**Pembroke Regional Hospital Celebrates the Grand Opening of its Renovated Inpatient Surgical and Day Surgery Units**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Pembroke Regional Hospital has proudly celebrated the grand opening of its newly renovated Inpatient Surgical space and Day Surgery Unit, marking an exciting milestone in the hospital’s history.

The $20 million renovation project which includes $2.6 million in donations from the Pembroke Regional Hospital Foundation and the Pembroke Regional Hospital Auxiliary, represents the hospital’s largest Ministry-funded investment since 2004 when Tower B was constructed.

The official opening held November 15th saw representation from approximately 70 invited guests including donors, community partners, government representatives, project leaders, members of the hospital’s Surgical team and others who all came together to honour the efforts and the people who brought this project to life.

“Thanks to all involved for the hours of work that went into planning and designing this space, choosing the equipment, assisting our contractor and architect and getting the space ready for move in,” said PRH President and CEO Sabine Mersmann. “Today, you are seeing the results of these incredible efforts designed to improve the care for our patients.”

Paying tribute to all involved in the renovations including Hein Construction, their staff and subcontractors, Dredge Leahey Architects and project engineers who worked tirelessly to ensure the area would be as functional as possible within the limitations of the 1951 structure, Mrs. Mersmann said she never imagined that a 1950-era building could look this good in 2024!

Completed in several phases, the goal of the project was to co-locate and improve all Surgical services and patient space on the third floor of Towers A and D, linked by an enclosed walkway.

The new Surgical Day Care unit was patient-ready in March of this year, transforming space previously occupied by the old operating rooms and hospital chapel into a bright, open concept, modern area that is co-located on the same floor as the new endoscopy suite and minor procedure rooms, Surgical registration, and the hospital’s medical device reprocessing area.

Phase 3, which is now patient ready, involved a complete reconstruction of the hospital’s 15-bed inpatient Surgical space which now features a mix of private and semi-private patient rooms which are larger than those there previously.

Two new isolation rooms were also added along with all new infrastructure, and new and enhanced comfort and safety features including:

* Central air
* Large energy efficient windows
* Larger accessible bathrooms with modern fixtures, new plumbing, grab bars, an upgraded nurse call system and safety doors that can open in both directions

“When you see these changes and improvements being made and the work that is being done at PRH to continuously bring better services to people of the area, it gives us all the more reason to be proud,” said Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke MPP John Yakabuski.

He added that in speaking with residents who have had surgery locally he has heard great anecdotes about the care and service they have received. “Now to have this new renovated space which makes everything more efficient, more effective, it’s amazing to have this kind of service here in the valley.”

Lisa Edmonds, Board Chair for the Pembroke Regional Hospital Foundation emphasized the importance of collaboration and community support for a project like this. “This is a huge milestone and I have the pleasure of saying thank you to the Foundation, the Auxiliary and the donors – all of you have made this day possible. What we’ve done will make the patient experience even better when services are needed and we couldn’t have done it without your help.”

Amongst those in attendance, Mrs. Edmonds gave special mention to the family of Harold Smallpiece who, after his passing, enabled his children to name the hospital that would receive his gift of $540,000 – they chose PRH and the Surgical Construction Project.

Dave Unrau, Past-Chair of the hospital’s Board of Directors shared a personal testimonial as a Surgical program patient and described his experience in detail from encounters with friendly staff, to the calm he felt coming into the new space and the high class post-surgical care he received.

He noted that his healing and recovery started the moment he entered the floor and thanked all involved for their vision of how this space could be transformed.

And finally, Dr. Colleen Haney, Chief of Surgery, spoke passionately about the facility's impact on patient care and what it means to the team to have this new workspace.

Paying tribute to those she works with, Dr. Haney said that the care they provide and the drive they have to do their best for their patients is humbling. “The walls around them don’t change that but with these renovations, we now have a facility to match their world class care.”

Dr. Haney noted that having higher volume procedures in dedicated space is good for flow and efficiency, and that having the new space will hopefully give the hospital an edge on future recruitment, but she said aspects like the added privacy the new space affords patients and their families is priceless. “We are sometimes having conversations and delivering news to patients that marks a fundamental shift in the trajectory of their lives – to be able to have space to have those conversations privately – you can’t put a value on that.”

The ceremony concluded with a blessing of the new space by Bishop Michael Brehl, and a symbolic ribbon cutting before guests were free to take self-guided tours of the space and enjoy some refreshments.

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