

### High Prairie patients being contacted

(October 27, 2008 – High Prairie, AB) – Alberta Health Services - Peace Country Health is contacting some former patients of the High Prairie Health Complex following the discovery of an infection control incident at the facility.

It was recently determined that syringes may have been used on multiple patients to administer medication through patients intravenous lines. This may have resulted in transmission of infection. Health experts have completed a risk assessment and the potential for infection is very low. Alberta Health Services – Peace Country Health is checking all patients who may have been impacted by this practice to ensure any spread of infection is identified.

The investigation determined this may have occurred during endoscopy procedures performed between March 1, 2004, and October 2, 2008 and involves potentially up to 1,300 patients.

Some dental surgery patients who received service prior to Oct. 2, 2008 will be contacted. A patient chart review is currently underway to determine which patients need to be contacted for testing. This review will go back to 1990 and may involve potentially up to 1,400 additional patients.

Alberta Health Services is in the process of contacting these patients by phone and registered mail for follow-up blood testing.

Blood testing for the patients will be coordinated by Alberta Health Services - Peace Country Health. For more information former patients can call Health Link Alberta at 1-866-408-5465.

The multiple use of this item has been stopped at the High Prairie Health Complex. All processes at the Health Complex have been reviewed and are safe. All services are being provided as usual at the facility.

Alberta Health Services – Peace Country Health has reviewed all its other surgical facilities and determined High Prairie is the only facility where this practice occurred.

We acknowledge the stress and worry this incident may cause the community. We want to reassure the public that care provided in our facilities is safe and that the risk to those patients involved is very low.

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#### FOR MEDIA INQUIRIES, PLEASE CONTACT:

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