

# Energy for Change

# SASKATCHEWAN

# CHANGE DAY 2015!





## **‘We in Saskatchewan had to give this a try’**

**Foreword by Dr. Susan Shaw, Health Quality Council board chair**

It started with a tweet, spread across a country, and then around the world. Over the last three years, Change Day, a grassroots social movement started by the National Health Service (NHS) in England that asks everyone to contribute to collective change, has captured the imagination and possibilities of hundreds of thousands of health care providers and leaders across the globe, and the patients we all serve.

I knew when I first learned about the NHS Change Day in 2013 that we in Saskatchewan had to give this a try. Our province is filled with caring, innovative, and passionate people, but at times it might feel like you need to wait for permission to try something new. You don’t! We all have the power within ourselves to commit to making one small change. Together, many small changes will combine to create something big – a health care system that is energized and continuously improving!

I made my first Change Day pledge as part of the first NHS Change Day campaign; my pledge was to bring Change Day to our province. With the help of a small but committed team at the Health Quality Council, Saskatchewan Change Day was launched in 2014. The second Saskatchewan Change Day was held on Nov. 5, 2015. I’m really pleased to see how Change Day has continued to grow – not only in Saskatchewan, but around the world. We are part of a global community that includes England, Ireland, Australia, Finland, India, Sweden, and other countries, and, closer to home, the provinces of British Columbia and Alberta.

***Dr. Susan Shaw has been a driving force behind Saskatchewan Change Day***

This booklet is filled with just a small sample of the stories and photos of change agents across our province.

Be prepared to be inspired. It’s never too late to make your own personal pledge to make a change.

Try it, see what happens, and then try it again!



# Saskatchewan Change Day 2015:

## Second annual campaign encourages health care improvements

Dr. Mark Wahba is making a small change that could have a big impact on his patients. Wahba, an emergency physician who works in Saskatoon Health Region, made the following pledge for the second annual Saskatchewan Change Day campaign: “When I would like a patient to follow up with their family doctor after their ER visit, I’m going to call their doctor’s office and make the appointment for them.”

By doing that, Wahba hopes to shorten the amount of time a patient has to wait for an appointment with his or her family physician.

“After some Emergency Department visits, it is beneficial for people to follow up and be reassessed within a short timeframe,” he said.

“Unfortunately, I sometimes hear patients say, ‘It takes weeks to get in to see my family doctor.’ I wondered, ‘If I call and speak to their family physician or the receptionist, could we find a way to get them seen sooner?’

“Family physicians and primary care teams are the best providers when it comes to continuity of care. We sometimes see people return to the Emergency Department for problems that their family physicians would want to see, and probably should see. If I can help coordinate better follow up and continuity for the patient and their family physician, hopefully the patient will have a better outcome.”

Saskatchewan Change Day, a province-wide campaign organized by the Health Quality Council (HQC), is part of an exciting global movement aimed at making small health care improvements. The Change Day concept originated in the National Health Service in the United Kingdom and has since spread to countries around the world, including Sweden, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, India, Jordan, the Netherlands, Finland, Australia, New Zealand, Scotland, and Northern Ireland, and the provinces of Saskatchewan, B.C., and Alberta in Canada.

HQC organized Canada’s first Change Day in 2014. Saskatchewan Change Day was held again on Nov. 5, 2015, with the theme “Make Health Better Together.” Participants could pledge to do something to improve their own health, the health of their workplace, or the health of the patients, residents, or clients they serve.



*Emergency physician Dr. Mark Wahba made a Change Day pledge*

Anyone who provides health care, receives health care, or who cares about health care was encouraged to pledge to make a difference. A pledge is an idea for improvement that is meaningful to the pledger. People were asked to enter their pledges on the Saskatchewan Change Day website, [www.skchangeday.com](http://www.skchangeday.com), by Change Day on November 5, 2015.

The idea behind Change Day is that every individual has the power to make a change for the better – a concept Wahba supports. “I think all health care providers can look at what they are doing and find small ways to improve. We are all in this together, so we all need to look at what we can do differently,” said Wahba, who also works part-time at HQC as a physician consultant.

Dr. Susan Shaw, who practices critical care and anesthesiology in Saskatoon Health Region and who serves as HQC’s board chair, also pledged to make a positive change: She will sit down and be at eye level when talking with all of her patients and their family members. It may seem like a small action, but she’s hoping it will make a big difference for her patients and their families.

“This is a small but significant change in how most doctors talk with their patient in a hospital. It helps create a better sense of people being equal partners and participants within the conversation,” Shaw said.

“I really hope my patients will feel more at ease when speaking with me and know that I actually do want to hear from them. But I also hope that I will model a best practice to my colleagues and medical students, and then others will build this best practice into their work.”

Saskatchewan residents could find out more about Saskatchewan Change Day, or make a pledge, at [www.skchangeday.com](http://www.skchangeday.com). Saskatchewan Change Day 2015 also had an active social media presence, and could be followed on Twitter (@SKChangeDay).



@SKChangeDay

#SkChangeDay

## A sampling of Saskatchewan Change Day pledges

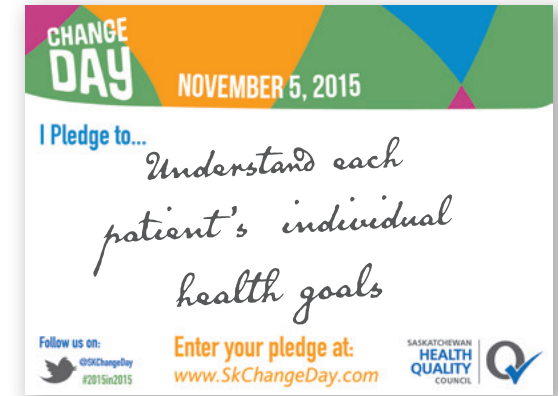
The 2015 Saskatchewan Change Day theme was “Make Health Better Together.” Participants could pledge to do something to improve their own health, the health of their workplace, or the health of the patients, residents, or clients they serve.

Participants were also welcome to make more than one pledge. In total, more than 1,430 pledges were received during the second annual Saskatchewan Change Day campaign.

**Here are some examples of the inspiring pledges from the campaign:**

### Improving the health of patients, clients, or residents:

- Have meaningful conversations with future clients and try my best to understand their personal barriers to health care.
- Always remember the importance of having empathy for patients and their families.
- Review all the patient’s medications on discharge.
- Speak directly to each client on how their day is going and if they have any concerns.
- Greet everyone as a person first, and a patient second.
- Provide patient-centred care by collaborating interprofessionally.
- Try to learn one fact about each of my patients (personal, medical, etc.) each time I speak to them, in order to build healthy relationships with the people in my community.



