



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## SUN and CFNU to hear findings of WSI Mentorship Program pilot project

<<REGINA>> Nurse leaders from health regions across Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Union of nurses (SUN), members from the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU), and government ministry officials are meeting today to hear the findings of the Mentorship Project, implemented in Saskatchewan more than a year ago. The Mentorship Project is one of two pilot projects initiated by the CFNU, with funding from the Human Resources and Social Development Canada's (HRSDC's) Workplace Skills Initiative (WSI).

"SUN, the CFNU and other stakeholders have been working together to see this project come to fruition since 2005," commented Rosalee Longmoore, SUN president. "We started lobbying the federal government for a Canada-wide program that would access Employment Insurance (EI) dollars to help support training projects, much like the construction industry has been doing for years with their apprentice program."

It was CFNU that proposed the "New Skills for Nurses: A Partnership Approach to Professional Development" to HRSCD in 2005, hoping to receive funding under the government's Workplace Skills Initiative Project. The primary goal of the program was to provide opportunities for both new and experienced nurses, in urban and rural settings, to upgrade their skills and competencies while still remaining in the workplace. An important secondary objective was to engage nurses unions and regional health authorities in new collaborative partnerships to address specific and urgent nursing workforce retention and recruitment issues.

Saskatchewan received funding to develop a mentorship project in the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region. "This has been a long time coming," noted Linda Silas, CFNU president, "but we have been pleased to be a part of the process. Providing mentorship to support new graduates as they enter the workforce - helping them make that important transition from learning institute to working environment - is critical in retaining new nurses."

Recently, the Government of Saskatchewan implemented a Provincial Nursing Mentorship Initiative, which will support regional health authorities to develop, implement and evaluate regional nursing mentorship activities in Saskatchewan. The initiative is modeled on the mentorship program at Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region. This is a clear demonstration of how collaborative project work can evolve into a larger provincial program.

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**For more information, or to learn more about the Mentorship pilot project findings, contact Rosalee Longmoore, SUN president, at 539-6162.**