

**November 21, 2013**  
**For immediate release**  
**All Manitoba Media**



### **Better COPD care also improves healthcare efficiency**

Seven Oaks General Hospital and its healthcare partners in the northwest sector of Winnipeg have been recognized with an Innovation Award for improving care and reducing the need for hospitalization of patients with a lung condition known as Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disorder. (COPD)

The award was presented in the partnership category by the Manitoba Patient Access Network (MPAN) and the George and Fay Yee Centre for Healthcare Innovation (CHI) at Manitoba's 2013 Health Innovations Conference.

It recognized a wildly successful COPD Integrated Care Pathway project, funded by MPAN, which demonstrated an effective model for standardizing care for better patient access and outcomes, and dramatic improvements in health system efficiency. The pathway ensured recommended care in hospital, in Emergency, in the family doctor's office and in the community, including education to better manage their condition and pulmonary rehabilitation at Wellness Institute.

This resulted in:

- Improved patient recognition of symptoms and self-management behaviour
- Reduced exacerbations or "lung attacks" and Emergency Department visits
- Reduced hospital admissions and re-admissions
- Dramatic reductions in length of stay

"We looked at models for improved COPD care in the UK and other jurisdictions to connect acute care, primary care and community care," said Seven Oaks Hospital Chief Medical Officer Dr. Ricardo Lobato de Faria. "By ensuring best practice care wherever the patient entered the pathway, we helped patients retain their activity level and independence, but we also improved our own processes and freed up beds in the hospital and Emergency to care for other sick people."

COPD refers to a group of chronic lung conditions such as asthma, bronchitis and emphysema that are chronic and characterized by permanent loss of lung function. COPD-related diagnoses are the most common reason for admission to a community hospital in Winnipeg, and the underlying cause of frequent Emergency Department visits across Canada.

Seven Oaks partners in the project included the Seven Oaks Health and Social Services Centre, several WRHA clinical programs, private family medicine clinics and Access Nor'West.

"This project showed the way for primary care physicians to manage their patients proactively, to engage patients in their own self-management and avoid the pain and disruption to their independence from repeat visits to hospitals," said Carmen Hemmersbach, Community Area Director for Seven Oaks and Inkster

The treatment protocols developed in the project have been implemented as permanent changes in the way care is delivered. The partners are in the process of disseminating the results and looking for ways to expand the program to serve more patients in the community.

"This project is a model for how various agencies in one sector of Winnipeg partnered together to integrate services and improve the experience and outcomes for patients and also dramatically reduced the cost of care," said Seven Oaks General Hospital President and Chief Operating Officer Carrie Solmundson.

**Media Contact: Toby Maloney, Public Relations Manager**  
**204-632-3341 or [tmaloney@sogh.mb.ca](mailto:tmaloney@sogh.mb.ca)**