## Improving workplace health:

- Continue to promote workplace safety within my department and others.
- Say thank you to a colleague every day.
- Ask my staff daily how we can improve our processes.
- Make sure my colleagues and all people I encounter feel valued and heard in all of my interactions.
- Promote the flu shot and encourage others to get it to protect those who cannot.
- Learn more about my co-workers and what they excel at, so we can work better as a team.
- Come to work on time with a smile on my face.
- Bring a healthier alternative on work-related food events.





### Improving personal health:

- As a patient, I commit to being an active partner in my care by asking questions of my health care providers that ensure they are providing care “with me,” not “to me.”
- Step away from my desk and take a walk every day.
- Nourish my body by eating more organic, fresh produce daily.
- Increase daily physical activity – commute by bicycle to work, and go for a daily walk.
- Take better care of myself by getting enough sleep.
- Run a marathon again – last did one 24 years ago (got “too busy”).
- Eat a balanced, nutritious breakfast every day.
- Take the stairs in all of our facilities instead of the elevator.

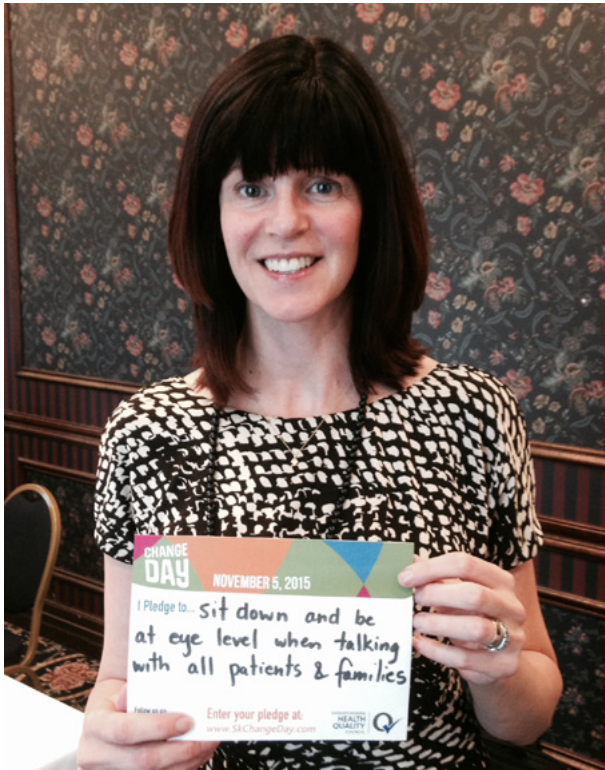


# Change Day pledge stories

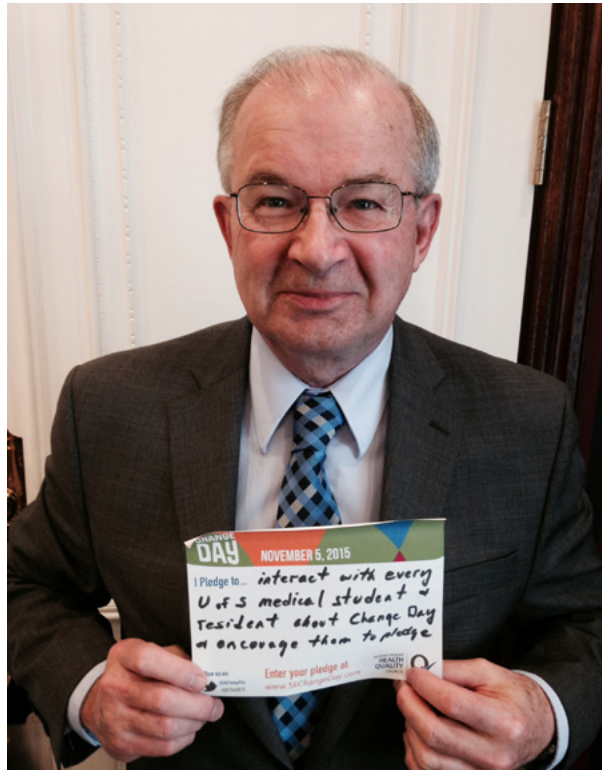
## HQC board members, CEO make pledges

Members of the Health Quality Council's board, and the organization's CEO, made pledges for Saskatchewan Change Day 2015.

Here are some of their pledges:



**HQC board chair Dr. Susan Shaw**, who practices critical care and anesthesiology in Saskatoon Health Region, pledged to “sit down and be at eye level when talking with all patients and families.”



**HQC board vice-chair Dr. Dennis Kendel**, who is also the CEO of saskdocs, pledged to “interact with every U of S medical student and resident about Change Day and encourage them to pledge.”

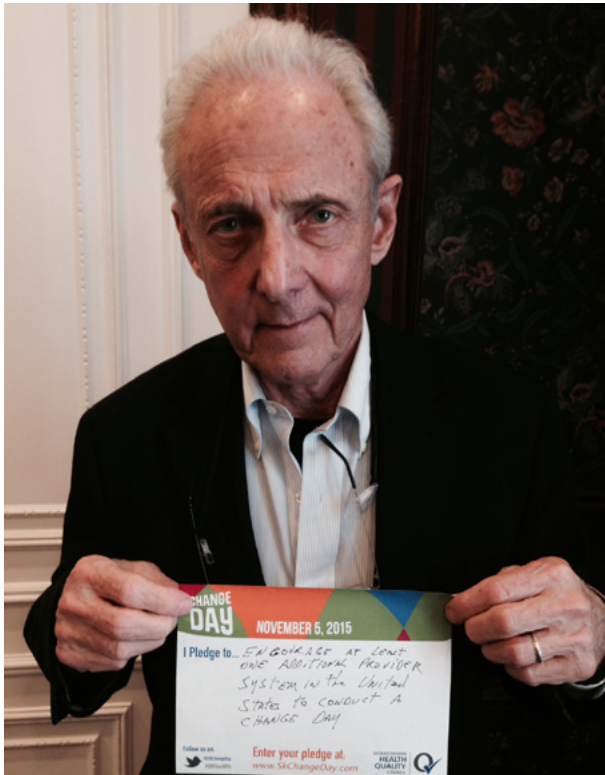


**HQC board member Dr. Werner Oberholzer**, who has a family practice at the Radville Marian Health Centre, pledged to “incorporate the Choosing Wisely campaign in the daily care delivery to patients.”



# CHANGE DAY

## NOVEMBER 5, 2015

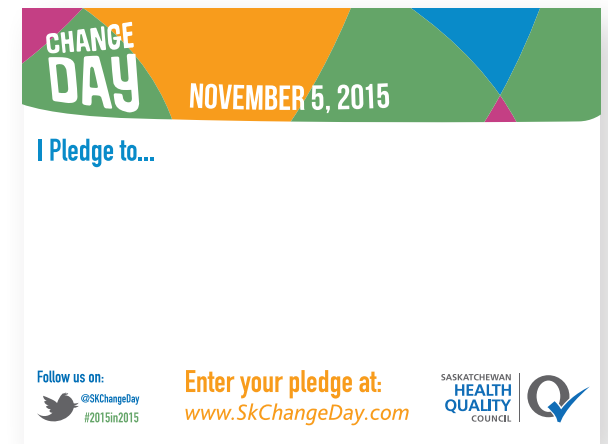


**International HQC board member Dan Fox** pledged to “encourage at least one additional provider system in the United States to conduct a Change Day.”



