

SAIL Home Oxygen

Tester's Newsletter

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Upcoming Home Oxygen Tester's Workshops (via Telehealth)

· Thursday, November 21, 2019, 1430-1630

[Click for workshop posters and additional information](#)

Do you have questions about a client's oxygen coverage?

Do you need more SAIL Oxygen and Palliative Oxygen Application Forms?

Call or email SAIL: 1-888-787-8996 DPEB@health.gov.sk.ca

NOTE: Oxygen providers are encouraged to use the above email to contact SAIL. Responses to emails that are sent directly to individual staff may be delayed if that individual is not available.

Questions about oxygen testing, funding criteria, or troubleshooting?

Call or email Jaimie Peters, RN, CRE: 1-306-667-3012
jaimie.peters@sk.lung.ca

Home Oxygen Tester Information



Interview with Fort Qu'Appelle Home Oxygen Tester – Cathy Berg

How long have you been working as a RN and conducting home oxygen testing?

I have been a registered nurse for almost 30 years. I started out my career on a respiratory medical unit at Regina General Hospital. All of my knowledge and skill, and love of respiratory medicine started there. I worked alongside Dr. Hopkins and Dr. Abdulla who were great mentors for us young nurses. The unit had a two special beds saved for 'Respiratory Rehab' from Monday-Friday and the patients would go through a COPD informational sessions and educational sessions. After 10 years on the respiratory unit, I moved on to the cardiac/ thoracic surgical unit where I was able to incorporate much of my respiratory knowledge for post-op open-heart and lung surgery clients.

I have been working in Home Care in Fort Qu'Appelle for almost 5 years now and have been certified to conduct home oxygen testing. I am still using that baseline knowledge of respiratory rehab to this day.

What is your favourite part about oxygen testing?

My favourite part is seeing how clients are doing in follow-up - sometimes there is an improvement and often I see the slow progression. I want to help them with their breathing battles. I can help them make better decisions or be more

pro-active in their care. I will also refer them into our current COPD rehab programs.

What is your biggest challenge?

The biggest challenge is getting them oxygen if they don't qualify. Sometimes people are so short of breath but it's not their lungs causing this, it's their heart. And maybe they need to see a cardiologist to fine tune their cardiac meds vs needing oxygen. Sometimes the clients get quite upset with me for not getting them to qualify. Unfortunately, the numbers don't lie and I can't just give them the oxygen. It's out of my hands, but I do feel bad for them and encourage them to visit their doctor or specialist.

Tips for other oxygen testers?

I was having a lot of trouble with our new oximeters but I/we have persevered and it's not as bad now. There are little quirks that, if I could, I would change. I also always meet my clients in our local hospital in the same spot, where I have an open area. I have walked out a 30 meter space so it is easy to record distances for exertional testing. I just have to remember how many times I do a lap! I rarely do testing in the home as the space isn't usually large enough. I have gone outside in the summer to complete a testing!

Tips for oxygen users? Any education tidbits you suggest?

For my oxygen users I just always tell them to wear their oxygen. Some clients are scared they are going to become dependent on it. Well, it is a chronic disease, with a poor outcome but you're not going to heal from it but you can control the symptoms and with-holding oxygen from your body isn't going to help you at all. I try to encourage them to continue to use it all the time. Also I do have a few that still smoke. Well- I really need to stop eating chocolate so I don't really get mad at them for not being able to stop smoking because I can't stop eating chocolate. I just tell them don't quit quitting!!!



Nonin WristOx Overview & Tips

Learn how the Nonin 3150 wrist oximeter works and how to change the batteries properly.

[Watch the video](#)

Rural Nocturnal Oximeter Shipping

Please package all nocturnal oximeters in a bag or box to ensure patient confidentiality. Bags can be requested from Purolator or Canada Post for free.





Nellcor PM10N Oximeter Driver Download Process

For anyone who may be getting a Nellcor PM10N oximeter to replace an older model, there is a new process to receive help from IT.

Any and all users who want to download the driver file onto a Saskatchewan Health Authority workstation (PC) will need to get a manager to make the request to IT directly.

[Email for more info](#)



Palliative Home Oxygen

Dyspnea is the subjective feeling of being uncomfortably short of breath caused by physiological and/or psychological factors. Dyspnea is a common symptom near the end-of-life caused by multiple diseases that, among others, include COPD, cancer, dementia, CHF, and anxiety disorders. There are many people who are tachypneic and look like they are uncomfortable, but this ultimately does not mean they feel dyspneic.

Self-reporting is the only method of measuring dyspnea. This can be assessed similar to pain by completing a full dyspnea history and using a scale to describe current state (0=no shortness of breath, 10=worse possible difficulty breathing). Pallium Canada has fantastic guidelines for dyspnea assessment for anyone who has been through this course.

Oxygen is often prescribed near the end-of-life for comfort care, yet there are many other less expensive pharmacological and non-pharmacological treatments for dyspnea. Oxygen is generally not a recommended treatment unless the

patient is hypoxic. Patients with end-of-life COPD often are very dyspneic but are not hypoxic, therefore treatment is likely not beneficial. Pallium Canada lists many tips to assist with dyspnea. **Opioids are the most useful drugs for treating dyspnea.** Other helpful measures include: a fan blowing across the face, pursed-lip breathing, relaxation therapy, sitting upright, bronchodilators, inhaled steroids.

While there isn't much evidence showing that oxygen improves end-of-life care, the SAIL Program does have criteria for palliative home oxygen for comfort. After a physician has deemed a patient 'palliative', an assessor/coordinator or LTC nurse manager can use the Palliative Performance Scale (PPS) to determine when (and if) a patient may benefit from oxygen. The PPS level to receive oxygen is 30%, which means the patient has extensive disease, is totally bed-bound, and needs total care.

Home oxygen testers, assessor/coordinators, and home oxygen companies are key stakeholders that palliative oxygen is being used appropriately and as per the SAIL guidelines.

[Review the PPS](#)

Home Oxygen Companies

It is the clients decision to choose the oxygen company that will provide the best service and pricing for their needs. There are now four oxygen suppliers in Saskatchewan.



Lung Association News & Info



Tackle Radon. Protect your Family. Test Your Home.

The Saskatchewan Government has proclaimed November as RADON ACTION MONTH! Protect your family and TEST for RADON.

RADON IS THE #2 CAUSE OF LUNG CANCER. You can't see, taste or smell radon. The only way to know how much radon is in your home is to test for it. Manitoba and Saskatchewan are hot spots for this deadly gas.

[Click to learn more about radon or buy a radon test kit.](#)

2020 Inspired Breathing Conference (IBC)

The IBC will bring together patient voices, family physicians, respiratory specialists, allied respiratory health care professionals, and educators to learn together and to network with one another. Registration opens soon.

[View agenda](#)



Lung Transplantation Webinar

To recognize Lung Month, we would like to share an upcoming webinar education opportunity with those living with lung disease, patients, families, and anyone involved in lung health.

November 28th, 7:30 pm

[Register here](#)



CPAP Mask and Equipment Companies

A list of Saskatchewan companies that sell CPAP equipment and may do home testing for sleep apnea.

[Visit webpage](#)



Pulmonary Rehab Programs

A list of Saskatchewan locations that offer pulmonary rehab programs for those with lung disease.

[Visit webpage](#)



Certified Respiratory Educators

A list of Saskatchewan Certified Respiratory Educators who provide education for asthma and COPD management.

[Visit webpage](#)

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Questions about your lungs?

Call our helpline: [1-888-566-5864](tel:1-888-566-5864)
or email us at info@sk.lung.ca.

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