

Thursday » February
22 » 2007

Health region approves land for new facility

Centre will treat youths addicted to drugs, alcohol

Lana Haight

The StarPhoenix

Thursday, February 22, 2007

The Saskatoon Health Region is placing its hope on a piece of property southeast of the city.

"We think it's the best of both worlds," said Greg Drummond, director of Saskatoon Health Region's mental health and addiction services.

On Wednesday, the Saskatoon Regional Health Authority approved the purchase of 11.7 acres of land south of Highway 16 and east of Highway 11 for a new treatment facility for youths addicted to drugs and alcohol. The purchase price for the land sandwiched between the Saskatoon Christian School and Lakeview Church is \$332,100.

The land purchase has a couple of hurdles before it is finalized. The RM of Corman Park must give discretionary use approval for a residential facility and Saskatchewan Health must approve of the purchase.

The youth treatment facility is one component of Project Hope, announced by Premier Lorne Calvert in August, 2005. He dedicated \$30 million to tackle substance abuse in the province. Saskatoon Health Region was allocated \$6 million for the youth facility which is to include 12 beds for youth aged 12 to 17 years who want to begin treatment for their addictions. Another 12 beds will be for youth who need to be stabilized before entering treatment. Some of those stabilization beds will be used for youth who will be held against their will, but who've been ordered into treatment by a judge.

"This is not a criminal facility. It is not a jail, but just like in other parts of our health system where people aren't able to make good decisions that they need to make to receive care and where their lack of their ability to make that decision puts them at imminent risk, sometimes there is a need to hold that person," said Drummond.

All the teens entering the treatment facility would be screened to ensure that they can be properly cared for at the centre, he says.

By locating on the outskirts of Saskatoon, the treatment centre will have significantly more outdoor space than it would if built in the city, yet it's close enough to the city for the youth to access other services if needed.

"Physical activity needs to be part of the recovery process. They can't just sit and engage in a talking approach to healing," said Drummond.

"We also want to be able to provide some culturally appropriate practices. So that might allow us to have a sweat lodge."

While waiting for approval for the land purchase, planning will continue on the design of the treatment facility. If approval is granted by Saskatchewan Health and the RM of Corman Park, construction would begin this summer with a move-in date in the fall of 2008.

Once the new youth facility opens, the Calder Centre where youth treatment services are now provided in Saskatoon will be renovated to provide family-centred addictions treatment for adults.

SUTURE CONTRACT SAVES CASH

The Saskatoon Health Region will spend more than \$8 million over the next five years on sutures and staples used in surgeries.

At its regular meeting on Wednesday, the Saskatoon Regional Health Authority awarded Johnson & Johnson Medical Products Ltd. the contract to supply wound closure products at a cost of \$8.1 million over five years with the option of an additional two years.

The Saskatoon and Regina-Qu'Appelle health regions worked together to secure the contract with Johnson & Johnson, according to a report submitted to the Saskatoon health authority.

Saskatoon Health Region will save about \$239,000, based on projected price increases.

lhaight@sp.canwest.com

© The StarPhoenix (Saskatoon) 2007

[CLOSE WINDOW](#)

Copyright © 2007 CanWest Interactive, a division of [CanWest MediaWorks Publications, Inc.](#) All rights reserved.