

Community Connection



Pembroke Regional Hospital Fall 2017 Edition

*Leading, Learning,
Caring For You*

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Pembroke Regional Hospital's Emergency Department Gets Top Marks

"We've really turned the corner," says Pierre Noel, PRH President and CEO, referring to the great results PRH's emergency department has been experiencing. PRH has recently been rated in the top 20 percent of high volume emergency departments in Ontario by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's ED Pay for Results (P4R) program.



Pierre Noel

"That work which included the opening in 2012 of a separate area called 'Zone B' for lower acuity patients presenting to the ED and the initiation of 'Lean' process improvement strategies throughout the Hospital in 2013 has really paid off," he said.

"We've been able to make great strides over the last five years thanks to Lean – so much so that we are now ranked 15th out of 74 high volume hospital emergency departments and we are the best performer within the Champlain Local Health Integration Network" said Francois Lemaire, Vice-President of Patient Services – Acute Care and Chief Nursing Executive.

The ranking given to PRH is part of the P4R program which was launched in 2008 in order to address ED wait time challenges among high volume emergency departments (those with 30,000 or more visits per year) by providing funding for hospitals with improved performance.

The funding each hospital receives is used to support the planning and implementation of local solutions to reduce ED length of stay, increase patient access to quality health services, and improve the patient experience.

"Through this program

we are not only compared with other hospitals, but with ourselves as well, and we are being financially rewarded for our improved performance," Mr. Lemaire said.

Thanks to the continued engagement by staff and physicians and the work that has been done, PRH has been able to achieve a greater than 50 per cent reduction in wait time for patients being admitted to hospital through the ED, typically the sickest patients. For the less urgent patients, those who are treated and then go home, the time from being assessed by the triage nurse to being discharged has been reduced by over one and a half hours bringing the wait time for people in our community to well below the provincial average of other Ontario hospitals.

"We're very proud of these results," said Dr. Tom Hurley, Chief of the PRH Emergency Department, "and our challenge now is to sustain the gains we have made and to maintain our excellent performance."

"Our ultimate goal is for our patients to get great care when they come to our ED and to make sure that this is delivered as efficiently as possible in a friendly and caring environment."



Dr. Tom Hurley



Francois Lemaire

New Urologist Offers Expanded Services

The Pembroke Regional Hospital is excited to announce the arrival of Dr. Jeremy Setterfield, urologist who has joined the hospital's medical staff and will lead the Urology program, following in the footsteps of Dr. Scott Murray who established the program in 1981 and is now transitioning into retirement.



Dr. Jeremy Setterfield and Dr. Scott Murray

"This is an exciting time for our Surgical program as we celebrate the career of Dr. Murray and welcome Dr. Setterfield who will be expanding urology services in the region to include additional procedures such as laparoscopic kidney surgery and radical prostatectomies (removal of the prostate gland)," said Francois Lemaire, Vice-President of Patient Services – Acute Care and Chief Nursing Executive at PRH.

Urology is the branch of medicine that focuses on surgical and medical diseases of the male and female urinary-tract systems and the male reproductive organs.

Dr. Setterfield earned an undergraduate degree in bio-chemistry and attended Medical School at Queen's University where he developed an interest in surgery and he credits a positive training experience in the field of urology as the reason he chose that specialty.

Continued on Page 3

PRH Achieves Silver Status In Healthy Foods In Champlain Hospitals Program

Retail food offerings at the Pembroke Regional Hospital have become a lot more enticing with the introduction of a fresh salad bar, new beverages, and oatmeal/yogurt toppings for breakfast, among other things; all part of achieving the Silver benchmark in the Healthy Foods in Champlain Hospitals program.

According to a congratulatory letter from Dr. Andrew Pipe, Chair of the Champlain Cardiovascular Disease Prevention Network, PRH is now among a small but growing number of hospitals to reach this impressive milestone in our region.

"Reaching the Silver benchmark is a clear reflection of PRH's commitment to investing in the long-term health of staff, physicians, volunteers, and the hospital community at large," said Dr. Pipe, acknowledging the efforts of Dietary Manager Judy Zilney, Auxiliary President Diana Gagne, and Pat Bennett, purchaser for The Sunshine Gift Shop and The Mural Café.