**HQC CEO Gary Teare made three pledges:**

- To become a regular volunteer at the Lighthouse shelter.
- Walk my two dogs every day that I'm home. This will do wonders for both them and me!
- Have lunch or coffee with each and every HQC employee at sometime between November and March. Too often there just isn't enough time in the work day to simply enjoy one's colleagues as people – not just co-workers.



## Rufus the dog visits residents at long-term care facility



*Rufus enjoys some treats during a visit to a long-term care facility*

Dog owner Tanya Verrall has seen how interacting with pets can improve someone's day and bring a smile to their face.

That's why she incorporated her dog, Rufus, into her pledge for the second annual Saskatchewan Change Day. Verrall pledged to brighten up visits with her aunt, who lives in a long-term care facility in Saskatoon, by bringing along her dog.

"Seeing dogs always makes her smile," said Verrall, who is the director of health system integration and networking at the Health Quality Council.

During a trip to visit her aunt, Irene, in the spring, Verrall brought Rufus with her. Her aunt happily fed Rufus treats, and some of the other residents at the long-term care facility also enjoyed interacting with the dog.

"My aunt had to stay in bed when I visited her, but I was also able to take Rufus down the hall to the TV room and visit with some of the other residents. It was a lot of fun. Rufus loved the attention, and we saw a lot of smiles," said Verrall.

"A few of the residents told us about the pets they used to have. I asked my aunt what it means to her to have Rufus come for a visit and she said, 'It means a lot. It's a warm feeling you get. It's good for your morale. It sparks memories of dogs and pets we (residents) used to have.' "

Verrall's aunt was also inspired to make a Change Day pledge of her own. The title of her pledge is "assisting my fellow residents in long-term care."

"I pledge to be the voice for those who cannot speak for themselves at the long-term care facility where I live," she wrote.

## HQC board vice-chair does headstands for Change Day

Dr. Dennis Kendel, the vice-chair of the Health Quality Council board and the CEO of saskdocs, decided to spread the word about Saskatchewan Change Day in a creative way.

Kendel did a headstand at the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association (SRNA) annual meeting in Saskatoon on May 6, 2015. A photo of the impressive feat was captured at the event and shared on social media to promote Change Day.

Kendel did the headstand to encourage people to pledge for Change Day and to spread this message:

“Change up, change down – just change!”

He repeated the feat two days later at the Saskatchewan Medical Association (SMA) representative assembly on May 8, 2015, to encourage doctors to pledge – and that headstand was also captured with a picture.

For more information about  
Saskatchewan Change Day visit:

[www.SkChangeDay.com](http://www.SkChangeDay.com)

[changeday@hqc.sk.ca](mailto:changeday@hqc.sk.ca)



*Dr. Dennis Kendel does a headstand as SRNA executive director Karen Eisler looks on*



*Dr. Dennis Kendel does a headstand alongside Saskatchewan Medical Association (SMA) CEO Bonnie Brossart (left) and past SMA president Dr. Dalibor Slavik*



## Saskatchewan nurses make group Change Day pledge

About 270 Saskatchewan nurses showed their support for the 2015 Change Day campaign by making a group pledge.

The nurses' pledge was entitled "Collaboration – RNs for a Winning Future."

They committed to "coming together as one voice to advance patient-centred care in the public interest."

The pledge was made on May 6, 2015, in Saskatoon as part of the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association (SRNA) annual meeting. At the meeting, the SRNA also challenged the Saskatchewan Medical Association (SMA) to pledge as part of "a battle of the AGMs." The SMA, which held its spring representative assembly in Saskatoon on May 8, accepted the challenge. Both groups generated many inspiring pledges among their members.

*Nurses show their support for Saskatchewan Change Day 2015*

## Saskatoon doctor pledges to bike to work with colleagues

Dr. John Dosman made a Change Day pledge that inspired others.

Dosman, who works at the Saskatoon Community Clinic, pledged to offer to bicycle to work with his co-workers “to get them confident enough to continue to use active transportation in their lives.”

“I chose this pledge because I’ve been a long-time advocate of cycling as a simple way to improve one’s mental and physical health. It also takes CO2-producing vehicles off the road and reduces traffic congestion,” said Dosman, adding that cycling also makes seeing patients easier at the city’s hospitals when traffic is heavy, bridges are closed, or vehicle parking is limited.

Dosman biked to work with his colleagues Dr. Leane Bettin and Dr. Erin Selzer, who work in family medicine obstetrics with him. He said they enjoyed their bike to work, and the trio even stopped at Royal University Hospital on the way to the downtown community clinic to see patients.

Dosman said he likes the Saskatchewan Change Day campaign, which encourages people to pledge to improve their personal health, the health of their workplace, or the health of the patients, residents, or clients they serve.

“Work in the health care field can be busy and challenging, and sometimes the focus can be so strongly on patient care, or even the negative or challenging things at work, that one loses sight of one’s own physical and mental health and the health of one’s workplace or one’s co-workers,” he said.

“I liked that Change Day is a good stimulus and reminder to take a step back and work on making sure we, and our colleagues, are as happy and healthy as possible so we can do a better job of caring for others and each other.”



*Cyclists Dr. John Dosman (right), Dr. Leane Bettin, and Dr. Erin Selzer hold Change Day pledge cards*

## Saskatoon Health Region CEO authors online Change Day pledge journal

Saskatoon Health Region President and CEO Dan Florizone's pledge for Saskatchewan Change Day was "to seek, listen to, and understand the individual experiences of 365 patients and their families in 2015."

As a result of that pledge, Florizone created an online journal – entitled Dan's Pledge Journal – that describes his conversations with patients and families. He has chatted with many patients and family members, including with a family that travelled from Regina for specialized pediatric inpatient services, a daughter who talked about the death of her mother, and a man who was waiting while his wife underwent diagnostic tests. One of those stories featured Pauline Galgan, a 96-year-old resident of Cudworth Nursing Home, who is pictured here with Florizone.

To read the online journal, visit [danspledge.wordpress.com](http://danspledge.wordpress.com).



*Saskatoon Health Region President and CEO Dan Florizone poses for a photo with Cudworth Nursing Home resident Pauline Galgan*

## Saskatchewan's health minister makes two Change Day pledges

The province's health minister made commitments to improve his personal health for the second annual Saskatchewan Change Day campaign.

Health Minister Dustin Duncan made two Change Day pledges during the Saskatchewan Medical Association's representative assembly in Saskatoon in May 2015. His pledges were to "eat healthy – no ice cream!" and to "take the stairs instead of the elevator at work."



