

The Manning Community Health Centre nursing team is one of the recipients of the 2020 RhPAP Rhapsody Health-care Heroes Awards. Established in 2018, this award recognizes rural Alberta health-care providers or teams that demonstrate superior commitment to their patients, health-care team, and community.

The dedicated and close-knit nursing team in Manning is a roughly 50-50 mix of nurses who grew up in the local area and those who came from afar.



Oneikah Richards, care manager, speaks with two nurses during their morning meeting at the Manning Community Health Centre.

Oneikah Richards, a registered nurse, grew up in the Caribbean, and practised nursing there and in the United States for 15 years before coming north. She originally planned to nurse in Manning for just six months.

Two years later, she is still there with no plans to leave.

“I even bought a house,” said Richards, care manager at the Manning Community Health Centre. “I stayed because when I came to Manning initially, it was very refreshing how the people were. It was the sense of community that appealed to me most.”

Aarni Kumon, a licensed practical nurse, came to Manning from Vancouver. Like Richards, she originally planned to stay for only a short time.

“I only came here for a year, and I thought I would [get] some experience and go away,” said Kumon. “Now, I’ve been here for seven years.”

I feel more satisfaction working here in a smaller community. You feel more part of a closer-knit team - Chris Graw, RN

Originally from Saskatchewan, Shannon Rowein has been practising in Manning for four years.

“It’s awesome. I actually really like it,” said Rowein, a licensed practical nurse. “We’re quite lucky, because we do team nursing here, so you get a feel for everything. You get a little bit of long-term care, a little bit of acute care, and then emergency as well.”



Chris Graw, registered nurse.

Chris Graw, a registered nurse, grew up in the Manning area. She left to work in emergency in Grande Prairie for six years, but the lifestyle and work experience in Manning drew her back.

“I feel more satisfaction working here in a smaller community. You feel more part of a closer-knit team. You know your patients personally.”

All of us [on the nursing team] treat every patient like they are our family members - Shannon Rowein, LPN

Bodil Schoendorfer, registered nurse and clinic coordinator, also grew up in the Manning area. She was no stranger to the Manning Community Health Centre growing up.

“I guess I was always a hospital brat,” said Schoendorfer. “My mom is a nurse here, so I would come and visit her on her meal [breaks] when I was a kid anyways.”

Schoendorfer left Manning to pursue a nursing degree and returned right after graduation to work alongside her mom.

“Patients would definitely tell you that’s she’s number one, and she’s their favourite nurse, Nurse Nancy.”

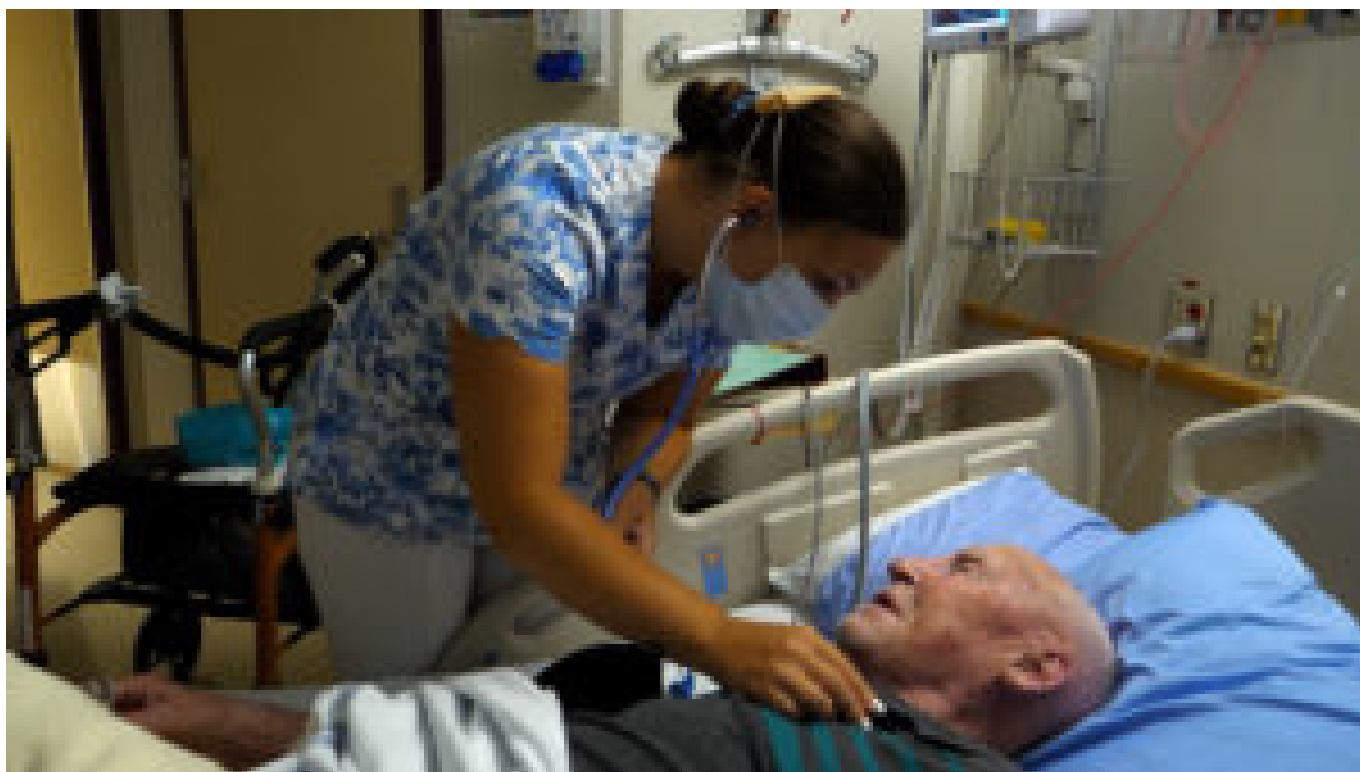
Nurse Nancy has practised in Manning since 2000.

