



# Primary Health Care

## SW1 Newsletter—Breathing Is Life

**Primary Health Care Nurse** 306-882-2672  
x.2208

The Primary Health Care (PHC) Nurse plays a significant role in Chronic Disease management by providing education, system navigation and guidance to patients and their families to ensure seamless coordinated care. The services provided include Cardiac education and post-surgical support, Stroke education and Pulmonary/lung health management e.g. **COPD**.

The PHC Nurse organizes the **Collaborative Health Management Team (CHMT)** which is an interdisciplinary group of health providers delivering team-based care to improve health outcomes for clients. The team may include home care, therapies, diabetes nurse educators, mental health & addictions specialists, dietitians, and palliative care. The CHMT focuses on supporting the complex needs of clients.

**CHMT programs are available in the Kindersley, Rosetown and Biggar Health centers.**

**Exercise Therapist** 306-460-9660

The Exercise Therapist (ET) helps individuals manage their chronic conditions or reduce the risk of chronic diseases occurring. They conduct fitness tests and assessments, and design, develop and deliver rehabilitative exercise programs in the community and in health-related settings. The types of chronic conditions include heart diseases, lung diseases such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), diabetes, hypertension, obesity, dyslipidemia, and osteoarthritis.

ETs create **personalized exercise programs** aimed at improving or maintaining health. These programs may involve aerobic, strength, and flexibility exercises, designed to gradually increase an individual's physical activity levels in a safe manner.

ETs also help individuals recovering from musculoskeletal injuries (e.g., from accidents, work-related injuries, or sports-related issues) by providing rehabilitation programs designed to restore physical function and mobility.

ETs support and organize **community-based exercise programs** aimed at improving overall population health.

- **Pathway to Wellness (Kindersley)**
- **Walk this Way (Rosetown)**
- **Breathe Easy programs (Kindersley, Biggar, and Rosetown), focusing on lung health and rehabilitation.**

The Saskatchewan Health Authority works in the spirit of truth and reconciliation, acknowledging Saskatchewan as the traditional territory of First Nations and Métis People.



### Message from Public Health & Medical Health Officer Dr. Tabien

"Submitted by Public Health Inspector Dustin Kagan for Dr. H Tabien MHO"

#### Pest Control: featuring Deer Mice & Hantavirus

When the temperature drops, pests like to find someplace warm to survive. Make sure this isn't your home!

The common pests found in Saskatchewan homes are bedbugs, cockroaches, crickets, and mice.

The number one way to ensure pests are not a problem in your home... **Clean and Organize!**

Pests travel to places with food, water, and safety. If you **deny their access** to eating, drinking, and a safe place to hide, they will go somewhere else.

- Seal all cracks or possible entry points.
  - \* Deer mice can squeeze in spaces the size of a dime.
  - \* Sealing with steel wool is effective as they cannot chew through it.
- Glue boards have been considered inhumane, live traps or snap traps are recommended.
- Place mousetraps flush against a wall.
- Store outdoor garbage tightly closed.
- Repair plumbing leaks.
- Do not place kitchen scraps on top of compost.
- Place bird feeders away from the house.
- Remove vegetation from around the foundation.
- Contact a pest control company.



**Deer mice are dangerous because their urine, saliva, and droppings may contain Hantavirus.**

Hantavirus infections are rare but serious. Between 1994 and 2023, 38 cases of Hantavirus pulmonary syndrome were reported in Saskatchewan; 13 of those cases were fatal.

This virus can cause severe illness and enters the body if dried droppings are inhaled, from bites, or if contaminated food is eaten. Inhalation can be caused by vacuuming or sweeping dried mouse droppings, as well as having poor ventilation in areas with deer mice activity.

