



Winnipeg Regional Health Authority
Office régional de la santé de Winnipeg



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Concordia Hospital Urgent Care Centre to open June 3, Seven Oaks Emergency Department to transition in September

May 29, 2019 – The emergency department at Concordia Hospital will become a 24/7 Urgent Care Centre on Monday, June 3, while similar changes remain on track at Seven Oaks General Hospital for September, the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority and Shared Health announced today.

The decision was based on clinical input from both organizations, as well as careful analysis of staffing resources that would be required to sustain the emergency department at Concordia beyond the beginning of June. These changes align with recommendations from Dr. David Peachey’s recent quality assurance assessment of the second phase of the Healing the Health System plan.

The urgent care centres will be appropriately staffed to treat patients arriving either via ambulance or on a walk-in basis for treatment of urgent, but non-life-threatening, health concerns. As with the transition of Victoria General Hospital’s emergency department to an Urgent Care centre in 2017, the change will be supported by safety protocols and contingencies that ensure an appropriate response to higher-acuity patients.

“Dr. Peachey’s review identified a number of challenges which clinical leadership from Shared Health and the WRHA have been addressing over the past few weeks,” said Dr. Brock Wright, chief executive officer, Shared Health. “Patients are, and will remain, the focus of our clinical planning work across the province. The revised timeline and sequencing of the WRHA’s plan are necessary and we are confident in our ability to ensure ongoing quality of care and patient safety.”

Going forward, Shared Health clinical leadership will be positioned to more actively monitor clinical changes throughout the province, including those in Winnipeg, to ensure the desired improvements are achieved and that a productive exchange of information amongst site leaders and clinical planners continues, Wright added.

Staff resources are in place to operate a fully functioning Urgent Care service at Concordia Hospital beginning on Monday. The Urgent Care centre will handle the urgent, same-day health needs of the residents of northeast Winnipeg and remain open to EMS arrivals. The centre will also support the hospital’s in-patient units, providing assessment, stabilization and code response.

Positive and productive discussions have already taken place with affected unions at Concordia Hospital to discuss the scope and impact of the new model on labour planning. Those discussions will continue in the coming days. Support and allied health staff who currently work in the Concordia emergency department will remain in place following the June 3 transition to Urgent Care. The hospital will be working with emergency nurses and union officials to collaboratively adjust schedules to ensure Urgent Care staffing is in place to support safe and quality patient care for the month of June, after which time the processes for permanent staffing will be implemented.

Wright and Cloutier reaffirmed their commitment to continuing to work toward the least disruptive and most equitable plan for impacted staff.

Additional physician and staffing resources will be made available to the emergency departments of St. Boniface Hospital, Grace Hospital and Health Sciences Centre Winnipeg in order to accommodate increased volumes and patient acuity at those sites.

“Above all else, we need to get these changes right for our community, our patients and our staff,” said Real Cloutier, president and CEO of the WRHA. “We are confident that these measures will achieve that goal.”

Evidence has shown the transition of community emergency departments to urgent care centres in jurisdictions including Calgary, Vancouver and Ottawa has been successful in improving wait times and patient care. Similar consolidation and concentration of resources were recommended in the 2017 *Provincial Clinical and Preventive Services Planning for Manitoba* report. Urgent care centres are ideally suited to treat the urgent, but non-life-threatening, health concerns of patients, ranging from broken bones, serious wounds and infections, to illnesses, rashes and fevers that cannot wait for an appointment with a primary care provider.

“Our data shows that an estimated 65 to 70% of the visits that the emergency departments at Concordia and Seven Oaks currently receive would be appropriate for an Urgent Care centre,” said Dr. Ainslie Mihalchuk, chief medical officer at Concordia Hospital, and the WRHA’s associate chief medical officer. “That being said, we also want the public to know that there is really no wrong door, as Urgent Care centres do have the capacity to stabilize patients and escalate to the appropriate level of care if necessary.”

For more information on the Provincial Clinical and Preventive Services Planning for Manitoba report, visit <https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/pcpsp.html>