actions will help to protect people's health and the environment at the same time.

How does the AQHI work?

The AQHI is measured on a colour-coded scale from 1 to 10+ (shown below). The higher the number, the greater the health risk associated with local air quality. The AQHI numeric ratings (from 1 to 10+) are also grouped into risk categories (low, moderate, high, very high) that are designed to help you easily and quickly identify your level of risk.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	+
Risk: Low (1-3)			Moderate (4-6)			High (7-10)			Very High (Above 10)	

Each risk category is associated with specific health advice for those at risk (children, seniors, people with heart or lung conditions and diabetics) and the general population.

Health Risk	Air Quality Health Index	Health Messages	
		At Risk Population	General Population
Low	1 - 3	Enjoy your usual outdoor activities.	Ideal air quality for outdoor activities.
Moderate	4 - 6	Consider reducing or rescheduling strenuous activities outdoors if you are experiencing symptoms.	No need to modify your usual outdoor activities unless you experience symptoms such as coughing and throat irritation.
High	7 - 10	Reduce or reschedule strenuous activities outdoors. Children and the elderly should also take it easy.	Consider reducing or rescheduling strenuous activities outdoors if you experience symptoms such as coughing and throat irritation.
Very High	Above 10	Avoid strenuous activities outdoors. Children and the elderly should also avoid outdoor physical exertion.	Reduce or reschedule strenuous activities outdoors, especially if you experience symptoms such as coughing and throat irritation.

Source: Manitoba Conservation

For more information on AQHI and Air Pollution visit the following websites:
<http://www.ec.gc.ca/cas-aqhi/default.asp?lang=En&n=CBOADB16-1>
<http://www.gov.mb.ca/conservation/pollutionprevention/airquality/aq-health/>
http://www.lung.ca/protect-protegez/pollution-pollution/outdoor-exterior/index_e.php

Music to My Ears

They say music can soothe your soul, and that healing occurs when the whole person-body, mind and spirit is engaged. That is the premise behind the Music to my Ears program. Musicians play on-site at hospitals creating a soothing healing environment for patients, families and staff. And now Manitoba Artists in Healthcare (MAH) brings the healing art of music to the Brandon RHA for the first time.

Harpist Ann Germani has been playing at the Brandon Regional Health Centre since the fall of 2009. This is the first time the project has been tried outside of Winnipeg. Every Friday she divides her time between the Chemotherapy unit, Dialysis and other areas. She talks about the power of music and the harp, "It has that soothing aspect to it, research has shown that it can alleviate tension and bring heart rates down, so you don't have that same stress level."

Brenda Huebert is a nurse in the Cancer Program; she says the response has been positive and hopes this program will continue once they move into the new Western Manitoba Cancer Center, "It would be nice because there will be more space and areas where musicians can play."



Pictured above is Harpist Ann Germani, playing some soft melodies for patients in the chemotherapy unit of the hospital.

Ann Germani hopes the program will play on. She says she loves the opportunity to play for people and if it can help them in anyway it makes it even more fulfilling. "It really is delightful, people have approached me after I play and say how much they appreciate having live music."

The program was created for Cancer Care Manitoba and they along with MAH have provided start up

funding for this one year trial which costs around five thousand dollars. They also interview and screen the musicians, and work with them so they are comfortable on site. Once this trial period is complete the program will be evaluated. MAH is a registered charity and you can learn more about them by visiting their website at www.mahmanitoba.ca or phone: 204 999-0057.

PUBLIC HEALTH SPRING/SUMMER REMINDERS

Manitoba public health officials are encouraging Manitobans to take advantage of spring and summer by enjoying outdoor activities, increasing physical activity and eating healthy.

However, spring and summer outdoor activities can increase the risk of exposure to some infectious diseases such as West Nile virus, Lyme disease, E. coli infections, rabies, hantavirus and blastomycosis. Manitobans are also reminded to properly prepare for the heat and exposure to the sun's rays.

Manitobans can take precautions to reduce these risks by:

- preparing for West Nile virus season by reducing standing water around their homes;
- taking precautions to avoid contact with blacklegged (deer) ticks to reduce their risk of Lyme disease;
- taking proper food-handling precautions and test wells regularly to reduce food- and water-borne infections;
- vaccinating pets and avoid handling wildlife to reduce the risk of rabies;
- avoiding exposure to mouse droppings to reduce the risk of hantavirus infections;
- being aware of the risk for exposure to blastomycosis from fungal spores found in soil in the risk areas;
- wearing a broad-brimmed hat and appropriate clothing to protect from the sun, along with sunscreen, especially between the hours of 11:00 am and 4:00 pm; and
- recognizing situations where heat-related illnesses may occur and taking steps to protect yourself and others.

