

Community Connection



Pembroke Regional Hospital

Holiday 2023



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Mental Health Services Partners With Local Pharmacies To Improve Client Access To Vital Medication Injections

In order to better serve a growing number of clients who require long-acting injections for the management of Schizophrenia, Mental Health Services of Renfrew County has partnered with local pharmacists who are receiving education and training in order to help provide this vital medication within their community-based pharmacies. In many cases, the increased numbers and need have been attributed to a lack of family physicians who are able to provide the service.



Lisa MacQueen

Project Lead Lisa MacQueen who is a Registered Nurse with Mental Health Services' ACT (Assertive Community Treatment) team, explained that the team has partnered with Doug Butchart from Janssen Pharmaceuticals and some local pharmacies in order to expand the pharmacy role by administering these injections for local clients. Such a partnership has been successful in other locations. Until this point, the service gap was being filled temporarily through an injection clinic staffed by nurses from other MHS programs.

As part of a gradual rollout, Ms. MacQueen said, the pharmacists are now offering walk-in injections to those clients who receive their regular oral and injectable medications at those locations. Program feedback to date has been positive. Not only is the improved access helping the clients but the pharmacists are finding it very rewarding to be in partnership with PRH and provide assistance to this client base.

Given the early success, plans are being made to expand the service to other pharmacies in more rural parts of the county. This will not only result in care closer to home for some clients, reducing travel time and costs, but it will also make use of the pharmacists' full scope of practice.

PRH Enables Safe Patient Dropoff/Pickup With Free 10-Minute Parking Lot Access

For the safety of all patients and those dropping them off or picking them up, all gated parking areas offer complimentary 10-minute access, eliminating the need for vehicles to stop or pullover on Deacon and Mackay streets.



Simply take a ticket to enter the lot and drop off or pick up the patient. When exiting, insert the ticket and if no more than 10 minutes has passed since entry, the gate will open and you can exit without needing to pay.

When you do need to pay for parking, please note that the gate machines now allow for contactless debit and credit card payment with tap.

Exciting Investments At PRH Are Paving The Way For Future Health Care Needs

A tremendous amount of activity has taken place at the Pembroke Regional Hospital over the past several months, all of which has been centered around patient experience improvements, strategic planning for the next five years and infrastructure upgrades.

Board Approves Epic Investment

First and foremost we are very excited to share that our Board of Directors has given the green light to proceed with a significant investment in *Epic*, a new health information system which will completely transform our hospital from a paper-based patient record to a fully integrated electronic system.



Sabine Mersmann

Epic uses the latest technology to securely store, organize, and access patient records while maintaining patient privacy and providing a comprehensive digital health record for every patient.

By implementing *Epic*, we will become part of a fully integrated network of 10 hospitals in our region using this state-of-the-art and best-in-class health information system. The Ottawa Hospital is the host hospital for this system which means that Pembroke Regional Hospital will have the same access to standardized care pathways and best practices as TOH.

In addition, when a patient is transferred between hospitals, critical information will be available immediately to their new health care team and the patient will not have to repeat their medical history over and over. The result is more seamless, coordinated care.

The launch of *Epic* will also give our patients better access to their own health information through the *MyChart* portal which enables patients to see their medical history, diagnostic test results, upcoming appointments, lists of allergies and medications and even educational materials anytime, anywhere.

There are many other great things about this digital transformation which will be taking place and we can't wait to share them with you as we go forward. Given the magnitude of the change this represents to our hospital, it will take approximately one year to implement which means we will be launching it in 2025.

Five-Year Strategic Plan For PRH

I'm also excited to share with you the status of some of the work that has taken place as part of our strategic planning exercise. Over the past couple of months, a facilitator has helped gather local health, service utilization and demographic data as well as internal information that helps to paint a collective picture of health care trends and future needs.

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PRH Recognized By Trillium Gift Of Life Network With Two Awards For 2022/2023

Since partnering with TGLN in 2013, Pembroke Regional Hospital has supported two organ donors who had six organs recovered and transplanted - saving the lives of five individuals, and 70 tissue donors who have enhanced the lives of many others.

