

INTERSECTIONS



Land of living skies - Jeff Phillips, Manager of Operational Support Services, submitted this winning shot of the Saskatoon skyline to a staff photo contest.

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A word from our CEO Davin Church

Welcome to the second edition of eHealth *Intersections*, a quarterly newsletter sharing highlights of how eHealth supports accessible health care through technology and innovation.

As we head into fall, we’re sharing a wide range of stories about improving health care delivery and supporting those providing that care when and where it’s needed.

You’ll hear about how we contribute to long-term projects – for example, by updating the IT needed to add long-term care spaces, rolling out M365 or building platforms to collect and analyze data to build a “picture” of public health. Other stories focus on our reaction to more urgent situations, like a



consolidated ambulance dispatch system to quickly get emergency responders where they’re needed, or quick planning and co-ordination to ensure evacuees could access health care during the wildfire season.

We’re also taking a look inward this issue, delving into how providers use eHealth-supported tech to access health records and what a recent employee survey tells us about working at eHealth.

As always, our stories illustrate our ongoing commitment to putting patients first. We may not be right there in the ER, doctor’s office, ambulance or lab, but our technology and infrastructure is there for those who are.



Wildfire response: health care when and where it's needed

Helping the health system deliver care where it's needed is nothing new for eHealth. So when forest fires in the north forced thousands of Saskatchewan residents from their homes, we were quick to do our part to bring help wherever it was needed.

Temporary clinic, continuous care

In health care, staying connected saves time – and lives. A reliable, secure internet connection is the lifeline that ensures providers at any medical facility can access information needed to make quick and informed decisions. When the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA), Canadian Red Cross and City of Saskatoon set up a temporary health clinic at an evacuation site in Saskatoon, eHealth was there to build the network and set up laptops and printers to give health care providers their standard level of access to information.

"Evacuees needed access to care in the midst of a stressful and uncertain situation. eHealth stepped up to get the clinic connected and up and running within a few hours of the request," says Greg Ursel, eHealth's Program Manager for Major Capital Construction. "Things like re-filling prescriptions for someone who fled without their medication or treating sick and injured patients who need to see a doctor quickly – none of that happens without the technology you'd normally find in a hospital or doctor's office."

eHealth-supported technology allowed SHA employees to securely log in to the same systems they use every day to access medical records and clinical applications, keeping patient information private and protected. Though the facility was temporary, continuity of care was uninterrupted. Patients were registered and tracked, supporting communication with family, emergency services and support programs.

Have tech, will travel

SHA's wellness buses are outfitted by eHealth with technology to offer a wide variety of services, including basic health assessments, mental health support, and wound care. Evacuees staying in hotels in Saskatoon and Creighton residents returning to their homes were able to access on-the-spot care from wellness bus staff.

I don't have my health card...

The eHealth Registries team also ensured patients could access health care by expediting processes for people who required health cards urgently. Coverage letters (which include the same information as health cards) were emailed or sent the same day by mail. The letters provide assurance patients have coverage and can receive publicly-funded health services until their actual health card arrives – peace of mind in a stressful situation.

Coming together in a crisis

"Evacuees needed support on a number of fronts to ensure they could access health care even in the midst of the chaos," says Aaron Mula, eHealth's Vice President of Digital Services and Chief Information Officer. "I was proud to see our teams recognize the need and go above and beyond to bring health care to people when and where they need help."

EMS CAD project dispatches help more quickly

Ambulances can save lives with the help of specially trained personnel and advanced medical and technical equipment. But for that to happen, they need to be in the right place at the right time. A recent cross-agency collaboration is getting help where it's needed more quickly.

In the past, ambulances were dispatched via one of three separate dispatch systems. If the closest ambulance was on a different system than the one the dispatcher was using, that ambulance couldn't be sent to the emergency. The consolidation project combined the three dispatch systems into a single, integrated provincial system that lets operators send the closest available ambulance.