More information about these health issues is available online at www.manitoba.ca

Source: Manitoba Health

Brandon RHA Completes Comprehensive Health Assessment

The Brandon Regional Health Authority (Brandon RHA) has completed its extensive 2009 Community Health Assessment (CHA). The CHA describes the health, health needs and strengths of the Brandon population. The information gathered will be used as a tool to determine future health priorities within the Region.

"This document is integral to planning appropriate health programs and services for the community to meet the needs of the people we serve," says Nancy McPherson, Population Health Planner/Analyst and Coordinator of the CHA. "The report is structured to provide easy access to information by age grouping whether it is children and youth, adults or seniors. There is also a chapter that gives an overview of the region in terms of demographics, and the

description of the health system."

The CHA is an ongoing process with the last report completed in 2004. Information from that report has led to several new initiatives in the region such as the Crocus Plains High School Early Learning Centre, Brandon Community Language Centre, and Healthy Brandon; a chronic disease prevention initiative.

The CHA process identifies new learnings for the organization. "For example, an ER chart review conducted as part of the 2009 CHA has identified accidental falls as the primary reason for injury related visits to our emergency room by all age groups," McPherson says. "It's this type of information that greatly assists in helping us develop effective prevention intervention."

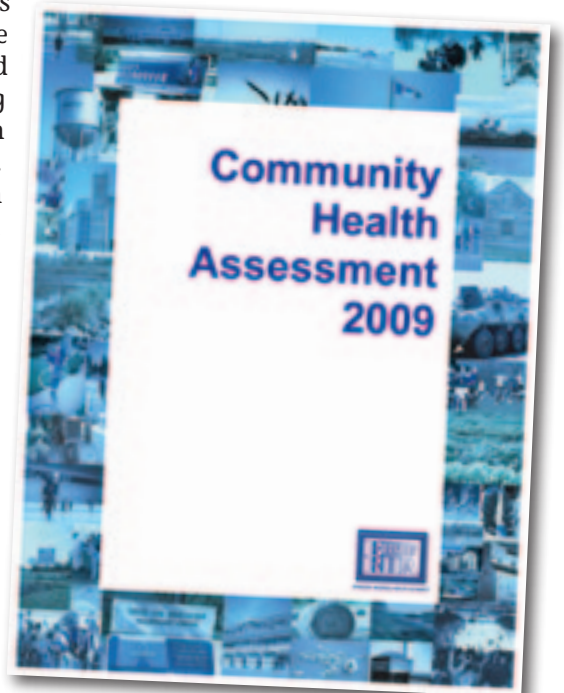
The next edition of Health Care News will be dedicated to the 2009 Community Health Assessment. It

will provide highlights of findings at the district levels. A range of strengths and challenges will be presented for the Brandon region overall and by specific districts, including – Brandon Rural, Brandon Southeast, Brandon West, Brandon Southwest, Brandon North End, Brandon East, and Brandon Central.

For example, the health status indicator of low birth weight babies for the Brandon region is the same as the provincial average, however, the highest rate of low birth weight babies live in Brandon West.

Watch for the next edition of Health Care News to learn more about the health of our region and new programs and services already in

place as a result of Community Health Assessment findings.



THANK YOU!

The Brandon RHA and the BRHC Foundation thanks the following businesses and all volunteers who helped make Dudley's Ambulatory Surgical Hospital - DASH Tent a huge success.

Because of their support this fun and educational event was FREE to the children and their families!



Canada Moving
Canada Safeway
Coca - Cola Bottling Ltd.
CUPE Local 4242
Dietitians of Canada
Display Manitoba
Domino's Pizza
Healthy Child Manitoba

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Humpty's Family Restaurant
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94.7 Star FM
Novopharm
Paladin Security

Regent Custom Cresting
Reid Takvam – Tent Rental
Siemens
Staples
Super Thrifty Drugs
World of Water



**DASH Tent was held Sunday, June 6
in conjunction with the
Westman Dreams for Kids Country Fair!**



BRANDON REGIONAL HEALTH AUTHORITY



Employee Profile - Ann Sawers

With her Doppler machine and stethoscope in hand Ann Sawers is off to make another house call. She says in her line of work it's all about choices. A mother's choice of the type of care they want during their pregnancy and if they would like to have their baby at home or in the hospital. That is the type of guidance Ann Sawers provides as the senior midwife with the Brandon Regional Health Authority (RHA) Midwifery Services. She has worked for the RHA for 21 years. Before immigrating to Canada from Scotland Ann was a nurse and Midwife in her native country. When she first came to Canada she lived and worked in Flin Flon. Moving to Brandon she worked as an RN alongside a few nurses who were also midwives. It was from that

small group they started the Nurses Midwife Association of Manitoba. They helped push through regulating midwifery in this Province. Since then Ann has worked tirelessly in this area of care and was hired to get the Midwifery program off the ground for the Brandon RHA in 2001. She oversaw the eventual move of the program into its current site on Princess Avenue.

