



For Details, Contact:
Kevin O'Donovan
Public Relations Manager
Interlake RHA
1-204-467-4747



For Details, Contact:
Kathy McPhail
CEO
Regional Health Authority – Central Manitoba Inc.
1-204-248-7250

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Info Bulletin

Province's 84th Telehealth Site Launched in St. Laurent, Interlake Regional Health Authority (RHA)

St. Laurent MB – May 27, 2010: On May 27, 2010, the community of St. Laurent officially launched the 84th Telehealth site in the Province.

“The new Telehealth site in St. Laurent will help connect French-speaking patients with francophone health care providers, which is an incredibly important service,” said Theresa Oswald, Minister of Health. “Manitobans in this region will now be able to use Telehealth to access specialized medical expertise while they're close to home, and in the language with which they are most comfortable.”

RHA - Central Manitoba Inc. in partnership with South Eastman Health invited the Interlake RHA to take part in this project made possible through grant funding by Health Canada via the *Société santé en français* and the *Conseil communauté en santé du Manitoba*. Central CEO Kathy McPhail recognizes and acknowledges the support of MBTelehealth in facilitating the expansion of the St. Laurent site adding that these invaluable partnerships and those with the community have allowed many initiatives to move forward, creating increased opportunities and access to bilingual health services.

A project of MBTelehealth, *Projet Télésanté Manitoba (TSM)* uses information technology to link people to health-care expertise in other communities. A satellite or ground video link is used to connect specialists or other health-care providers to patients, who are able to see, hear and talk to each other on a television screen. There are over 100 clinical specialties that may be accessed using the MB Telehealth Network, including speech language pathology, dermatology, neurology and cardiology.

“Expansion of video-conferencing technology linking health-care providers to clients will ensure Interlake residents will get the care they need closer to home”, said Interlake CEO Kevin Beresford. “Linking people to health-care expertise at a distance reduces their travel time while increasing their access to specialized services and continuing education.”

Currently, there are 87 sites in 58 communities on the MBTelehealth Network with at least one site in each of Manitoba's regional health authorities and sites in First Nation communities. More information on MBTelehealth is available in the backgrounder below and via www.mbtelehealth.ca.

Province's 84th Telehealth Site Launched in St. Laurent, Interlake Regional Health Authority (RHA) – May 27, 2010

Backgrounder:

MBTelehealth uses information technology to link people to health-care expertise in other communities. A satellite or ground video link is used to connect specialists or other health-care providers to patients, who are able to see, hear and talk to each other on a television screen. There are over 100 clinical specialties that may be accessed using the MBTelehealth Network, including speech language pathology, dermatology, neurology and cardiology.

A project of MBTelehealth, *Projet Télésanté Manitoba (TSM)* was established by the Province of Manitoba in 2007 with implementation funding support from Canada Health Infoway. The project was in response to recognition that interactive videoconferencing is a useful tool for supporting existing Regional Health Authority initiatives to improve access to health care services in French to French-speaking residents of Manitoba and to support the French-speaking clinicians. The project was a collaborative effort between MBTelehealth, RHAs, Canada Health Infoway and Manitoba Health. The project locations also complemented proposed practice locations for the Francophone Family Residency Program developed by the University of Manitoba. At that time, seven Francophone communities were identified for implementation as Télésanté sites:

- Centre de Santé, St. Boniface (WRHA)
- St. Claude (RHA Central)
- Notre Dame de Lourdes (RHA Central)
- Ste. Anne/Centre Médical Seine (SE-RHA)
- St. Jean Baptiste (RHA Central)
- Swan Lake (RHA Central)
- St Pierre Jolys (RHA Central)

An additional site launched in La Broquerie followed shortly thereafter and greatly enhanced French language health services delivery in South Eastman Health.

In 2009, funded by Health Canada via the *Société santé en français* and the *Conseil communauté en santé du Manitoba*¹, the Regional Health Authority – Central Manitoba Inc. was awarded grant funding to develop a project to use information and communication technology to further develop bilingual/francophone professional health care and social services and to provide tools for clients and the community to support them in assuming responsibility for their health. Among many project deliverables which formed part of this provincial initiative was the establishment of a Telehealth site in St. Laurent.

More information on MBTelehealth is available at: www.mbtelehealth.ca.

¹ The *Conseil communauté en santé du Manitoba (CCS)* assumes a leadership and coordination role in fostering access to quality French language services in the health and social services sectors. Specifically, the mandate of the CCS is to:

- develop and promote the Franco-Manitoban community's vision regarding access to quality health and social services in French to the government bodies and organizations concerned;
- propose, introduce and implement or support various strategies for the Franco-Manitoban community's vision for access to French language health and social services to be implemented by the government bodies and organizations concerned.