This year, PRH was one of two hospitals in Ontario to receive 100% Routine Notification Rate (RNR) awards, with 134 notifications. Routine notification is the rate at which hospitals notify TGLN when a patient has died and there's potential for organ and/or tissue donation. Routine notification is an important step taken by our team to connect potential organ donors with TGLN. Through this process, we're able to honour our patients' wishes, recognize donation opportunities



Celebrating these awards are just some of the team who support and play an important role in facilitating organ and tissue donation.

and save lives. PRH has received the Routine Notification Rate Award five times!

Also, for the first time, our hospital received the Provincial Eligible Approach Rate Award, recognizing hospitals who demonstrate leading practices by facilitating a donation discussion between TGLN and eligible patients and/or families of patients at the end of life. Our hospital has achieved a 100% eligible approach rate!

Both awards demonstrate how we continue to follow leading practices and consistently offer the opportunity for organ and tissue donation to every eligible patient as part of high-quality, end-of-life care.

Exciting Investments Are Paving The Way...Continued From Front

They have also conducted broad consultation with over 800 of our staff, health care partners and the public at large through surveys, interviews and focus groups in order to identify areas for strategic focus. In addition, we heard from our provincial leaders, Ontario Health, the Ontario Hospital Association, our local Ottawa Valley Ontario Health Team leads and others about the future role of hospitals and some key areas of focus.

Some of the emerging themes from these consultations include:

- The need for hospitals to continue to lead and be anchor organizations
- The need to identify and implement new models of care to address staffing challenges
- Enhanced focus on equity, diversity and inclusion in health care, particularly with our indigenous partners
- A greater focus on the frail elderly, mental health and addictions and the unattachment crisis
- The need for targeted communication and strong feedback mechanisms
- The importance of taking full advantage of advancements in technology and innovation
- Finding more ways to address care gaps for the community's most vulnerable

Direct feedback from all groups also yielded some very positive comments about our health care team, the care that is provided and the

collaborative spirit our hospital brings to partnerships, while suggesting ways to improve care, services and the workplace over the next five years.

Having examined the data, we are not surprised by what we have seen and heard. In fact, the feedback has validated, in many ways, that we are on the right track with some of the improvement work we are doing, and it has strengthened the need to prioritize other aspects.



Members of the hospital's Board, Senior Leadership Team and Strategic Planning Steering Committee reviewed feedback and data as part of a planning session.

In the coming weeks, the Board, physicians and administrative leaders will use this information to craft a plan that will help guide our priorities and improvement efforts over the next five years. Plan approval will take place in March and we will broadly share the results at that time.

Construction Update

And finally, tremendous progress is being made

on various construction and renovation projects throughout our facility. I, among others, have had the opportunity to visit some of the areas being transformed and can say with certainty that our patients will benefit greatly from the improvements being made.

In terms of updates:

- We plan to go to tender this month with Phase 2 of our Cancer Care Project involving Medical Daycare and Chemotherapy.
- We are within eight months of completing the Surgical Redevelopment Project and will be able to use some of the space in the early new year.
- The Tower C Ground Floor Renovations are still under discussion with the hope of a start time early next year and a 12-month completion target. This will certainly be disruptive at times for our patients and visitors but the end result will be an incredible transformation as we are building a new front entrance to our facility.
- Work is also being done in many clinical areas to prepare for the installation of new Automated Medication Dispensing units which are best-practice in the health care industry and represent a \$2.2 million investment in the way we deliver medications to patients.

In the coming months, we will be sharing many more details and photos about the work and enhancements taking place. I wish you all a very Merry Christmas.

Patient Advisor Shares Positive Feedback About Patient Experience



Tracy Gagne

Every patient experience holds a unique tale, and we are delighted to recount the story of Tracy Gagne, a resident of Laurentian Valley, who encountered a water accident this past summer.