Several eHealth teams were part of an inter-organizational group awarded the Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency's President's Award for Teamwork for their outstanding work on the EMS CAD consolidation project. Pictured with SPSA President Marlo Pritchard (left), eHealth's Manager of Analytics Infrastructure Marnie Richard, Director of Field Operations South Jason Walz and Network Solution Architect Nakul Aloni accepted the award on behalf of the eHealth teams who contributed to the project.

Ready to respond

It all started with modernizing computer hardware to ready ambulances for new software, including supporting private ambulance providers with the procurement process. Ambulances need rugged yet compact devices to withstand a variety of road conditions without taking up too much space. At the same time, computer aided dispatch workstations were refreshed to support the change.

eHealth worked with the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) to test the new equipment before installing it in more than 65 ambulances in 12 locations ahead of the software rollout. eHealth teams developed and now host the reporting environment for ambulance services, which is configured to give access to other agencies such as Medavie and Parkland Ambulance Services. This allows for broader access to data for analysis and reporting.

With real-time tracking, the system identifies and dispatches the closest available unit, eliminating delays caused by transferred calls. Response time analytics help identify bottlenecks and opportunities for improvement. The consolidated system also ensures continued operations across the province if one Medical Communications Co-ordination Centre is down.

This initiative was a collaboration among eHealth, the SHA, the Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency (SPSA), the Ministry of Health, and Medavie and Parkland Ambulance Services. eHealth's Executive Director of Enterprise Business Services and Chief Digital Information Officer Darren Myles says the success of this project speaks to the power of cross-agency collaboration.

"When we work together toward a shared goal of improving essential public service, we make great things happen."

Upgrades were installed in 65+ ambulances in 12 locations:

- Regina
- Moosomin
- Whitewood
- Grenfell
- Indian Head
- Strasbourg
- Imperial
- Milestone
- Lestock
- Cupar
- Balcarres
- Fort Qu'Appelle

A look at eHealth's long term plans

eHealth's Strategic Roadmap was developed in collaboration with health system partners to outline the goals, initiatives and milestones we plan to achieve in the next five years.

The roadmap identifies four key focus areas. With a patient-first approach to everything we do, we'll make ongoing improvements like using technology to handle administrative work done by physicians, engaging with partner organizations to develop innovative approaches to everyday tasks, and building on existing partnerships to make a positive impact for patients and providers.



PATIENT ACCESS AND OUTCOMES

1 Year

Expand access to care and improve efficiency for patients and providers. Introduce a Patient Literacy Program.

Use technology to enable seamless patient and clinician access to information that improves outcomes and reduces wait times.

3-Year Picture

Clinical systems share information seamlessly. Reduce geographical barriers to care and reliance on faxing. Deploy tools to reduce administrative work for clinicians.

5-Year Vision

The health care system is fully connected with information flowing to applications at every point of care, leveraging technology to provide additional insights.



PARTNERSHIP AND INNOVATION

1 Year

Work with partners to set priorities, identify innovations, and launch pilots that prepare the health system for the future.

Transform delivery of care, collaborating with partners and frontline staff to spark new digital solutions.

3-Year Picture

Move successful pilots into implementation. Establish a provincial digital health research hub.

5-Year Vision

Saskatchewan is a leader in digital health transformation, driving innovation and partnerships that reshape health care.



SERVICE AVAILABILITY

1 Year

Reduce downtime for critical services with a critical infrastructure plan and mature cybersecurity and disaster recovery plans.

Build a secure, resilient technology infrastructure that supports future growth.

3-Year Picture

Connectivity within and across all health facilities supports clinical workflows. Mature cyber and infrastructure management programs enable reliable services.

5-Year Vision

Digital transformation is fully supported. Technology is not a barrier.



SERVICE EXCELLENCE AND CAPACITY MANAGEMENT

1 Year

Reduce the impact of technical issues on service delivery. Create visibility into health system capacity for more informed decisions.

