

June 15, 2009

**PROVINCE INVESTS OVER \$500,000 IN NEW STROKE-  
PREVENTION INITIATIVES**

The province is investing more than \$560,000 to strengthen stroke-prevention measures across Manitoba including new regional stroke co-ordinators and an expanded provincewide public awareness campaign, Healthy Living Minister Kerri Irvin-Ross announced today.

“Knowing the risk factors of stroke and taking action to eat well and increase physical activity can dramatically reduce the likelihood of having a stroke,” said Irvin-Ross. “The new resources we’re announcing today build on our investments to help reduce the effects of strokes on Manitobans, their families and our health-care system.”

Today’s investments support co-ordinated care and stroke-prevention education for all Manitobans by:

- launching an expanded provincewide stroke awareness campaign focused on the five warning signs of stroke, in partnership with the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Manitoba (HSFM);
- funding a co-ordinator at HSFM to promote use of best practices across regional health authorities and ensure health professional education is provided within each region;
- adding three new regional stroke co-ordinators who will support the regions in providing comprehensive services, information and support; and
- funding a provincial project manager to guide development of a

provincial action plan to reduce the burden of stroke on Manitobans including consultations and partnership with other stakeholders.

Seven Manitobans have a stroke every day, which can lead to permanent disability or death. Genetics and age can be significant risk factors for stroke, but for many people, strokes can be prevented by reducing high blood pressure, choosing to not smoke, reducing alcohol consumption, staying at a healthy weight, having a healthy diet and increasing physical activity.

“Stroke is a medical emergency, and we are pleased that the province is partnering with HSFM in our efforts to prevent and reduce the devastating impact of stroke on people and their families,” said Debbie Brown, president and CEO of HSFM. “For the last four years, HSFM has been working with the regional health authorities to develop and implement a provincial stroke strategy focused on stroke prevention, care and rehabilitation, and we are delighted to see the province making great strides in these areas.”

The minister noted the new investment in stroke prevention supports provincial efforts on chronic-disease prevention including:

- more than \$2.8 million in new funding to create teams that address cancer and chronic disease prevention and promote healthy living services across the province;
- the Get Better Together! program which helps Manitobans across the province manage chronic health conditions through physical activity and staying healthy;
- the Chronic Disease Prevention Initiative, a partnership with the federal government to provide \$6 million over five years for

community-led, evidence-based activities that promote healthy eating, physical activity and smoking reduction; and

- Manitoba *in motion*, a provincewide program to encourage physical activity for health benefits.

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