*Health Minister Dustin Duncan (left) poses for a photo with HQC board chair Dr. Susan Shaw*

## SMA president pledges to increase social media use

Dr. Mark Brown plans to increase his use of social media to inform the public about important health care issues, both provincially and nationally. This commitment stems from his pledge for the second annual Saskatchewan Change Day campaign.

Brown, the president of the Saskatchewan Medical Association (SMA), made the pledge during the SMA's 2015 spring representative assembly held in Saskatoon in May. As part of his leadership role, one of his strategic goals is to improve communication "at all levels" with other doctors, health care workers, and patients. Brown said he was inspired by the Canadian Medical Association's use of social media, "so I felt it was time Saskatchewan stepped up, too."

"We can easily reach a wide audience and hopefully influence the public in a more meaningful and appropriate way – especially to reach Generations X and Y," said Brown, a family physician from Moose Jaw.

Brown, who is a strong proponent of quality improvement and collaborative care, is supportive of the Saskatchewan Change Day concept.

"I'm a believer in grassroots change and I feel this is the most successful way to make meaningful change possible," he said.



*Dr. Mark Brown is the president of the Saskatchewan Medical Association*

## Cypress Health Region CEO plants a garden for Change Day

Cypress Health Region CEO Beth Vachon made a Change Day pledge related to improving her personal health. Her pledge was to plant a large garden and a pumpkin patch, because “it’s good physical activity, and the bonus will be all the wonderful organic food through the summer.”

“I made this pledge because I spend hours working in my yard each summer. I grow lots of flowers and a few tomatoes. This year I decided that I would grow a vegetable garden also. I have two large corners of my backyard that I had intended to landscape – instead, one is now my garden and the other is my pumpkin patch,” she said.

“This pledge is important to me because not only is homegrown produce good for you, there is a sense of accomplishment when you prepare food straight from the earth to the table. I have three grandchildren and I want them to have the opportunity to see where food comes from, to spend time with me in the garden, and to enjoy what we harvest. When I was growing up, everyone had a vegetable garden, but that doesn’t seem to be so anymore.

“Is gardening becoming a lost art? Not in my backyard!”

Vachon, who is also a Health Quality Council board member, is supportive of the Saskatchewan Change Day concept.

“I chose to participate in Change Day because I believe small changes over time make the biggest difference,” she said.



*Cypress Health Region CEO Beth Vachon believes small changes can make a big difference*



## Prince Albert physician pledges to improve quality of care

Dr. Cecil Hammond is striving to improve the quality of care he provides to his patients.

That goal was the focus of his pledge for the second annual Saskatchewan Change Day campaign.

“I made this pledge so that I would strive to improve the quality of care I provide to my patients at the Prince Albert Medical Clinic. We have so much evidence-based clinical information out there that every day new advances in care, therapy, medicines, diagnostics, and resources are becoming available. Utilizing these resources, I am hoping to improve the quality of care I provide,” he said.

Hammond decided to make a Change Day pledge because he felt “it was the right thing to do” and “it was the right time to do it.”

He has been practicing medicine in Saskatchewan for several years and didn’t want to become complacent about the care he provides to the patients of this province.

“Every patient I see, I ask myself the question: ‘What would I want done if this was my mother, father, brother, or sister?’ ”

Hammond, who is originally from South Africa, moved to Saskatchewan in 2008. He previously served as senior medical officer in Keewatin Yatthe Health Region, and currently serves as senior medical officer in Prince Albert Parkland Health Region.

Hammond wants to provide the best care possible to his patients, and notes that he identifies “more strongly day by day” with the provincial logo of Putting Patients First – Better Health, Better Care, Better Value, Better Teams.

“If I can improve each day, I know the lives of my patients will get better each day,” he said.



*Prince Albert physician Dr. Cecil Hammond wants to provide the best care possible*

## Prairie North manager values patient- and family-centred care

Lisa Yushchyshyn wants to make sure that family members are included in patient care. For the second annual Saskatchewan Change Day, Yushchyshyn, the Manager of Women's Health at Lloydminster Hospital in Prairie North Health Region, pledged to "ensure patient and family friendly care is being provided on a daily basis."

"In my area, maternity, we are creating families and, as such, get to see miracles every day. However, sometimes I feel that in our need to get the nursing process completed on our timeline, we forget that this is a family," said Yushchyshyn, a registered nurse.

Patient- and Family-Centred Care (PFCC) is a philosophy based in respect, dignity, collaboration, information sharing, and meaningful participation. In 2014, a provincial PFCC strategy was finalized in Saskatchewan and a new governance structure was developed to support the strategy. The three-year strategy seeks to support health regions to increase the level of engagement of patients and families in their own care, in each organization, and across the province's health system.

Yushchyshyn said her Change Day pledge is meaningful to her. "I've had two children and have been blessed with multiple nieces and nephews in which my whole family arrived to celebrate the joy in. I've also lost my father and two children and have had my family rally around each other to get us through those times," she said. "Being included in the care and knowing how to navigate the 'system' is what made these situations easier. I know, however, that many families don't have that inner knowledge, but want to be able to help as much as they can. A health care system that pushes them away is never going to be successful."

Yushchyshyn said she participated in the Change Day campaign because she feels "it's important for everyone to keep our goals in mind." "I believe in education and in bettering ourselves. Ensuring we're always striving for that next step is what keeps us evolving," she said.



*Lisa Yushchyshyn is the Manager of Women's Health at Lloydminster Hospital in Prairie North Health Region*

## Nursing manager pledges to provide quality care every day

Ken Buchynski's Change Day pledge caused him to "stop and reflect on my nursing practice – why I am here and how I can make a difference in my patients' care."