Deliver consistent, high-quality digital health services; improve patient flow and citizen expectations.

3-Year Picture

Improve scheduling and workload distribution using data and technology.

5-Year Vision

Health system demand is monitored and resources allocated as appropriate in near real time. Automation is leveraged for IT incident resolution. Ongoing improvements are sustained.

Making the technology fit for long term care

Long term care (LTC) homes provide a sense of community for residents while meeting their ongoing and varied medical needs. In an effort to add more LTC beds, the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) sometimes acquires and retrofits privately owned personal care homes. The renovations and updates go beyond flooring and plumbing. They also need new technology – from the phones and paging systems staff rely on for communication, to nursing stations that provide touchpoints for instant and easy access to information that supports patient care.

Starting from scratch...

eHealth's Health Facility Services team works with the SHA to help retrofit existing buildings to meet their standards and needs for long term care. This includes recent work on Aspen Village in Emerald Park, which opened earlier this month.

"Because we're basically treating this like a new build from an IT perspective, it requires a full scope of installation," says Cara Riddell, Project Coordinator.

That means everything from creating a network from scratch, to adding wireless-connected workstations on wheels, to office basics like computers and printers.

"All of it has to be done within the existing design of the building," says Riddell. "Changing the size or shape of a room is rarely an option when retrofitting."

...while taking on different tech

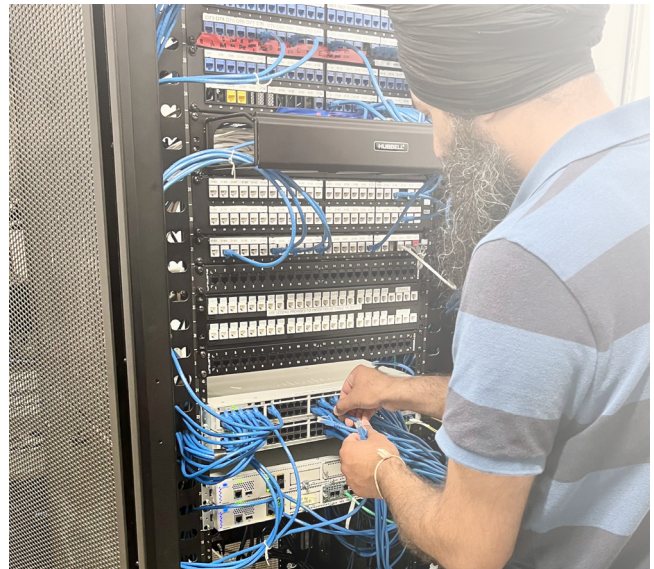
eHealth was able to use some of the existing technology at Aspen Village, such as video surveillance cameras and a high-tech paging system that's different than eHealth typically supports.

In this facility, the SHA is also trying to reduce reliance on fax machines. Because the bulk of faxes are pharmacy related, eHealth worked with the SHA to implement a digital pharmacy solution to manage prescriptions and medication, saving paper and time while delivering the right dose to the right person.

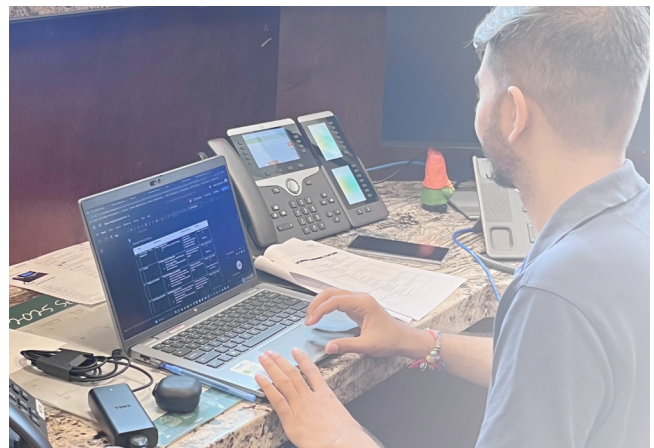
Collaboration gets the job done

The SHA, eHealth and on-site contractors collaborate closely on these projects to ensure deadlines are met. Each line of work contributes to the development of the overall schedule and these groups work together throughout the project to keep the schedule and tasks on track. As these retrofits become more common, names and faces are more familiar – and so is the task at hand.

