



Students at the Bashaw School didn't mind that there were still patches of snow on the ground on Wednesday, March 23 and just made good use of their recess time under bright sunshine despite the single digit temperatures.

Photo by Mustafa Eric

Program succeeding in improving medical outcomes

BY JORDIE DWYER
BASHAW STAR

Providing a different approach to serving the medical needs of people has truly been a success in Bashaw.

Back at the beginning of January of last year, the Camrose Primary Care Network started its partnership with the Bashaw Medical Clinic and it has certainly proven it works from a patient and clinical perspective.

Brooke Bertschi works as the in-clinic LPN (licensed practical nurse) and health coach at the clinic. Her focus is mentoring and working with patients on chronic disease management - which includes various conditions such as diabetes and heart-related diseases - as well as on nutrition and weight management. Bertschi also assists the medical practice by seeing patients when she can, works with women on pre-natal care and gives immunizations.

"(The program) has been well received by the community," stated Bertschi in a recent interview at the clinic.

"The patients are happy to have more options available to them. The physicians only have so much time to spend whereas I can spend 30 minutes or two hours with them if they need it."

While patients get a referral to her via their doctor, a majority of ongoing health and wellness issues fall on her shoulders with a lot of patients more comfortable seeing her for followup.

"They seem to take it fine. It can be all encompassing and

there is a whole scope of essential resources are available through me - from getting referrals to access mental health services to dieticians to variety of other supports," she said.

"I have a number of contacts and the support I receive and the relationship has been great with the clinic. It's also good being able to work together on a wide range issues and collaborate with the doctors."

For some patients, it's exactly that support that has been a very important factor in improving their medical conditions, their overall health as well as how they live their lives on a daily basis.

In the case of Frank Sawatsky, he was having trouble controlling his diabetes and figuring out how to make things better with his diet.

"The doctor had no real time to spend with me," he explained.

"Brooke is always good for a laugh. She takes the time to sit down and discuss lots of things. That discussion is the big benefit for me and the fact she smiles all of the time. The atmosphere is different than talking to the doctor. It's certainly sometime easier to talk with her."

Sawatsky believes he has gained more knowledge and is more engaged in his diabetes management because of the program, which he added feels more relaxed and more personal at times.

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Users to pay more for ice time

BY JORDIE DWYER
BASHAW STAR

It was a given that rates would be going up, the only question was by how much.

That was answered at the last Bashaw town council meeting on March 17 after nearly a month of discussion, surveys and investigation following the town taking over management of the arena from the recreation board.

Following the discovery that the rink was being operating in the red to the tune of nearly \$50,000 last year and the town absorbing that loss, administration began the process in February of reviewing the hourly ice rental rates with a view to at least paring down that deficit.

Two user groups made a presentation to council at its meeting on Feb. 25, when it was decided a further survey of all the user groups would be made as well as a comparison look done at the rate of

some area arenas. The issue was brought back to council's meeting on March 3, which saw councillors shoot around the suggestion - made by the user groups - of moving toward a tiered rate schedule.

And in the end, council decided that was a good goal and approved an option calling for four separate rates - a local rate for youth and one for adults along with rates for out of town youth groups and another for adults. What distinguishes local from out of town is groups that use the Bashaw Arena as their primary facility and are based out of the community.

Local youth user groups - which include minor hockey and figure skating - will see their rate increase to \$90 per hour, while local adult groups will pay \$110. Out of town groups will be charged \$125 (youth) and \$130 (adult) per hour respectively.

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