"The Silver level builds on the tangible changes made at Bronze and includes progressive standards such as expanding the provision of calorie and sodium information at point-of-purchase, reducing processed meats, and phasing out sugary beverages. Sites are also introducing new and delicious meals and snacks which emphasize whole grains, vegetables, fruits, nuts and seeds - mainstays of healthy eating," he said.

Since achieving the Bronze level designation in 2015, PRH has continued to work closely with its Dietary staff, vendors and the PRH Auxiliary to seek out new recipes and products which are both healthy and appetizing to sell in The Lunch Box, vending machines, The Mural Café and The Sunshine Gift Shop.

Continued on Page 3



Pembroke Regional Hospital Foundation



Fondation de l'Hôpital Régional de Pembroke

PRH Foundation Launches Cutting Edge Campaign at Black and White Gala 150



Kelley Whitman-McKie (PRHF Director), Sarah Neadow (Development Assistant), Nancy Warren (Executive Director) and Tim McCann (PRHF Director)

The Cutting Edge Campaign is part of an \$11.5 million project that will see the modernization of the in-patient surgical area and support the Orthopaedic Program.

Over 6,000 surgeries are performed at our hospital each year and the upgrading of our in-patient space is long overdue. The 1950's design met patient and staff needs 60 years ago, but with the advancement in treatments today the space is substandard.

The government is funding \$9 million of the renovation costs leaving the community in concert with the Foundation to raise the remaining funds. Having nearly reached the halfway point of the \$2.5 million goal, the Black and White Gala served as the official public launch to kick the Cutting Edge Campaign into high gear to swiftly raise the remaining \$1.3 million over the coming months.



Pierre Noel, President and CEO

"Everybody needs a hospital at some point in their lives, so having everybody's support for this campaign is really quite important. This is the official launch of the public phase of the campaign where we are inviting everyone to get behind this great effort because it takes a whole community to support a regional hospital," remarked Pierre Noel, PRH President and CEO.

Gala 150 will go down as a night to remember as organizers celebrated the incredible generosity of our community, securing \$150,000 from event and raffle ticket sales and sponsorships.

Thank you to the Gala Organizing Committee, the attendees and the following remarkable sponsors:

Butler Chevrolet Buick GMC Cadillac Ltd. - EGM Insurance - Frank Carroll Financial - Scotiabank - Algonquin Chiropractic Clinic - Art Fleming & Sons Ent. Ltd. - Mr. Jim & Mrs. Ann Bertrand - BMO Financial Group - Buske Office Equipment - Custom Draperies & Blinds - Data Communications Management - Mr. Todd & Mrs. Sally Fletcher/East Side Mario's - Dr. Clive & Mrs. Gwen Greenstock - Dr. Fahamia Koudra - Koudra Medicine Professional Corp. - Dr. Fred Matzinger & Mrs. Jocelyne Brault - Dr. Graeme Rodgman - Dr. John & Mrs. Leslie Menzies and Family - Dr. Pawel & Mrs. Marcey Stefanski - Dr. Raluca Antonescu - Emond Harnden LLP - Great West Life - Greenwood Paving - Helferty's Disaster Restoration - Jim Noble RBC Wealth Management - Mr. Don & Mrs. Lori Junop - KI Pembroke LP MacEwen Petroleum - Malcolm, Deavitt & Binhammer Limited - Manulife - McDougall Insurance - McKie Pools & Spas - Midas Pembroke - Mr. Don Lauzon & Mrs. Darlene Dumas - Mr. Edward Cotnam - Mr. George & Mrs. Nancy Warren - Mr. James & Mrs. Nancy Fogarty - Mr. John & Mrs. Trudi Wren - Mr. Lawrence & Mrs. Catherine Lupton - Mr. Marc & Mrs. Jennifer Jennings, Investors Group - Mr. Pierre & Mrs. Penny Noel - Mr. Roger & Mrs. Melissa Schilf - Mr. Tim & Mrs. Theresa McCann - Mrs. Kamala Debi Mukherjee - Ms. Laura Murphy - OK Tire - Patterson Telecommunications - Bell - Pembroke Tile, Carpet & Drapery - Petawawa Physiotherapy & Sports Injury Clinic - Roy & Associates - Pet Value - Physio in the Valley - Spruceholme Inn - SRB Technologies - Stanton Windows - Star-Set Jewellers - Tannis Food Distributors - The Co-Operators, Frances M. Lemke - Valley Automotive, Mary Poirier - Valley Mobility - Wave Optical - Wilkies Fresh Baked Bread - John Butler - Shawn Behnke - Algonquin College - Gallant Media - Cassidy's Transfer & Storage

Congratulations to our Gala 150 Raffle winners! John Wren (0.51ct Canada 150 Maple Leaf Diamond donated by Star-Set Jewellers); Andrew Plummer (Elton John Package sponsored by Midas) and Laura Murphy (Two tickets to the 2018 Black and White Gala).