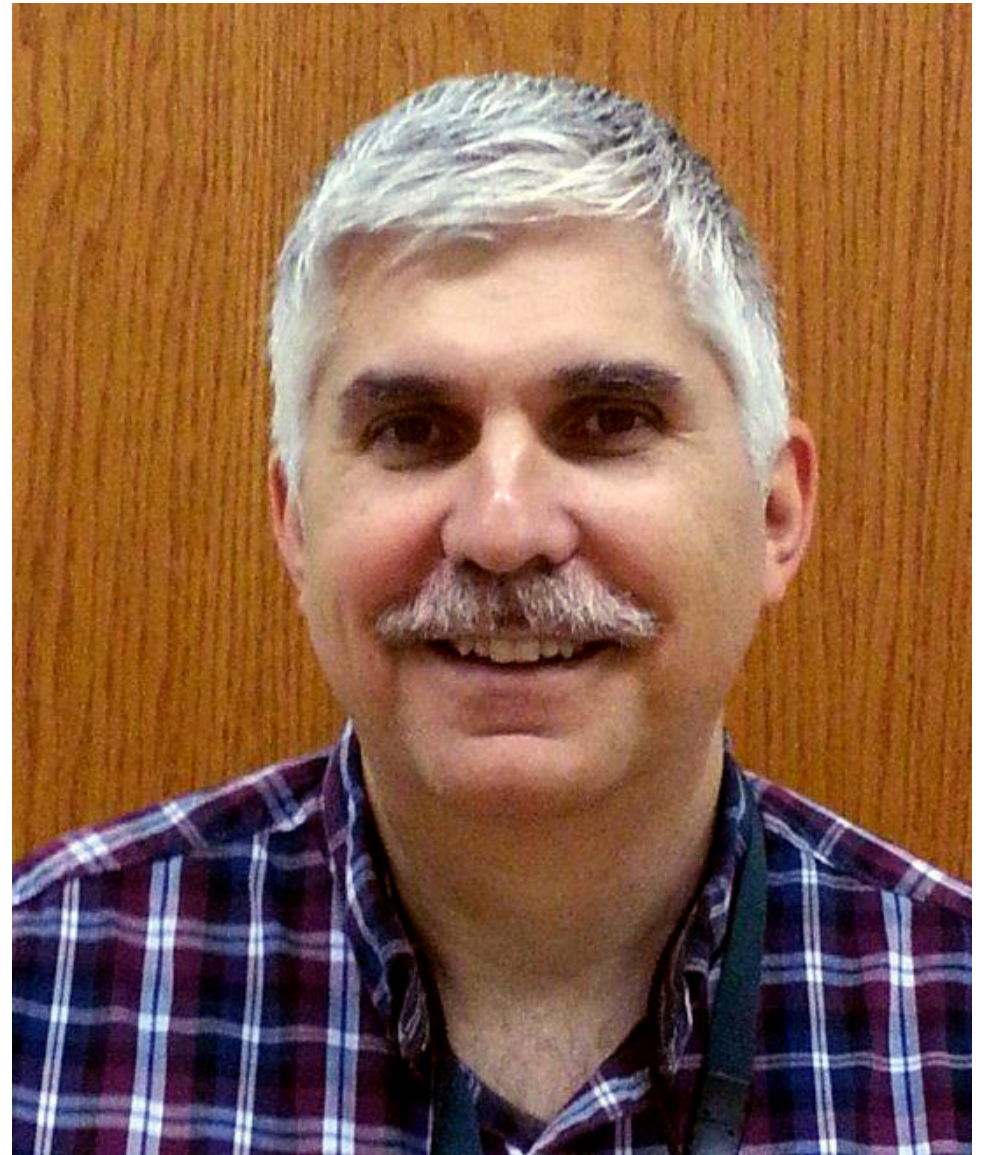
For the second annual Saskatchewan Change Day, Buchynski, a nursing manager working in Prairie North Health Region, pledged to be there for his patients and to provide quality care on a daily basis.

"It helps to remind me why I chose the nursing profession to begin with. As a nursing manager, I can make change that will be meaningful to the patients that we provide care to," he said.

Buchynski was happy to participate in the Saskatchewan Change Day campaign.

"I feel it is a time to reflect and be part of a campaign that will deliver awesome care to the patients we care for on a daily basis," he said.

"As well, I support this initiative because I believe everyone in the nursing profession should take the time to periodically reassess and reflect on their own practice."



*Ken Buchynski is a nursing manager working in Prairie North Health Region*

## Prairie North employee pledges to spread the word about Change Day

Chanel Johnston is supportive of the Saskatchewan Change Day campaign, and her pledge reflected that. Johnston pledged to talk to three people per week about Saskatchewan Change Day, which was celebrated on November 5, 2015.

“Since Change Day is a new initiative Saskatchewan has implemented, it needs to be spread to as many people as possible to sustain the momentum it has gained,” said Johnston, a Kaizen Promotion Office (KPO) Specialist in Prairie North Health Region.

“By talking to three people per week about Change Day, I hope to educate those who are not aware and want to jump on board,” she said.

Johnston sees Change Day as a natural extension of her work, which is focused on health system improvement. She said Change Day aligns with the kaizen concept of making continuous incremental changes.

“Through Change Day, we are practicing what we preach. I am a strong believer in walking the talk,” she said. “The more people that I can educate, and get them to make pledges, will add to the cause. Who knows? Maybe a pledge made by someone I have influenced may impact, in a positive manner, a patient’s or a staff member’s experience. You never know what happens regarding the ripple effect.

“The Change Day campaign is such a positive one, so how can you not jump on board? Making sure you are keeping true to your pledge – now that’s the challenge. I will challenge my fellow co-workers to ensure they are sticking to their pledge, which will keep me in check, too.”



*Chanel Johnston is a KPO Specialist in Prairie North Health Region*

## Prairie North employee pledges to support continuous improvement in health care

Dione Kardynal is committed to helping her colleagues continually improve the care that is provided in Prairie North Health Region.

Kardynal, a Kaizen Promotion Office (KPO) Specialist in North Battleford, made a Saskatchewan Change Day pledge to “visit the gembas that I have worked on in order to support the managers and staff to continue making things better for our patients, families, and staff.” The term “gemba” refers to the place where the work happens, such as on a hospital ward, in a long-term care facility, or in an office.

Kardynal’s job focuses on continuous improvement in health care. She assists managers and employees with improving the care that is provided to patients by using Lean tools such as Rapid Process Improvement Workshops (RPIWs) and the 5S process, which helps reclaim underutilized space in facilities.

“I made this pledge because it is a piece of my work I can do better. We make excellent improvements during RPIWs and 5S, but I worry that we then leave process owners and staff with lots of work to do afterwards without the support needed,” she said.

“I want to feel like I have done my best to support staff in the great improvements and want to keep the momentum and excitement going. The follow on work is what really makes the difference to staff and patients.”

Kardynal wanted to participate in the Change Day campaign and make a change for the better.

“I think it is important to continue to challenge myself as an employee for the health region and for my own growth,” she said.