"It's generally all the same people going from project to project. We've already all worked together, we already know the needs. It's second nature to say here's the list, here's all the items we need, here's the work that has to happen," says Riddell.



Organizing the network closet - the "brains" of the network.



Testing the new phone system.

eHealth employees committed to improving health care

eHealth set some ambitious plans with our new five-year Strategic Roadmap (see page 4 for an overview). Employees are engaged and understand the unique role they each have in achieving the long-term goals established with our health partners.

"We're keenly aware that providing and supporting the technology health care providers rely on every day has a real impact on patients," says Shauna Young, Vice President of Policy, Planning and Human Resources at eHealth. "At every level of the organization, we're proud of our contributions to the vision of connected and accessible health care for everyone."

eHealth employee engagement scores show that staff here are ready to meet the challenges of the road ahead.

"There's a clear link between engagement and business results," says Young. "With engagement levels rising, eHealth is well-positioned for the challenges our five-year roadmap lays out."

“At every level of the organization, we’re proud of our contributions to the vision of connected and accessible health care for everyone.”

-Shauna Young, Vice President of Policy, Planning and Human Resources

Survey scores increased across the board

The numbers from a recent staff survey tell a positive story:

- With a 92 per cent response rate, employee engagement improved by 9.5 per cent compared to two years ago.
- Overall scores now exceed industry standards when compared to similar organizations.
- Employees want to stay at eHealth, with 87 per cent saying they plan to be working here in a year.

Digging a bit deeper, it's clear that eHealth employees see how their individual efforts benefit and support patients and providers:

- The number of staff who agree that citizens and health system partners value our products and services increased by an impressive 30 per cent since two years ago.
- Staff agree their individual contributions are important for eHealth's success and that they're part of a team working together towards a shared goal (84 per cent for both statements).

Strong engagement = better outcomes

"As we build stronger partnerships within the health system, we're also focused on strengthening employee engagement and understanding of our long-term goals," says Young. "eHealth's mission is to transform health care using technology and innovation, and we all contribute to that no matter what our job title is. As we move forward in our roadmap, it's important our staff and partners can see the route we're taking and how they will help us get there. These scores show how we are stabilizing and building as an organization, for the betterment of the health system and patients."

Genomics project enables safer, more informed public health decisions

A project that began as a way to improve the collection and analysis of public health data related to COVID-19 has grown to become much more – a centralized and standardized data repository that supports automated reporting, combining data from multiple health sectors. This leads to more informed public health decisions and helps keep Saskatchewan citizens safer.

When the pandemic hit, there was a sudden, urgent need to analyze genomic data to help epidemiologists (scientists who investigate patterns and causes of disease and injury) track variants of the virus and support outbreak management. With help from the Saskatchewan Health Authority, Public Health and Ministry of Health, eHealth quickly assembled a system to meet this need, but it couldn't be automated or integrated with other systems at the time.

A picture of public health

The genomics project replaces this ad hoc system with a more robust, partially automated platform that combines genomic data with other health data to form a more complete picture of public health. Thanks to cross-organizational efforts, the system is more efficient, functional and scalable to help manage viruses and other public health risks. To date, it's been used by teams at the Roy Romanow Provincial Laboratory. This new system allows for faster identification of emerging health threats. Improved co-ordination among health care providers and public health teams reduces duplication and ensures data

What is genomic data?

