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# News Release

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **MORE NURSES FOR SASKATCHEWAN**

*Patients Benefit as Number of Nurse Training Seats Increased*

On the heels of fulfilling its commitment to hire 800 new nurses for the province, today the Government of Saskatchewan announced a further increase of 170 registered nursing (RN) training seats for Saskatchewan nursing students.

"Our government is committed to training more nurses through a more accessible, learner-centered system, which will benefit both the health care system and our growing communities," Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration Minister Rob Norris said. "I am particularly pleased that we are introducing a two-provider training model in our province."

Beginning in 2011-12, the University of Saskatchewan (U of S) and the University of Regina (U of R), in collaboration with SIAST, will both grant nursing degrees.

"It's been a great week for patients in Saskatchewan," Health Minister Don McMorris said. "We've kept our promise of hiring 800 new nurses as announced earlier this week, and now we've kept our promise of adding these new nursing education seats - another major step forward in better meeting the needs of all Saskatchewan patients."

This increase of 170 seats completes government's platform commitment to create 300 new nursing training seats. The government is committing \$11.25 million this year to allow the expansion to begin.

"The University of Regina is excited to offer the new nursing degree program in collaboration with SIAST," University of Regina President Vianne Timmons said. "The University is a leader in health-related research in areas such as pain management, aging and Aboriginal health, so the creation of a Faculty of Nursing is a wonderful opportunity to build on that expertise and increase our academic offerings for students."

"The expansion of nursing education in Saskatchewan – both in capacity and program choice – is great news for aspiring nurses, for the health care industry and for patients," SIAST President and CEO Dr. Robert (Bob) G. McCulloch said. "SIAST and the University of Regina have been preparing for today's announcement through the development of the Saskatchewan Collaborative Bachelor of Science in Nursing program, which offers students four years of nursing education informed by an analysis of contemporary health care issues."

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"This investment is greatly appreciated and I am excited that the University of Saskatchewan will offer a new nursing program as a part of our integrated approach to health sciences education across Saskatchewan," University of Saskatchewan Provost and Vice-President Academic Brett Fairbairn said.

"We are offering a degree that makes a difference in the lives of our students and the people of Saskatchewan," U of S College of Nursing Dean Lorna Butler said. "The College of Nursing is confident in attracting students who are committed to innovation and change to make Saskatchewan and nursing professionals world leaders."

The institutions are currently working together to develop these programs.

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