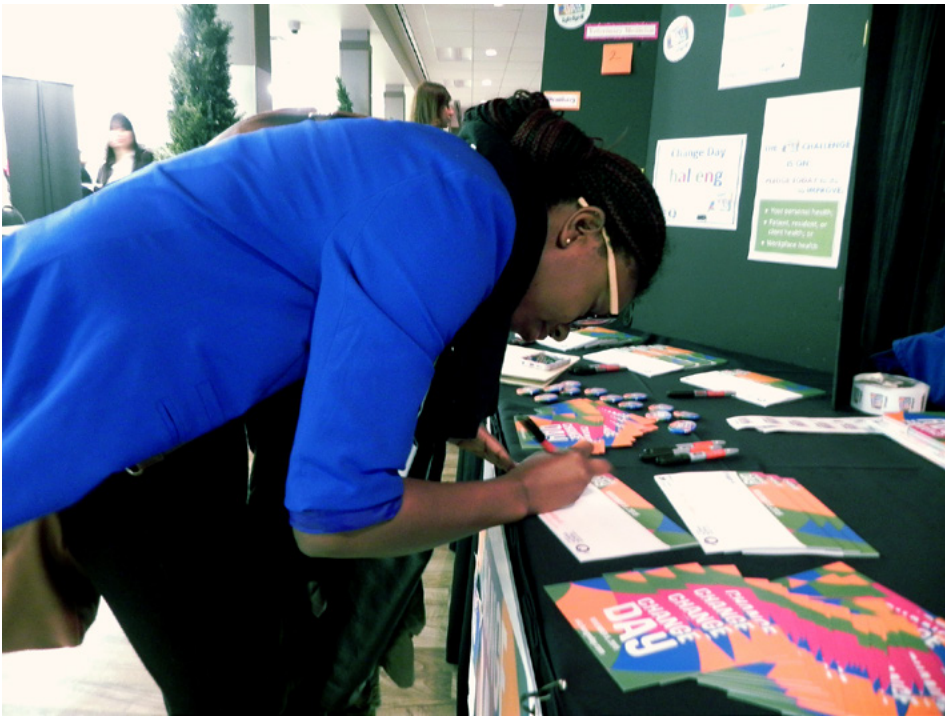


*Dione Kardynal is a KPO Specialist in  
Prairie North Health Region*

## Health sciences students make Saskatchewan Change Day pledges

Health sciences students showed their commitment to improving health and health care by making pledges for the second annual Saskatchewan Change Day.

The Inter-Professional Annual Student Symposium (I-PASS) was held in Saskatoon on Sept. 16, 2015. The event, organized by the Health Sciences Students' Association (HSSA-SK), attracted more than 600 first-year health sciences students, who were provided with early exposure to inter-professional education. The Health Quality Council (HQC) was a conference sponsor and hosted a Change Day exhibitor booth at I-PASS, where the students could make their pledges and have them posted to a pledge wall.



Oluwatosin Odeshi was one of the students that participated. The first-year student at the University of Saskatchewan's College of Medicine made a pledge related to her personal health by committing to spending "some quality time with friends and family every week."

"I think improving health is an important movement for all of us. Change Day gives us the opportunity to reflect on our personal health and health within our community," she said.

*Medicine student Oluwatosin Odeshi makes her Change Day pledge*



Susanna Kim, who is studying in the College of Dentistry, is another health sciences student who made a Change Day pledge.

Her pledge was also related to personal health, as she committed to taking “30 minutes each day to exercise or participate in a relaxation activity.”

She said she wanted to make the pledge so she would “stay mindful and motivated.”

**Dentistry student Susanna Kim holds up her Change Day pledge**



Meanwhile, Fiona Hooch-Antink, a student at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine, pledged to “always acknowledge the health, comfortability, and safety of my clients, owners, patients, co-workers, and myself.”

“I wanted to make a pledge to hold myself accountable to a simple task that I can do every single day,” she said.

**Veterinary medicine student Fiona Hooch-Antink holds up her Change Day pledge**

## 3sHealth employee pledges to walk 10,000 steps each day

Elyse Fisher made a Saskatchewan Change Day pledge that is dedicated to improving her personal health.

Fisher, a communications specialist at 3sHealth (Health Shared Services Saskatchewan), pledged to walk 10,000 steps a day.

“I always struggle to stay on track with exercise and proper diet,” she said.

“I used a gift card for my birthday to purchase a Fitbit. It tracks number of steps as well as your calorie count for the day. You can observe in real time how your day is going. So now I have no excuses – I know immediately if I am hitting my 10,000 steps a day. Making the pledge is just another way to keep me honest.”

Fisher said her pledge is meaningful to her because “staying healthy as I age is important in so many ways.”

“Aside from just making you feel better, it has long-term implications on my quality of life, my relationships with my spouse, children, and future grandchildren,” she said.



*Elyse Fisher is a communications specialist at 3sHealth*



## Regina physician makes hand hygiene pledge

Dr. Joy Dobson is committed to keeping her patients safe. For the second annual Saskatchewan Change Day campaign, Dobson pledged to wash her hands before and after every patient contact.

“Nosocomial infections are one of the biggest risks in hospitals. Patients are at their most vulnerable and we are often the vector for harm,” said Dobson, an anesthesiologist in Regina Qu’Appelle Health Region who also locums in Moose Jaw.

“I have a pretty reliable – but not perfect – routine of washing my hands after every case as I leave the room. That protects me as much as others. But I realized that even if I go directly to my next patient, that person didn’t see me wash my hands and know they are clean. I think the patient would feel safer if they see me cleanse my hands with Isagel as I enter the room to care for them.”

The 2015 Saskatchewan Change Day theme was “Make Health Better Together.” Participants could make a pledge to do something to improve their own health, the health of their workplace, or the health of the patients, residents, or clients they serve.

Dobson said she was inspired by “the power of everyone making a small change.” She first pledged in 2014, after hearing HQC board chair Dr. Susan Shaw speak about Change Day on CBC Radio.

“This year, I posted my pledge at 3sHealth after seeing their commitment to personal and citizen health,” Dobson said.



*Dr. Joy Dobson works in Regina Qu’Appelle Health Region*

## Laboratory manager pledges to spread the word about Change Day

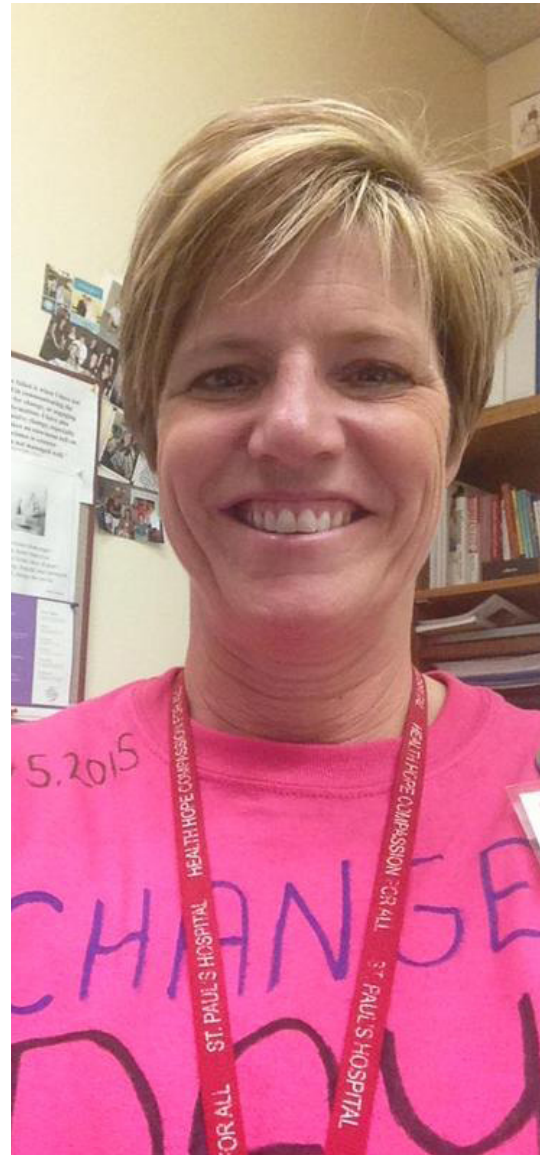
Lenore Howey became a “walking advertisement” for Saskatchewan Change Day.