After sustaining a fractured ankle and an extensive break to her fibula during a sea-doo incident, Tracy was beyond grateful for the support of the Renfrew County Paramedics who came to her aid to help stabilize her and transport her to the hospital's Emergency Department.

With all the chaos of the first few hours, Tracy specifically recalls the important role of the staff in the Emergency Department. "All the staff were amazing, comforting, and they let me know what they were doing at each step." For Tracy, this was particularly important. She had many concerns and the time staff took to help support her with her questions gave her the peace and reassurance that she needed in light of this traumatic event.

The extent of her injuries resulted in the need for a couple of surgeries and a four-day stay on the hospital's Surgical unit. Tracy noted that, for all her procedures, she was quickly put at ease by everyone involved and expressed appreciation for the detailed explanations of everything that was taking place. "I can't say enough about how well I was treated by the staff, so to them I owe a world of gratitude."

This gratitude extended to the kind and compassionate care provided by so many members of the interdisciplinary team. From the nurses for taking the time to explain so much important information, to the Pharmacist team for ensuring her medication history was accurate, to the Physiotherapists for playing a critical role in helping Tracy adapt to using a walker and wheelchair.

Tracy commended the entire team on ensuring she was well prepared for discharge. She was equipped with knowledge, tools and plans for followup which included a visit to the hospital's fracture clinic where Dr. George Mathew and the nursing team fitted her for an aircast and provided her with some much needed reassurance on her journey to recovery.

Today, Tracy, who previously maintained an active lifestyle, is well on her way to a full recovery and remains optimistic about achieving her personal aspiration of climbing Mount Everest. She expresses gratitude to the remarkable orthopedic team/program, recognizing their crucial role in keeping her goal alive.

Tracy, who volunteers as one of our hospital's Patient Advisors said that she looks forward to bringing this positive first-hand patient experience to the hospital's Patient and Family Advisory Council as an enhanced perspective on ways to go forward and improve care for others. Being a Patient Advisor is an important opportunity to help improve the patient and family experience for yourself and for others. We'd love to tell you more about these opportunities. If interested, please call (613) 732-2811, extension 6161.

SHARE Program Turns 25!

It was a milestone moment for our SHARE (Self Help Through Awareness, Recreation and Education) program as the team recently celebrated its 25th anniversary and took the opportunity to reunite with many who have been involved with the program over the past two-and-a-half decades.

The peer-led support group is a program offered by Mental Health Services of Renfrew County which provides emotional and social support to those living with mental illness. Membership in the program is through self-referral.

SHARE Coordinator Helen McLeod attributed the success of the program to hard work, dedication and compassion, among other things as well as the involvement of the members themselves. "Our voices, experiences, and contributions are the lifeblood of SHARE. It is through listening to each member and creating a safe environment for dialogue that we have thrived," Ms. McLeod said.

She noted that SHARE members come together family-style to prepare meals, share conversation, and clean up, collectively. "This time is precious, as it allows us to connect, learn from one another, and provide essential support, especially for those who live alone," she said, adding that one member described the program as "their anchor", which, she said, is among the highest compliments the program could ever receive.



Mental Health Services of Renfrew County Director Mireille Delorme, left, SHARE Coordinator Helen McCleod and SHARE Manager Rob Wynja take part in the program's anniversary celebrations.

To learn more about the regional services, visit accessmha.ca.

Hospital Welcomes New Clinical Scholars

As part of a new Ministry of Health funded program, we are excited to introduce full time Clinical Scholars Kerri Timm (Registered Practical Nurse), top right, and Allyssa Rabishaw (Registered Nurse), bottom right.

In their new roles, these experienced nurses are responsible for providing clinical support and guidance to new graduate nurses, internationally trained nurses, nurses transitioning to a new unit and/or any nurse looking to upskill.

Regularly available to staff on any clinical unit, the Clinical Scholars can often be found supporting new nursing grads in skills, communication, and orientation to a new unit and they also make themselves available by phone or email for questions.