Genomic data in this case refers to useful information found within a virus's genetic code that helps researchers and clinicians learn more about how viruses affect our health.

is used effectively. This all helps protect the public with:

- more accurate reporting on infectious disease trends
- quicker public health actions and decisions to respond to risks identified – for example, with vaccination programs or public awareness campaigns

The project is now in its second phase, which will incorporate data from a broader range of provincial public health labs, covering additional specialty areas like enterics (gastrointestinal) and vaccines for preventable viruses.

eHR Viewer provides easy access to records

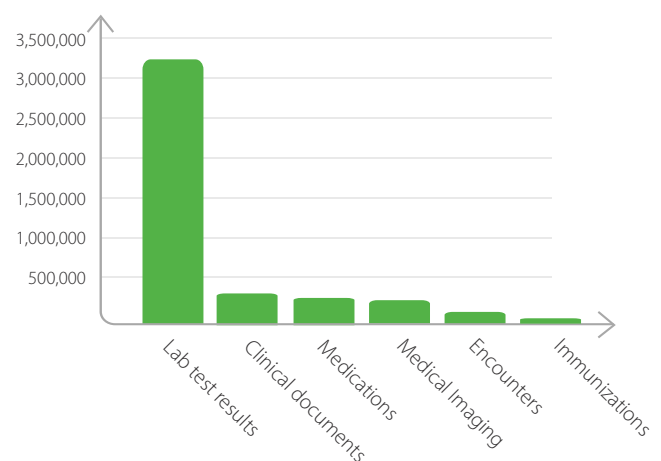
The provincial Electronic Health Record (eHR) Viewer gives authorized health care providers access to patients' health information, no matter where care is delivered in Saskatchewan. It complements other available health care information and reduces the need for duplicate lab testing or medical imaging.

This:

- frees up time providers spend on administrative tasks, leaving more time for care
- provides a comprehensive view of a patient's medical history
- shortens wait times for diagnostics
- reduces costs

Most viewed content

eHR Viewer



By the numbers

For the month of July 2025:

- 234,121 unique patient records accessed
- 13,675 active users

Modernization enables productivity

Improvements include moving 45,000 mailboxes

eHealth's M365 project team continues to make strong progress in collaboration with the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) in driving the transition from legacy technologies to modern Microsoft 365 cloud solutions. The transition to this modern technology for the health system is part of a larger strategy of implementing capabilities to reduce administrative burdens, allowing front line health care staff to spend more time on patient care.

Keeping the technology everyone in the health sector uses in their everyday work updated and well-supported minimizes downtime or service disruptions and ensures they can count on email, collaboration tools and other applications to work as needed.

-Curtis Becker, Director of Collaboration and Client Services

Already 95 per cent of Microsoft Office client upgrades across the SHA are complete. The project team is focused on the targeted completion of the transition in early October. "This is an important milestone, as it allows us to support upcoming cloud-based mail migrations and to ensure we meet Microsoft's end-of-life deadline next month," said Curtis Becker, Director, Collaboration and Client Services at eHealth.

Following the Office upgrades, the team has been rapidly migrating mailboxes for Saskatoon and Regina-based users. Over 45,000 user mailboxes – or 97% of all mailboxes – have already moved. They've also migrated 491 sites to SharePoint Online since July 21, improving accessibility, collaboration, and long-term sustainability of information across the health system.

"We've significantly strengthened our security and better aligned ourselves with our Strategic Roadmap," Becker says. "Keeping the technology everyone in the health sector uses in their everyday work updated and well-supported minimizes downtime or service disruptions and ensures they can count on email, collaboration tools and other applications to work as needed."

We're on the move!



Bringing teams together

eHealth has signed a lease for office space in Regina. Plans are under way for our move to the Canada Life building at 1901 Scarth Street, which will bring teams currently spread over three downtown locations under one roof. We'll keep health system partners and Saskatchewan residents updated about when we're moving and where they can find us. And we're committed to maintaining service levels while we transition to our new space.



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