Howey, a Saskatoon Health Region laboratory manager who works at St. Paul’s Hospital, pledged to spread the word about the second annual Change Day campaign and to empower others around her to make a pledge.

“I wanted to be involved in spreading the word on the meaning of Change Day. I am a true believer of continual improvement over time, and small changes make a long, sustainable change,” she said.

“Just imagine what would happen if we were all engaged to make the small changes required to make a large change.”

To help spread the word about the Saskatchewan Change Day campaign, Howey wore brightly coloured T-shirts to work that resembled the colours found in the Change Day logo. She wrote the Change Day website address – [www.skchangeday.com](http://www.skchangeday.com) – on the shirts, as well as the date that Change Day was celebrated across Saskatchewan (Nov. 5, 2015). Howey also encouraged staff members to get a bright shirt of their own and to display a Change Day pledge sticker on it, or to write out their pledge on the T-shirt once they entered it online on the Change Day website.



*Laboratory manager Lenore Howey wore her brightly coloured T-shirts to promote Change Day*

## Saskatoon Health Region employee pledges to help prevent infection

Ajinkya Khare wants to ensure he does not spread illness to others.

For the second annual Saskatchewan Change Day campaign, Khare pledged to carefully follow hand hygiene guidelines and to get his flu shot as soon as possible. He also pledged to eat healthy and exercise daily.

“A healthy body rarely acts as a carrier for infections – hence protecting our community,” said Khare, who works as a strategy and visual management specialist in Saskatoon Health Region.

“This pledge is meaningful to me as I have control over my own actions; I can measure them and ensure I follow through with what I say. I work in hospitals and places where there are immune-suppressed individuals. If I take care, they will be spared the agony of infections like the flu and common cold.”

Khare is supportive of the Change Day campaign because he believes it is “small changes which make a difference in the end.”

He heard about the campaign from a colleague, and thought it was a great idea.

“My pledge, I know, is a small step, but every cog working better helps the machine as a whole,” he said.



*Ajinkya Khare is a strategy and visual management specialist in Saskatoon Health Region*

## HQC employee makes two Change Day pledges

Shari Furniss, a Health Quality Council (HQC) employee, was so inspired by Saskatchewan Change Day that she made two pledges for the second annual campaign.

Her first pledge was to have a conversation with her parents about their wishes for end-of-life care.

“A while back, I read an article written by a woman who had founded The Conversation Project,” explained Furniss, the director of collaborative learning and development at HQC.

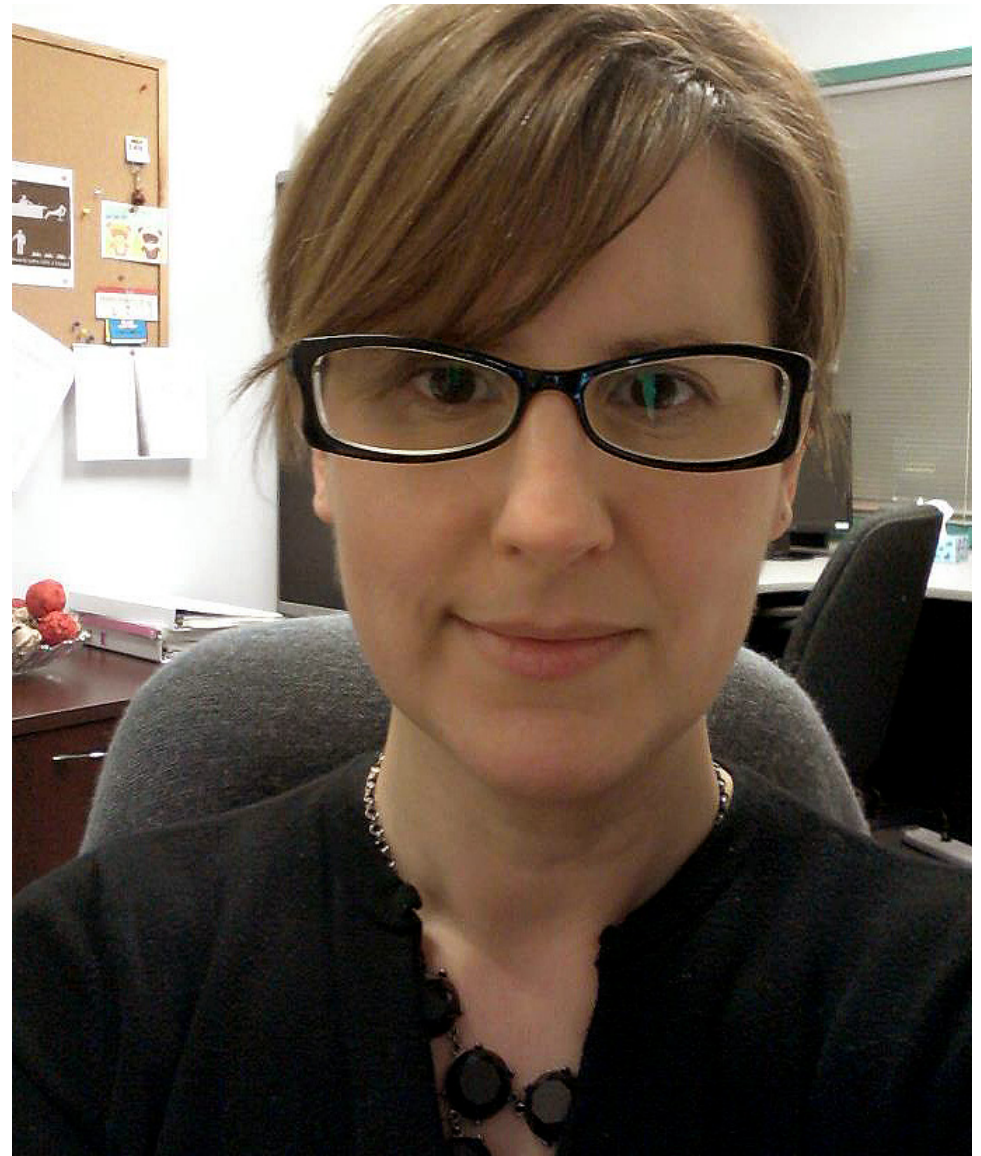
“When her mother became ill, she realized that she had talked to her about arrangements for after her death, but not about end-of-life care.

“She was then in the unfortunate situation of having to make these decisions in the middle of a crisis, without knowing what her mother wanted. In response, she created a starter kit to help families have ‘the conversation’ about end-of-life care.”

When Furniss had the conversation with her parents, she realized she had assumed her parents would want the same things that she would want. However, she found out that wasn’t always the case.