Clinical Scholars also assist and provide support with psychomotor skills, soft skills, critical thinking, decision making and problem solving. To date, the Clinical Scholars have been well received in all areas of the hospital. The Clinical Scholars program is currently funded by the Ministry of Health through March 31, 2024.



Improving Cancer Care Wait Times

Regionally, over 8,500 people are newly diagnosed with cancer each year. Reducing the impact that cancer has on our population is one of the missions and visions that unites us together as health care professionals, researchers, and leaders.

We do so, collectively and continuously by improving the care we provide and advancing new therapies as part of a refreshed Regional Cancer Program strategy, while keeping the patient and their loved ones at the centre of our compassionate approach. Over the past year alone, there have been countless quality improvement initiatives linked to this strategy in the Champlain region - from cancer screening programs and diagnosis to novel treatments and supportive care.

At PRH, in addition to a wide variety of cancer-related services that are provided, over 150 patients annually receive elective cancer surgery treatment in our operating rooms, while many other oncology procedures are performed on an outpatient basis.

To improve the service our patients receive, cancer surgery wait times are monitored internally, regionally and provincially. This data is measured against provincially set target timelines to represent the best possible outcome for our patients. It is our responsibility to work collaboratively to meet those timelines.

Recently, we were recognized for a 17.7% improvement in our *Wait Time 2* category for the first quarter of this year (April to June, 2023). This represents the period from when patients first meet with the surgeon and make a decision to treat, to the time the patient receives their surgery in the operating room. This means that 93% of our cancer surgery patients had their surgery within the

target timelines which could range from 14 to 84 days depending on the assigned priority level for the cancer type. The provincial target is 90%.

Ontario Health also recognized PRH for meeting two of the province's annual improvement targets:

- *Wait Times performance indicator from the Ontario Breast Screening Program (OBSP)*. This covers the time from an abnormal screening to receipt of diagnosis for patients who had a tissue biopsy.

- *Colon Cancer Check Wait Times* which represents the time from when a patient has an abnormal fecal immunochemical test (FIT) to the time they receive their hospital colonoscopy.

Ensuring that all patients receive their appointments in a timely fashion has always been a priority not only for our hospital, but for our region.

"Everyone plays a critical role in supporting our patients and families throughout their journey. It is the synergy of these diverse skills and responsibilities that allows us to provide comprehensive and compassionate care to those who depend on us," said Beth Brownlee, Vice-President of Clinical and Support Services and Chief Nursing Executive.

All of these data points, and those in other areas of the hospital are extremely important and helpful to track as they help guide decision-making and planning to improve access to care for surgical and other patients, Mrs. Brownlee said.



Beth Brownlee

PRH Supported By Clinical Externs

Staffing shortages triggered by the pandemic continue to impact hospitals across the province, including ours. One of the innovative ways that PRH is addressing these is through the provincially-funded Clinical Extern Program, created by the Ministry of Health to provide additional health care support to hospitals.

Clinical Externs are senior university and college students in nursing, occupational therapy, respiratory therapy and paramedic programs who are hired to work as part of a team under the supervision of Registered Nurses and Registered Practical Nurses.

While externs are not yet registered health care professionals, they make significant contributions by helping with tasks they're allowed to perform as unregulated care providers such as bathing, personal hygiene care, dressing, eating, mobilization, and companionship and support for patients and their families. Externs can also complete other tasks, depending on their area of care and patient population, when delegated by a regulated health care professional.

At PRH, we hired 19 externs this past May, the majority of whom were RN and RPN students ranging in training from first to fourth year, in addition to one paramedic student.

The externs were assigned to different units throughout the hospital and on each unit, they were paired with an RN or RPN "mentor". Based on their year of education, each student was able to use specific nursing skills.

The program not only helped the students practice their skills under supervision, but it enabled them to enhance their communication skills with patients and their families, while learning to work as part of an interdisciplinary team with other nurses, staff and physicians.

