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## Two new family physicians now practising in Bonnyville

BONNYVILLE — Local residents have improved access to primary care with the recent arrival of two new family physicians, a result of ongoing recruitment efforts by Alberta Health Services (AHS) and its partners.

Husband-and-wife team Dr. Stefan Gideon Steyn and Dr. Annerie Britz moved to Bonnyville from South Africa late last year. Both are practising at the Bonnyville Medical Clinic. Their arrival is expected to make it easier for local residents to see a family doctor.

The physicians say they feel welcomed in their new hometown.

“We have really enjoyed the friendliness and hospitality of the Canadian people,” says Steyn, who married Britz two years ago. They’re now enjoying their first snowy winter.

“We have received great help from the community to settle in and find our feet in this new world. Although we are far from our loved ones, we are making many new friends. We have received great support from our colleagues in Bonnyville, and would like to thank everyone who has made us feel so welcome here in northern Alberta.”

This is the second time over the past two years a married team of physicians has moved to Bonnyville from South Africa.

Drs. Hercu and Sharne van der Watt moved here at the end of 2011.

“Without the van der Watts’ support, the recruitment of Dr. Steyn and Dr. Britz would not have been possible,” says Kim Fleming, a physician resource planner with AHS North Zone.

Hercu and Stefan were colleagues in South Africa.

“This is a great example of community connections and support that is needed to recruit physicians to smaller communities in northern Alberta,” says Fleming. “We look forward to continuing to work with local residents and community partners to help recruit physicians.”

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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