“One of the questions in the starter kit is whether at end of life you would rather be alone or surrounded by family. One of my parents was like, ‘Sure, the more the merrier,’ while the other said, basically, ‘I’m good on my own.’ I didn’t expect that,” she said.

“In all honesty, we don’t really know unless we ask – so ask. I hope



*Shari Furniss is the director of collaborative learning and development at HQC*

my pledge inspires other people to have the conversation. Can you imagine how much better our health care would be if families could work with providers to ensure the patients had the care they wanted, not the care we wanted to give them?”

Furniss created a video about her pledge, in which she notes 90 per cent of people say that talking with their loved ones about end-of-life care is important, but only 27 per cent have actually done it. She is grateful that The Conversation Project inspired her to have the conversation with her parents.

“I have two wonderful parents and I am blessed that they are still with us and enjoying relatively good health. But, as they near their 80s, I realized that this might not always be the case. I want to make sure that I know their wishes and am able to advocate for the kind of end-of-life care they want,” said Furniss.

“I chose this as my pledge because I knew it would force me to do it. I know this was the right thing to do, but honestly it was so hard to get started. I love my parents dearly – my mother is the sweetest person alive and my dad is my hero – so to even think about their end of life is hard. But, the reality is, we needed to talk about these things. We will not have forever, much as we may want to.”

Furniss’ second Change Day pledge was to participate in the Kindness Game – a concept she found on Facebook from one of the educational sites she follows. Furniss adapted the activity, which was designed for the classroom, into her second pledge, and committed to participating in the bingo-style Kindness Game in her workplace.

The Kindness Game encourages people to take part in various activities, such as smiling at 10 people, learning to say thank you in a new language, complimenting someone, sitting with a new person or a group of people at lunch, or giving someone a high five.

“The kindness bingo was a fun way of being more reflective on how I can relate to my colleagues on a human level, aside from the work. We’re all people, and connecting as people is important,” said Furniss.

As a result of the Kindness Game, Furniss has learned how to say thank you in Arabic and has been smiling at others.

“Change Day is a great way to get creative and pledge to do something you might not do otherwise. I enjoy the challenge of coming up with an interesting pledge,” she said.

## Medical students support Saskatchewan Change Day campaign

The Student Medical Society of Saskatchewan (SMSS) supported the second annual Change Day campaign by encouraging health sciences students to make a pledge.

The SMSS is the representative body for all students studying at the University of Saskatchewan (U of S) College of Medicine. On Oct. 26 and Oct. 27, 2015, SMSS representatives set up a Change Day booth in the U of S Health Sciences Building, where they encouraged medical students and other U of S health sciences students to make a pledge.

Medical student Jeffrey Poon, who serves as the SMSS VP External, pledged to make his patients feel comfortable and respected.

“I think the doctor-patient relationship is very important,” he said.

“I think it’s really important that patients feel they can trust their health care professionals and open up to them.”

Galilee Thompson, the SMSS VP Internal, pledged to “FIFE” every patient. This means she will ask her patients about their feelings, ideas, function, and expectations. Thompson said she chose that pledge because it will help “ensure that I continue to keep the human element in my interactions with patients.”

The SMSS worked with the Health Sciences Students’ Association to promote the Change Day pledge drive to health sciences students at the U of S. SMSS organizers said they wanted to promote interprofessionalism and collaboration between students from the various health sciences colleges. Students’ photos were taken at the Change Day booth, and those who had their photo taken with a student from another college had their names entered into a prize draw. Students were also encouraged to make the Change Day photos their social media profile pictures in celebration of Change Day on Nov. 5, 2015.



**Galilee Thompson (left) and Jeffrey Poon hold signs displaying their pledges**

## 3sHealth employee focuses on customer service

Employees at 3sHealth showed their support for the second annual Saskatchewan Change Day campaign by coming up with improvement ideas and making pledges.

Amanda Reimer, senior benefit services officer, and members of her team are committed to providing excellent customer service to the more than 42,000 3sHealth Employee Benefits Plan members.

For that reason, Reimer's Change Day pledge was to step in and take calls and assist the benefit service officers in other ways when needed so that the department can meet its customer service targets.

Reimer believes everyone provides better service if they are not feeling under pressure all the time.

"Some of the calls can be pretty complicated," she said.

"So, by offering to step in and answer calls, I am giving someone else a chance to reflect, have a more thoughtful work process, and connect with the purpose of our job. In the end, that provides better service to our customers."



*Amanda Reimer is a senior benefit services officer at 3sHealth*

## Pharmacist pledges to promote medication safety

Ray Joubert is committed to patient safety, and his Saskatchewan Change Day pledge reflected that.

Joubert, the registrar of the Saskatchewan College of Pharmacy Professionals, pledged to “take advantage of every opportunity to promote medication safety for all patients, and safe medication practices in the pharmacy.”

“More needs to be done to improve the ways in which medications are distributed and used as we learn more and more about the harm of unsafe medication practices,” he said.

The Saskatchewan College of Pharmacy Professionals is the self-governing body for the profession of pharmacy in the province.

Joubert said the organization is supporting an important initiative called COMPASS, or Community Pharmacists Advancing Safety in Saskatchewan.

“It is a continuous quality assurance pilot project for community pharmacies. Its main aims are to promote medication safety and safe medication practices,” he said.

“This pledge will help me focus on every opportunity to influence successful deployment of this project.”



*Ray Joubert is the registrar of the Saskatchewan College of Pharmacy Professionals*



## Nursing students encouraged to pledge for Change Day

After learning about Saskatchewan Change Day through Twitter, Dr. Janet McCabe decided to take action.

McCabe, an assistant professor at the University of Saskatchewan College of Nursing's Prince Albert campus, encouraged students in her NURS 200 class to make a pledge for the campaign. McCabe challenged the students to write a pledge based on the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association (SRNA) Standards and Competencies. She also encouraged them to connect their pledges to improving their own health, the health of their future patients, or the health of the health care system.

McCabe felt the decision to use Saskatchewan Change Day within the classroom context was a natural fit, as it "helped students to connect current class content to their future roles as student nurses and, ultimately, registered nurses in a meaningful way."

"It is important for nursing students to understand that, as nurses, we have an obligation to advocate for better health care, as well as to appreciate that healthy change can start with an individual and expand from there," she said.

McCabe said her students were interested in Change Day because the campaign "reaches out to everyone in Saskatchewan, making health care a responsibility of everyone – not just those in the system." McCabe said her colleagues were also excited about the campaign, noting it is a good way to involve students in grassroots-level change.

"The health care system is always in need of change, and is always changing. Sometimes we get too caught up in the day-to-day administration and budgets and forget that real people are being affected by the changes that we implement – whether that is the patient or the nurse," said McCabe.

"As professionals, we need to use every opportunity to advocate for effective, equitable health care for all individuals."



*Janet McCabe is an assistant professor at the University of Saskatchewan's College of Nursing*

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