We are thrilled to share that six Clinical Externs have stayed with us beyond the summer months in a casual capacity based on their availability and school schedule. Given the success of the first group, we are hoping to hire additional externs in 2024 based on funding availability.



Join Us As A Patient Advisor Or Part Of Our Patient And Family Advisory Council

Patient advisors provide feedback and ideas to help us improve the quality and safety of the care we provide. We have openings on our Patient And Family Advisory Council, our Accessibility Committee and in our clinical units (Acute Mental Health, Obstetrics, Diagnostic Imaging, Medical Quality Team).

To apply, or learn more, please call (613) 732-2811, extension 6161 or email laurie.tomasini@prh.email

Now anyone in the Ottawa Valley who needs a **Pap test** can get one.

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Ottawa Valley
ONTARIO HEALTH TEAM



OUR PARTNERS



Pet Therapy Returns To PRH As Part Of Volunteer Program

As our hospital continues to ramp up and expand volunteer services following the pandemic, we are excited to see the return of Pet Therapy on our Acute Mental Health Unit thanks to the local SPCA and *Watch My 6* Therapy Dog Program.

On a weekly basis, our furry friends provide love and comfort as part of the Unit's recreation program. The Pet Therapy program not only enhances the patient experience, but helps improve patient energy levels, social skills and mood while educating participants on the work of the SPCA and *Watch My 6*.

Based on the success of the program to date, we anticipate expansion of the program in the weeks and months ahead.

To learn more about volunteer opportunities at PRH, please contact Jackie Morrison at (613) 732-2811, extension 7103 or email: jaclynn.morrison@prh.email.

We would love to discuss the opportunities that may suit your schedule and priorities best.



Pictured above are Heather Jobe (SPCA), left, and Tina McNish (WM6). The dogs' names are Breacher, left, and Rayne.



www.PRHFoundation.com (613) 732-2811 extension 7408



Special Promo Pricing! \$50 savings
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We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to the families and organizations who continue to make donations In Memory and as a Tribute to the lives of those who impacted them and will never be forgotten. Your thoughtful donations stay in our community, support our health care advancements and enrich the lives of local families today and for years to come. Purchasing a space on our *Wall of Tributes* will permanently honour a loved one's legacy for all to see.

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LET'S CLOSE THE *CANCER CARE CAMPAIGN!*

The **\$3.5 million Cancer Care Campaign** is almost complete thanks to the generous donations from our community! Help us to close out this essential campaign before the close of 2023!

The **Cancer Care Campaign** will provide updates and overall improvements to the Chemotherapy and Medical Daycare Unit waiting areas, treatment areas, and the Pharmacy where the chemotherapy medications are prepared. These spaces are vital to the treatment and care of each and every cancer patient they serve and, through this campaign, our goal is to make these spaces comfortable, easily accessible and state-of-the-art.

We hope that you are excited about these continued improvements for your regional hospital.

In 2022, more than 176 individuals made 1,231 visits to the Pembroke Regional Hospital to receive their much-needed cancer treatments. Cancer is a disease that will affect nearly two in five people in their lifetime and its effects can be life-changing for the patients and their families.



- Help support local cancer patients.
- Help to expand the Chemotherapy treatment areas to care for even more local cancer patients.
- Help make a difference with a one time donation or every month by joining our *Monthly Giving Club*.

The goal of this campaign is to *Keep Cancer Care Close to Home*. Together, we continue to advance chemotherapy and cancer treatments for Renfrew County families. It is truly amazing what we can accomplish as a community!

You can be part of this remarkable journey by making a donation using the donation form below or by becoming a monthly donor.

YES, I WANT TO SUPPORT THE *Cancer Care Campaign*



Please complete this donation form and return it with an enclosed payment, if applicable, to **Pembroke Regional Hospital Foundation at 705 Mackay St, Pembroke, ON, K8A 1G8**
A tax receipt will be issued for gifts of \$10 or more. Charitable Registration No. 870047610RR0001

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