

Health and Community Services

June 18, 2014

## Investing in Preventative Health Care

### Colon Cancer Screening Program Expands to Labrador-Grenfell Health Region

The Provincial Colon Cancer Screening Program is expanding from Western and Central Newfoundland and will now be accessible to residents of the Labrador-Grenfell Health region. The program supports screening and early detection and diagnosis of colon cancer. The Honourable Paul Davis, Minister of Health and Community Services, announced the expansion today at the Labrador Health Centre in Happy Valley-Goose Bay.

**“The Colon Cancer Screening Program allows individuals to be proactive about their health and to administer the screening test in the privacy of one’s own home. When colon cancer is diagnosed early, treatment has been found to be more effective. I am very pleased to see the next phase of the program become available to the people who are served by Labrador-Grenfell Health, and I encourage individuals between the ages of 50 and 74 to participate.”**

*- The Honourable Paul Davis, Minister of Health and Community Services*

The program, which is available beginning today, will support distribution of screening kits upon request to residents throughout the Labrador-Grenfell Health region who meet the eligibility criteria. Returned samples are analyzed and individuals with positive test results are contacted for a follow-up colonoscopy. Those with negative results are rescreened in two years. A kit can be requested by calling 1-855-614-0144 or by emailing [nlccsp@easternhealth.ca](mailto:nlccsp@easternhealth.ca)

**“Since launching the Provincial Colon Cancer Screening Program in the summer of 2012, we have been pleased with the public’s response to this self-referred screening program. Participation in the screening program is an easy, painless and risk-free means of detecting colon cancer earlier and treating it more successfully. We look forward to further expanding on this vital component of our Cancer Care Program.”**

*- Katherine Chubbs, Vice-President of Cancer Care, Eastern Health*

Over the past two years, 4,630 individuals have self-referred or requested a home screening test kit. Nearly 75 per cent of those who request home screening kits return them to the laboratory for analysis. Currently, approximately 15 per cent of screening tests result in a positive finding, meaning those individuals will be contacted for a follow-up colonoscopy.

**“Labrador-Grenfell Health is extremely pleased to be taking part in such an important initiative in partnership with Eastern Health and the Department of Health and Community Services. A screening program which has proven successful in the Central and Western regions in detecting colorectal cancer at the earliest stage will benefit people in Labrador and the Northern Peninsula who call and request the home screening test kit.”**

*- Tony Wakeham, President and CEO, Labrador-Grenfell Health.*

The Provincial Colon Cancer Screening Program was launched in 2012 as an initiative of the Provincial Cancer Control Policy Framework through an investment of \$4.3 million over three years. It is designed for people between the ages of 50 and 74 who are at average risk for colon cancer and is administered by Eastern Health as part of the Provincial Cancer Care Program. For more information on the Provincial Colon Cancer Screening Program, visit: [www.easternhealth.ca](http://www.easternhealth.ca)

#### QUICK FACTS

- The Provincial Colon Cancer Screening Program has been expanded to include the Labrador-Grenfell Health region. The program is being phased in and was launched in western and central Newfoundland over the past two years, with the aim of province-wide screening by 2015.
- The program is designed for people between the ages of 50 and 74 who are at average risk for colon cancer and is administered by Eastern Health as part of the Provincial Cancer Care Program.
- Fecal Immunochemical Test kits will be made available to men and women in the targeted age group. The kit is more advanced and more sensitive than other available tests and is considered a very effective method for screening those at average risk for colon cancer.
- A kit can be requested by calling 1-855-614-0144 or by emailing [nlccsp@easternhealth.ca](mailto:nlccsp@easternhealth.ca)
- Since 2004, the Provincial Government has allocated over \$172 million for cancer treatment and prevention.

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