*Image credit to Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife*



**Prenatal / Breastfeeding Classes** In-Person (also online)  
**Register: 306-882-2672 x. 3 option 3**

Available at: Biggar, Davidson, Kerrobert, Kindersley, Outlook, Rosetown, Unity



saskhealthauthority.ca

## Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)

COPD is a lung disease that makes it hard to breathe because air doesn't flow easily in & out of your lungs. There are two (2) types:

**Chronic bronchitis:** When the airways that carry air to the lungs (bronchial tubes) get inflamed and make a lot of mucus. This can narrow or block the airways, making it hard to breathe. It can also make you cough.

**Emphysema:** With this disease, the tiny air sacs in the lungs are damaged and lose their stretch. Less air gets in and out of the lungs, which makes you feel short of breath.

COPD can get worse over time. You can't undo the damage to your lungs, but you can take steps to prevent more damage and to feel better.

There are a number of resources available to you & your Health Care Provider, to diagnose and manage COPD.

**Here is a 5-step process to help guide you in the right direction:**

### Did you know?

COPD is the most common chronic medical condition leading to hospitalization in Canada.

Under-diagnosis of COPD is common - much higher than high blood pressure or high cholesterol.

**TOP 5**

reasons for  
hospital stays



1

Giving birth



2

COPD and  
bronchitis



3

Heart  
failure



4

Heart  
attack



5

Pneumonia

CIHI (Canadian Institute of Health Information), Hospital Stays in Canada, 2022-2023

### Prevention 1

COPD is almost always caused by smoking.

The best thing you can do to help **prevent** or **slow** the progression of COPD is to stop smoking.

There are many options to assist you. Please talk to your local healthcare provider.



### Targeted Screening 2

- Are you aged 40 or older?
- Are you currently a smoker or have you smoked in the past?
- Do you cough regularly?
- Do you cough up phlegm regularly?
- Do even simple chores make you short of breath?
- Do you wheeze when you exert yourself (exercise, go up stairs?)
- Do you get many colds and do your colds usually last longer than your friend's colds?



If you answered "yes" to any of the above questions, see your Doctor or Nurse Practitioner about getting a [Spirometry Test](#).

### Testing 3

The only way to truly diagnose COPD is with a Spirometry Test, a quick and easy test which measures:

- How well your lungs work
- Determine if you have lung problems
- Measure how serious a lung problem is

Spirometry is the only way to truly diagnose COPD. **Testing is now offered in Outlook, Kindersley, and Rosetown.**

### Diagnosis 4

Your Physician or Nurse Practitioner will provide your **diagnosis** of COPD or other lung impairment.



### Clinical Management 5

There are a number of ways that COPD can be managed.

1. **Smoking Cessation:** This is the # 1 way to help improve lung function and breathing with any lung impairment, not just COPD.
2. **Rehabilitation:** Please see the **Breathe Easy** information (right).
3. **Vaccinations:** Immunization against the flu and pneumonia will also help your long term health as both can have serious implications on your lung function.
4. **Medication Management:** Medication is an important part of your COPD treatment plan. Your Health Care Provider and your Pharmacist will help determine the right medication for you.
5. **Oxygen Therapy:** Saskatchewan residents may be eligible for the *SAIL Oxygen Therapy* program or for Oxygen Coverage under the Ministry of Health. For more information, contact 1-888-787-8996 and/or 306-787-7121.
6. **Self-Management:** Managing your COPD at home is critical in staying healthy and avoiding trips to the hospital.
7. **Advanced Shortness of Breath and Palliative Care:** Your healthcare professional can offer support & resources in later stages.

**For education or resources, please reach out to Primary Health Care RN at 306-882-2672 x.2208.**



### Breathe Easy Program Pulmonary Rehab

Offering Pulmonary Rehabilitation to adults and seniors through exercise and education, focusing on chronic lung conditions.

Clients learn:

- how to use their medicine properly
- how to cope with feeling such as fear, anger, or stress
- how to make healthy food choices
- why exercise is important

This includes exercise sessions containing:

- a warm-up and stretching
- breathing techniques
- muscle strengthening
- Walking



This program is free of charge. For more information, contact our Exercise Therapist:

**306-460-9660**

*Ask us about future locations, dates/times coming soon!*