

Provincial update on changes and cuts

Below you'll find a brief summary of the current status of major cuts and changes within the WRHA and the latest on changes likely coming to rural regions.

Rural update

While all indications are that the province is planning reorganization and consolidation in rural regions, to date the precise plans have not been revealed. In a meeting with MNU, Health Minister Kelvin Goertzen confirmed that regional proposals have been sent to the newly created Shared Health for review. Recently, Premier Brian Pallister also hinted that some rural hospitals may be closed or converted to personal care homes. We anticipate hearing more in the Spring of 2018.

The Minister also stated that the Western Manitoba Health Care Task Force, which has held a series of town halls discussing closures of emergency departments in several Prairie Mountain region communities, has no official standing with the Manitoba Health. The task force was initiated by a group of 9 municipalities in the region. Their recommendations will be provided to the minister as a suggestion.

WRHA update

Phase 1 of the WRHA's restructuring plan is almost complete.

Employment Security Processes are still ongoing at St. Boniface, HSC, Quick Care Clinics and in Home Care. Riverview, Grace, Victoria and Misericordia have completed the process.

In total, approximately 2000 nurses in the WRHA have received deletion notices to date. Most nurses have found new positions, but 57 did receive layoff notice and 36 remain laid off as of Dec 15.

Phase 2 of the WRHA's restructuring plan, primarily affecting Seven Oaks and Concordia, is expected to begin in the spring with an implementation date likely to be in early July. The implementation date will be dependent upon the opening of the new Grace Emergency Department.

Detailed updates for affected facilities and programs can be found below.

Both Manitoba Health and the WRHA continue to assure MNU that all nurses will have the opportunity to find new positions within the region, and we continue to make every effort to ensure that they honour their commitment.

Victoria

A total of 290 nurses received deletion notices. Following the selection, posting and bumping processes, 249 nurses were awarded new positions. Unfortunately, following implementation on October 20, 42 nurses were laid off. As of December 15, 23 remain on layoff.

Grace

A total of 280 nurses received deletion notices. Following the selection, posting and bumping processes, 276 nurses were awarded new positions. Unfortunately, following implementation on October 20, 4 nurses were laid off, and have not yet found new positions.

Misericordia

A total 12 nurses received deletion notices, all related to the urgent care centre closure. All affected nurses found new positions within the facility. The urgent care centre was closed on October 3.

St. Boniface

In total, 1027 nurses at St Boniface received deletion notices. Of those, 953 have been awarded new positions through the selection and posting process. Meetings to begin the bumping process for the remaining 74 nurses began on Friday December 8. The expected date of implementation for new rotations is January 12, 2018.

HSC

A total of 313 nurses received deletion notices. Of those, 289 have been awarded new positions through the selection and posting process. The bumping process for the remaining 24 nurses is ongoing. New rotations went into effect November 17.

Riverview

A total of 32 nurses received deletion notices. Of those, 20 were awarded new positions through the selection, posting and bumping processes. Unfortunately, as of implementation on November 30, 13 nurses are on layoff and 12 remain laid off.

Quick Care Clinics

A total of 26 nurses received deletion notices. The employment security process is ongoing. Quick Care clinics (with the exception of the McGregor Street location) are expected to close on January 2. Unfortunately, despite repeated requests, the WRHA has still not advised MNU of their precise plans to maintain services provided by NPs following the closures. In several recent meetings with WRHA representatives MNU President Sandi Mowat has been adamant that NPs need answers, and that a plan is long overdue. We hope that an announcement from the WRHA is imminent.

Mowat also sought and received a commitment from the Minister of Health that the important services Nurse Practitioners provide would not be lost with the closure of the clinics. The minister acknowledged NPs as a valuable asset to the health care system.

Home Care

A total of 283 nurses received deletion notices. Of those, 260 have been awarded new positions through the selection process. The posting process is now beginning for the remaining 23 nurses, with positions available. The expected date of implementation for new rotations is January 12, 2018.

Our commitment

MNU has been steadfast in opposing these disruptive changes and cuts to the health care system. Manitobans will have fewer options for treatment, and it's unclear how these changes will actually improve the quality of care.

We have consistently spoken out in the media about the harm being done. Our Put Patients First campaign, calling on government to reverse the cuts, has been successful in raising public awareness, and garnered 9,000 petition signatures. In April, more than 1000 nurses and supporters attended our rally against the cuts at the legislature. Last month, MNU's board of directors met with 40 MLAs to discuss nurses' concerns directly. We have also initiated a campaign to speak directly to our members about these concerns.

We will continue to speak out for patients and nurses at every opportunity, and we will make every effort to minimize the impact these cuts and changes have on our members.