

A Great Run!

37 Years of Providing Service for Infant Hearing Assessment Program

PUBLISHED: 20 May 2019



The Infant Hearing Assessment Program in Regina tested 250 to 400 babies each year over the past 37 years.

The SaskTel Pioneers are known for numerous great causes they support in our province. One of them is the Infant Hearing Assessment Program in Regina which identifies early signs of hearing loss in infants.

The Pioneers have been involved with the program since 1982. Recently however, the Pioneers have decided they would step away from the program, which will now be administered by the Government of Saskatchewan.

“The program involved a large amount of volunteer effort for 37 years,” said Darrell Liebrecht, Pioneer Manager. “But we’re very pleased that the program is left in good hands.”

The program leaves behind many good memories for those who took part in it.

“I was part of the program from the very beginning,” said Joan Fletcher, a SaskTel Pioneer who was scheduling coordinator for the program. “We would run hearing tests on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. “It was a good feeling to know we were helping babies get tested.”

In November 1982, the Pioneers provided funding and purchased the proper equipment to perform the hearing tests. At the time, the Pioneers made a commitment to volunteer to perform the tests

and became an integral part of the volunteer program at the Regina General Hospital in the neonatal unit, the regular nursery and the Developmental Assessment Clinic.

Phyllis Pearson (along with fellow Pioneer Betty Spence) was there for the very first testing.

“In the early years, the equipment used was big and clumsy,” said Phyllis. “But as the years went by it got smaller and more efficient. To do the testing today, a cable runs from the testing machine. A rubber tip on the end of the cable is inserted into the baby’s ear and we measure brain stem responses to little clicking sounds. It really is very effective, and more often than not, babies sleep through the process.”

The volunteers tested 250 to 400 babies each year over the past 37 years.

In recognition of their longstanding commitment, the program recently received a H.A.D. Allen Life Member Award (The H.A.D Allen Life Member Club is comprised of retirees who are SaskTel Pioneer members in Regina). The Computers for Schools program was also honoured to mark their 25-year anniversary.

The great contribution made by the program was also recognized in the Saskatchewan Legislature on 14 May 2019 by the Honourable Don Morgan, Minister Responsible for SaskTel.

The Regina Qu’Appelle Health Region Volunteer Services also issued a thank you to the Pioneers in their April 2019 newsletter.

“This was certainly one of the more unique projects we worked on,” said Darrell. “Till the end, there were 14 volunteers that continued to help out. I would like to extend a big thank you to all the Pioneers who have contributed to infants for all these years with outstanding service.”