The demand for midwives has grown and Ann believes it's because the mother has more options. "When we first meet our clients we tell them about the philosophy of midwifery and the importance of informed choice. We ensure they know they can refuse something without repercussions, and we make sure they are well informed to make those choices."



Jodie Gompf with her baby Spencer is shown here with midwife Ann Sawers.

Even though Ann Sawers is semi-retired you can still find her busy helping families in Brandon and surrounding area. "It is so nice to see this wonderful change in couples, going

from individual to a family. They are so happy about the changes, the enjoyment and wonder of their new babies," says Ann. "The beauty of watching a woman in labor, realizing that they did this,

they brought their child into the world, it makes them feel strong and empowered."

Midwives are health professionals who have extensive training and must be certified in the Province they are working. Here in Brandon they have the same privileges a general practitioner has in the hospital. Sawers says it's important they keep up with the latest in research because they are the ones solely responsible for mom and baby. And even though she is pleased with how the practice has grown, her one wish would be to see an out of hospital birthing place where moms could come home within a few hours or the next day. A dream she hopes will come true before she totally retires.

Mayor's Volunteer Service Awards 2010



From Left to Right; Sharleen Gunston, Mayor Dave Burgess, Marlene Brichon (President), and Sheila Atkinson - Members of the BRHC Auxiliary accepting the Mayor's Volunteer Service Award.

The Brandon Regional Health Centre (BRHC) Auxiliary was awarded the Mayor's Volunteer Service Award under the Health Category for an organization. The awards ceremony which recognizes the contributions of individuals and organizations and their commitment to volunteerism took place at City Hall on May 5th.

The Auxiliary raises money through the Brandon Regional Health Centre Gift Shop, the Nearly New Shop and a percentage from the Tim Horton's coffee shop. Marlene Brichon is President of the BRHC Auxiliary and says it's nice to be recognized for the work they do. "The Auxiliary board works hard and plays an important fundraising role. The money comes in from the Nearly New Shop and Gift Shop and it's the Auxiliary that see that everything runs smoothly, keeps track of the money and with guidance from

the Brandon Regional Health Authority decides what good we can do with the money raised. I think the Auxiliary is the glue that keeps everything together."

The Brandon and area community benefits from the efforts of the Auxiliary through the purchase of equipment for the hospital and supports projects that are in the best interest of patient care.

Brichon says the Auxiliary is not huge in numbers but is strong. The board meets once every two months and she says they are always looking for interested people to join. You can leave your name with Volunteers Services at the BRHC, the Gift Shop or the Nearly New Shop.

Also nominated for their individual volunteer efforts was Jim Beedie who helps out at Fairview Home and Joan Buckley for her work at Rideau Park Personal Care Home.

Congratulations to Everyone!

Volunteer Profile - Lynda Wood



We begin our new feature honoring the many volunteers that help at the various locations throughout the Brandon Regional Health Authority.

Meet Lynda Wood, for the past 23 years she has been volunteering at Fairview Home. Lynda helps out four times a week. During her days at Fairview you can find her delivering mail and papers to the residents as well as taking them from one place to another. She also assists the recreational staff with their different programs.

"My grandmother was in a manor in Portage and I enjoyed helping her and doing things for her" says Lynda.

Susan Boisvert is the Volunteer Coordinator at Fairview and says if it wasn't for the volunteers many of their programs wouldn't be possible.

"From our live music on Saturday afternoons, our pub night or assisting our recreation staff with bingo, knitting or our hymn sing, it's the volunteers who make a difference in the resident's lives."

Susan says Lynda knows almost every resident in the building and is such a friendly face to have around. She says even the families of the residents know her and call her by name.

Lynda says she enjoys working with older people and seeing how much they enjoy having her around.

"It's very satisfying, I get a lot of enjoyment out of it and it puts a smile on people's faces."

Planning to Travel?



Travel Health Clinic at the Town Centre

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Call 571-8469 for questions or to make an appointment

Fee for services and vaccines. Prices are subject to change without notice.