

**Public Accounts
Ministry of Health
January 11, 2022
Requested Follow-up Information**

Monitoring Opioids Prescribing and Dispensing

- What is the number of individuals in the past calendar year who were prescribed opioids for pain management vs. addiction?
 - The number of clients on opioids for pain management in 2020-21 was 85,131.
 - The number of patients on opioids for addictions in 2020-21 was the following:
 - # of Methadone Clients = 3,534
 - # of Buprenorphine/Nalaxone Clients = 2,315
 - # of Buprenorphine Implant Clients = 19
 - # of Buprenorphine Long Acting Injection Clients (Sublocade®) = 80

(Hansard Verbatim Report No. 9, January 11, 2022, Page 79)

- What is the dollar value of prescribed opioids in Saskatchewan?
 - In 2020-21, the dollar value of prescribed opioids in Saskatchewan was \$10,198,476.09, of which \$7,959,580.28 was opioids and \$2,238,895.81 was Opioid Substitution Therapy (OAT).

Please note these numbers only include benefit data (claims adjudicated by the Drug Plan). Claims covered by Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board, Saskatchewan Government Insurance, Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB), Veterans Affairs, and Armed Forces were not included in the above totals.

(Hansard Verbatim Report No. 9, January 11, 2022, Page 82)

- If the Ministry funds 90% of the Prescription Review program – who funds the remaining 10%?
 - The College of Physicians & Surgeons of Saskatchewan (6%), the Saskatchewan College of Pharmacy Professionals (2%), the College of Dental Surgeons of Saskatchewan (2%), and the College of Registered Nurses of Saskatchewan (2%).

(Hansard Verbatim Report No. 9, January 11, 2022, Page 82)

Providing Special Needs Equipment for Persons with Disabilities

- Is there a set percentage of base funding that is allotted for equipment under the Saskatchewan Aids to Independent Living (SAIL) program?
 - We understand this question relates to the Ultralight Wheelchair Grant that is available through the Special Needs Equipment Program, and specifically what percentage the grant (\$2,500) covers in relation to an ultralight wheelchair.
 - The original grant amount was based on the average actual cost of an ultralight wheelchair provided through the Special Needs Equipment loan program. The grant should cover the full cost of a similar model ultralight wheelchair.

(Hansard Verbatim Report No. 9, January 11, 2022, Page 90)

- What is the status of the bulk purchasing of hospital beds? (pg. 210 of report)
 - Background: The Auditor's Report and in the 2021 Report, Volume 1 – it states: "The service provider reported to the Ministry that it planned to do a bulk purchase of hospital beds in early 2021 to help reduce the number of clients waiting for hospital beds."
 - SaskAbilities has confirmed that 40 hospital beds were ordered and received in early 2021 (20 in January, and 20 in February).

(Hansard Verbatim Report No. 9, January 11, 2022, Page 92)

Coordinating the Appropriate Provision of Helicopter Ambulance Services

- What is the current average cost to the Ministry of Health per STARS flight?
 - In 2020-21, the average cost to the Ministry of Health per STARS flight was \$14,957 (\$10.5M/702 flights).

(Hansard Verbatim Report No. 9, January 11, 2022, Page 96)

- What percentage of Regina and Saskatoon flights are initial trauma/emergency related vs, regular transfer to or from the hospital?
 - In 2020-21, 25% of STARS flights out of the Regina base were scene trauma/emergency and 75% were inter-facility transfer; whereas 35% of flights out of the Saskatoon base were scene trauma/emergency and 65% were inter-facility transfer.
 - Please note, the missions where STARS is deployed for inter-facility transfers between hospitals are critical care transports for patients who require urgent critical care transfers to a higher level of care. STARS is not used for non-urgent inter-facility transfers that can be provided by ground Emergency Medical Services.

2020-21	Regina base	%	Saskatoon base	%	Total	%
Scene call	85	25%	127	35%	212	30%
Inter-facility transfer	252	75%	238	65%	490	70%
Total	337		365		702	

(Hansard Verbatim Report No. 9, January 11, 2022, Page 96)

- What number of patient transfers were related to the pandemic?
 - Between April 1, 2020 and January 12, 2022, Saskatoon base has completed a total of 102 presumed or actual COVID related transports; and the Regina base has completed a total of 69 presumed or actual COVID related transports.

(Hansard Verbatim Report No. 9, January 11, 2022, Page 97)

Using Critical Incident Reporting to Improve Patient Safety

- What critical incident training has taken place since 2017?
 - The Ministry of Health Provincial Quality of Care Coordinators regularly provide support and informal coaching and education to Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) patient safety staff regarding critical incident reporting and reviews.
 - On an occasional basis, select SHA staff attend the Ministry critical incident review committee meetings to gain better understanding of the process.
 - The SHA is responsible for training their staff including patient safety staff who are involved in the critical incident reporting process.
 - Patient safety staff participate in onboarding for new hires, which includes the critical incident process. In addition, the Quality and Safety portfolio offers training on topics such as quality improvement, safety culture, team work, and patient and family centred care.
 - Patient safety staff participate in a community of practice which meets regularly to discuss operational matters, safety trends, and process improvement.
 - SHA weekly huddles are held with patient safety leads and the provincial Continuous Improvement lead and physician lead for patient safety.
 - In the fall of 2021, SHA and Ministry staff participated in a series of Patient Safety courses offered by the Institute of Health Improvement, including post course discussion groups.

(Hansard Verbatim Report No. 9, January 11, 2022, Page 105)