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Cowichan Tribes pilots patient access to records

July 20, 2016



DUNCAN, BC – Cowichan Tribes and Mustimuhw Information Solutions have announced a partnership with McKesson Canada's RelayHealth to improve healthcare for members of the Cowichan Tribes First Nation. The 18-month pilot project will provide 400 patients from the Cowichan Tribes with secure, personalized access to their own electronic health records and the ability to directly message their healthcare providers online.

This project – Closing the Circle of Care – honours the Cowichan Tribes' indigenous teachings and approach to care by reinforcing the importance of empowerment and the need to work collectively for improved health and wellness. By encouraging citizens, families, the community and their healthcare providers to be collaborators in healthcare, each participant becomes an active part of the community's healthcare team.

"Enabling our citizens to be active participants in their circle of care is an important and necessary step as we improve health outcomes for Cowichan Tribes," said Maureen Tommy, general manager at Cowichan Tribes and President of Mustimuhw.

"We will now be able to view all of our patients' records – whether they are from the community health nurse, the primary care team, or a family physician in town – in a single file," said Christina Nishimura, primary care nurse manager for Slhexun sun'ts'a clinic at Ts'ewulhtun Health Centre.

“Not only does this let us better coordinate care for our patients, but by giving patients access to this comprehensive record, it also allows them to schedule their own appointments, view lab results and directly message their full array of care providers with any questions or concerns they may have – it’s as easy as email.”

B.C. Health Minister Terry Lake (pictured), representing the Ministry of Health, and Michael Green, CEO, Canada Health Infoway were present at this announcement representing an investment from Canada Health Infoway, who helped make this breakthrough effort possible. Valerie Nicol, executive director of the Cowichan Valley Division of Family Practice, a collaborating partner for the project was also on hand for the announcement.

“For the first time, patients are empowered to manage their own health,” said Health Minister Terry Lake. “We are watching projects like Closing the Circle of Care with great interest and congratulate the Cowichan Tribes for their leadership in providing personal access to electronic health records.”

“Patients have a strong desire to be active in the management of their care, and having access to their own health information, with the ability to securely message their authorized providers, will go a long way to supporting them,” said Michael Green, president and CEO, Canada Health Infoway. “Infoway is proud to support this project, which is an example of what we expect to see for all Canadians in the future.”

For more than 15 years, Cowichan Tribes has been a leader in designing approaches to health delivery and connectivity that reflect a First Nations philosophy of individual empowerment, including the use of the Mustimuhw community electronic medical record (cEMR). Together with RelayHealth this commitment will be taken even further.

“When we first met the Cowichan Tribes, we were inspired by their vision of a truly holistic, patient-centered approach to healthcare,” said George Attar, senior vice president, chief technology and information officer of McKesson Canada. “I’m proud that RelayHealth is helping us realize the next evolution of healthcare by making patients active members of their care team.”

“We look forward to sharing what we’ve accomplished with our First Nations partners across British Columbia,” said Mark Sommerfeld, CEO of Mustimuhw. “This is truly a First Nations solution for First Nations healthcare.”

Over the past decade, Cowichan Tribes, the largest single First Nation in British Columbia, has been a national leader in health information management, providing a community electronic medical record (cEMR) for First Nations health service organizations.

The new Personal Health Record will be implemented as a pilot project, the first of its kind in British Columbia, initially involving 400 patients and 20 healthcare providers.

This innovative partnership between Cowichan Tribes, Mustimuhw Information Solutions Inc., McKesson Canada, and Canada Health Infoway is increasing access to healthcare for Cowichan Tribes, putting patients in control of their own healthcare and health record, and giving them remote access to healthcare providers.

Cowichan Tribes and Mustimuhw Information Services are excited to speak with First Nations across Canada about launching innovative technology solutions that increase access.

About Cowichan Tribes and Mustimuhw Information Solutions Inc.

Cowichan Tribes is the largest First Nation (FN) in British Columbia. Located in the Cowichan Valley in mid-Vancouver Island, the Cowichan Tribes is comprised of seven traditional villages: Kwa’mutsun, Qwumiyiqun’, Xwulqwselu, S’amuna’, Lhumlumuluts, Xinupsum, Tl’uqtinus and Tl’ulpalus. Cowichan Tribes is governed by a Chief and 12 Councillors, who have delegated responsibilities for a variety of services including Children and Families, Education, Health, Housing, Membership

and Social Development. Cowichan Tribes originated the Mustimuhw Community Electronic Medical Record (cEMR) system, which is broadly in use in First Nations Health Centres across multiple provinces. To manage their continued success in First Nations information management in the health and human services, the Mustimuhw Information Solutions Inc. was established as a Cowichan Tribes subsidiary company.

About RelayHealth

Launched in 2011, RelayHealth is McKesson Canada's web-based service that provides complete and secure information flow between patients and all of their healthcare providers coast to coast. Focused on the patient point of care, RelayHealth accelerates information exchange, facilitates collaboration between healthcare providers, advances patient quality of care, and reduces overall healthcare costs. The service has received Canada Health Infoway certification, meaning it has met or exceeded a series of pre-defined, domain specific assessment criteria, ensuring it conforms to global and national standards for privacy, security and interoperability.

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About Canada Health Infoway

Canada Health Infoway helps to improve the health of Canadians by working with partners to accelerate the development, adoption and effective use of digital health across Canada. Through our investments, we help deliver better quality and access to care and more efficient delivery of health services for patients and clinicians. Canada Health Infoway is an independent, not-for-profit organization funded by the federal government.

About the Cowichan Valley Division of Family Practice

The Cowichan Valley Division of Family Practice (CVDFP) has been formed to support the people and family physicians of the Cowichan Valley; to identify gaps in patient care, and to develop solutions to meet the community's needs. The Cowichan Division works to foster strong, collaborative relationships, and benefits from a high level of community engagement and collegiality among the medical community. As a result, CVDFP is able to work closely with a range of community partners to achieve its goals. There are currently 105 physicians within the Division.

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A woman in a white lab coat is looking down at a patient lying in a hospital bed. The patient is covered with a white blanket. The background shows a hospital room with a window and some medical equipment.

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The image features the Philips logo in the top left corner, set against a white background with a blue border. Below the logo, a male doctor in a white lab coat and blue scrubs is seated at a desk with multiple computer monitors. He is looking towards a woman with long dark hair, who is also seated at the desk and appears to be using a mouse. The scene is set in a professional, clinical or office environment.

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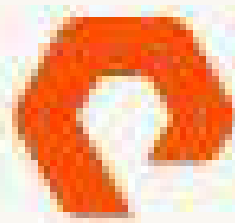
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