



Assiniboia Union Hospital Temporary Service Disruption Key Messages

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- On May 2, 2022, the Assiniboia Union Hospital (AUH) reduced Emergency Department services between the hours of 7 p.m. and 7 a.m. to accommodate staffing shortages.
- Assiniboia Union Hospital is experiencing significant staffing challenges because of unfilled vacancies due to employees bidding on other positions, maternity leave, retirements, resignations and sick leaves.
- The SHA is committed to restoring 24/7 services to the emergency department in the community of Assiniboia as soon as we can address the human resource challenges we are currently facing and will continue to update residents as information becomes available.
- The shortage in Assiniboia is no different than the shortage for licensed professionals faced across the province.
- The SHA is working on a number of strategies to address the disruption to emergency department services in an effort to provide reliable, sustainable, and safe access to emergency care to those who need it. This includes short and long-term strategies to ensure safe predictable care to our patients. Short-term solutions include engaging Contract Nursing support and enhancing Provider access. Long-term solutions involve matching the right services to the right provider, diversifying our staffing mix, and managing both recruitment and retention of our health care providers.
- Between Jan. 1 and April 30, 2022, the Emergency Department has experienced 11 days of service disruptions.
- The temporary reduced hours of the emergency department will continue until we can enhance our staffing complement including nurses and lab staff to allow for 24/7 operation.
- There are 5 Registered Nurse and 4 Licensed Practical Nurse positions currently vacant at the hospital, that are a mix of permanent and temporary. This means 41 per cent of RN positions are vacant and 50 per cent of LPN positions are vacant.
- If someone is experiencing an emergency, they should always call 911 and they will receive guidance. As always, a disruption in services at any facility in the province can be found on our website.
- Note that EMS and primary health care services are not impacted by the disruption to emergency department services. Primary health care in Assiniboia continues to be available at the Red Coat Primary Health Care Clinic Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. – 12 noon, and 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.
- The hospital leadership is working with Hutch Ambulance Service in Assiniboia. Hutch Ambulance Service will not be transporting patients to the facility between the hours of 6 p.m. and 7 a.m. The service will stabilize patients and transport them to the next closest appropriate emergency department. In most cases, this will be St. Joseph's Hospital in Gravelbourg. Discussions have already occurred between the two hospitals in preparation. St. Joseph's Hospital in Gravelbourg is approximately 65 km from Assiniboia (40 minutes travel).

- Lisa Cairns has been appointed as interim Health Services Manager at AUH. She can be reached at 306-640-7054, or lisa.cairns@saskhealthauthority.ca.
- Patients who require a higher level of care will be transported to Moose Jaw or Weyburn as is currently the case.
- We recognize that this will increase travel time for ambulances and workload for Hutch Ambulance Service. Every effort will be made to limit the time patient's wait for services and spend travelling between facilities.
- EMS transport and the SHA will be assessing impacts and mitigating those impacts as they arise.