“You do see people [through] the years, and they are very happy to be looked after by a nurse who has been there for them before,” said Nancy Andersen, a registered nurse, who recently retired, but still works on a casual basis.

Cliff Atkinson sure appreciates her care over the years.

Heart issues have led this retired boilermaker and pipefitter to be a regular visitor to the Manning Community Health Centre

“They’ve done a good job since 2005 until now to keep me vertical and with a heartbeat,” said Atkinson with a grin.



Shannon Rowein, LPN, checks the heartbeat of a patient at the Manning Community Health Centre.

“All of us [on the nursing team] treat every patient like they are our family members,” said Rowein. “We want to see the best for them. We give them the best care we can.”

According to Richards, the dedication and passion of the nurses in Manning surpasses any other nursing team with which she has ever worked.

“Sometimes, they go so much beyond what is expected of them,” said Richards. “I’ve had nurses who [are] on vacation and, because they know we are short staffed, call me up and say ‘Oneikah, I know we are on short staff. I’m on vacation, but I’m in town, so, if you need me, I’m willing to come in.’ Not many nurses would do that.”

Rowein explained, “We have all been in a situation where an emergency comes through the door and there are just two of you, and not nearly enough hands-on deck. ... I think that we’ve all kind of been there, so we’re all willing to come in.”

They've always gone the extra mile. They are very reliable and dependable -
Oneikah Richards, Care Manager

Not only does the nursing team provide exceptional care for patients, the nurses go out of their way to help the many students and newly graduated nurses who come to Manning.

"We really look after our young nurses to get those experiences," said Graw, who now works on a casual basis as a registered nurse, so that she has time to raise her children. She was acting care manager until Richards arrived.

"Someone will come down the hall looking for the nursing student to say 'hey, this is what we are going to do. Have you seen that yet? You should come and be a part of this.'"



Dr. Tyler May (L) and Bodil Schoendorfer, RN (R) visit a patient during their morning rounds at the Manning Community Health Centre.

The nursing team also has a great working relationship with the physicians who practise at the hospital.

“All of our doctors are wonderful to work with,” said Rowein. “They’re wonderful teachers. If you have any questions, they will always be happy to explain.”

The physicians are grateful, too.

“So many people say to me that they are so grateful that they live here, that they have these nurses looking after them, [and] that they know that they can trust them,” Dr. Anse Capon explained.

Congratulations to the Manning Community Health Centre Nursing Team - a recipient of the 2020 RhPAP Rhapsody Health-care Heroes Award.

“They are very deserving of this award,” said Richards, who was ecstatic when she learned her nursing team had been selected. “They’ve always gone the extra mile. They are very reliable and dependable.

“And here, we are like a family, and I wouldn’t change that for the world.”