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## Northern Alberta Renal Program offers seven-day dialysis

EDMONTON – Three Alberta Health Services (AHS) dialysis sites in Edmonton are now open seven days a week to treat a growing number of patients with chronic renal failure.

Previously offered six days a week, daily dialysis through the Northern Alberta Renal Program (NARP) was expanded to Sundays last month and is available from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. at the Royal Alexandra Hospital and in two units at the University of Alberta Hospital in Edmonton. The extra service hours will make room for 40 additional patients to dialyse in the Edmonton Zone.

There are currently more than 1,200 patients on dialysis within NARP, a geographical area that includes central and northern Alberta.

“We are currently operating at capacity but we continue seeing an increase in dialysis patients to our program by six per cent per year,” says Dr. Kailash Jindal, Clinical Section Chief Renal for AHS Edmonton Zone and Medical Lead for NARP.

“Building new units are very expensive, so by moving to a seven-day-a-week schedule, we can improve efficiencies and increase access to patients who urgently need dialysis.”

Patients can also access home therapies, such as home hemodialysis and peritoneal dialysis, which ease pressure on stationary units.

An aging population, rising diabetes rates leading to renal failure, and patients living longer due to medical advancements are all factors contributing to increases in demand for dialysis service in Alberta.

Betty Gharib, who has been dialysing for four years, is one of the patients who began dialysing Sundays at the Royal Alexandra Hospital when the service schedule expanded.

“I’m happy to see that more patients who need care can be accommodated,” Gharib says.

Alberta Health Services is the provincial health authority responsible for planning and delivering health supports and services for more than four million adults and children living in Alberta. Its mission is to provide a patient-focused, quality health system that is accessible and sustainable for all Albertans.

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