



March 13, 2015

TO: Medical Health Officers, Saskatchewan

RE: Saskatchewan HIV Testing Policy Revision

The Ministry of Health is releasing the revised *Saskatchewan HIV Testing Policy*. The former Saskatchewan HIV Provincial Leadership Team (PLT) released the first version of the Routine HIV Testing Policy in January 2013, along with a number of resources to assist in implementation. Since that time, the HIV PLT and HIV Strategy Coordinators have been providing education and information on the policy to provincial stakeholders and health care providers. Feedback has been received and incorporated in the current revision. The revision incorporates updated information from the *HIV Screening and Testing Guide* published in 2014 by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) and the *HIV Testing Guidelines for the Province of British Columbia*. A copy of the revised policies and supporting documents can be found on the Ministry of Health's website at: <http://www.saskatchewan.ca/live/health-and-healthy-living/health-care-provider-resources/treatment-procedures-and-guidelines/blood-and-blood-borne-illness/hiv-information-for-health-care-providers#hiv-testing> or the Saskatchewan HIV Provincial Leadership Team website at: <http://www.skshiv.ca/routinehivtestkit.html>

The policy is an important component of routine medical care in our province as undiagnosed HIV infection represents a major public health challenge and is undermining HIV treatment and prevention in Canada. The policy and resources provide guidance to health care providers for consideration in providing optimal care to patients. Adopting this policy into your practice and health region is integral to reducing the number of people who are undiagnosed in our province, linking them to care and treatment, and subsequently, preventing HIV transmission. The policy was shared with the Senior Medical Officer Committee in October. We request that you disseminate and implement this policy with your Practitioner Advisory Committees, HIV Strategy Coordinators, Public Health Nurse Managers, and other relevant stakeholders in your region.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Saqib Shahab'.

Dr. Saqib Shahab
Chief Medical Health Officer

cc: Stakeholders

Medical Health Officers, Saskatchewan

Page 2

March 13, 2015

List of Stakeholders:

Population Health Branch c/o Donna Magnusson
Primary Health Services c/o Margaret Baker
Saskatchewan Disease Control Laboratory c/o Patrick O'Byrne
Senior Medical Officers c/o Dr Brian Laursen
Regional Health Authority Vice Presidents
Saskatchewan Medical Association
Saskatchewan Registered Nursing Association
HIV Transition Leadership Team
HIV Strategy Coordinators
Former HIV Provincial Leadership Team
Public Health Nurse Managers
Saskatchewan College of Physicians & Surgeons
HealthLine