Black and White Gala 150 Organizing Committee: Denise Dionne, Lisa Edmonds, Kim Drake, Melanie Henry, Nicole Popkie, Donna Saal, Claire Johnson, Karolyn Xie, Sarah Neadow, Laura Carroll, Nancy Warren, Marianne Minns and Jessica Boldt. Missing from photo: Alice Michaud-Fleming, Lynda Dobbs, Mercedeth Bowerman, Janice Hollingworth-Egan and Karen Roosen.

Pembroke Business Improvement Area (PBIA) and PRH Foundation Partner for Downtown Fall Fest 2017



Holiday Inn Express Dr. Kim Armstrong Turkey Trot 150 Organizing Committee and Volunteers:

Lisa Bradley, Sabine Mersmann, Beth Brownlee, James Lumsden, Nancy Warren, May Seto, Dianne O'Connor, Colin Neadow, Kim Neadow, Andrew Connors, Sonya Silver, Ryan Fischer, Genevieve Harrisson, Adam Dezan, Matthew Neadow, Lorraine Pecoskie, Sarah Selle and Sarah Neadow.

Missing from photo: Claire Johnson, Lomie Coleman, Jessica Schmidt, Kristen Purcell, Mireille Delorme and Samantha Moreau.

By changing the date of the Holiday Inn Express Dr. Kim Armstrong Turkey Trot, the annual run united with the Downtown Funk Party providing a full day of activities for local families. Over 300 participants took part in the run which raised over \$17,000 for the Cutting Edge Campaign. Thank you to the organizing committee, the event day volunteers, the participants, the spectators, the PBIA and our generous sponsors:

The Holiday Inn Express Pembroke - Active Chiropractic Family Health Centre - 104.9 MyFM - 2 Combat Engineer Regiment - 2 Engineer Equipment Group - Mr. Alan & Mrs. Delores Armstrong - Bee Gee Farms & Smith's Sweet Corn - Patterson Telecommunications - Bell - Best Western Fitness Centre - Boston Pizza - Brum's Dairy - Calabogie Peaks Resort - Calla Bean Emporium - Mrs. Charlene Jackson - Ms. Christine Spicer Peltzer - Culligan Water - Custom Draperies & Blinds - Furniture, Bedding & Home Décor - Dineamics - Dollarama - Dot. - Downtown Pembroke - Pembroke Business Improvement Area - Dr. Kathy Reducka - Dr. Lomie Coleman & Dr. Debbie Timpson - Fifth Avenue Jewellery - Mr. Gene & Mrs. Lorraine Murphy - Grand & Toy - Huckabone O'Brien Instance Bradley Lyle - Hugli's Berry Farm - Island Brae Golf Club - KI Pembroke - Kings' Sports - MD Management - Michael Moncion Photography - Mulvihill Drug Mart - Murphy Funeral Home - New Star Restaurant - No Frills - Parkview Dental/Dr. Munro - Pembroke Athletics and Conditioning - Pembroke Golf Club - Pembroke Medi Spa - Pembroke Professional Firefighters Association - Petawawa Electric Ltd - Petawawa Physiotherapy and Sports Injury Clinic - PhysioFit Pembroke / The Lavallee Health Centre - Play It Again Sports - PRH Maintenance Department - PRH Wood Working Factory - Redpath Technical Services - Roy and Associates - Run Wild Studio Hand Painted Glass - Running Room - Ry-J's Climbing Adventures Inc. - Shampoo Room - Sjl Eventz - Speedpro Signs Pembroke - Sugar Creek Farm - Tents Moments Rental - Thai Gardens - The City of Pembroke - The Co-operators, Frances M. Lemke Insurance - The Urban Gourmet Co. - White Pine Yoga - Ms. Michelle Mcluskie

Legacy Giving - When Pembroke Regional Hospital is named in someone's will, that gift is shared with local families who depend on our hospital each and every day for local state-of-the art medical services.

John Campbell Anderson served in the military, lived in Pembroke and led a quiet life with his loving wife Edna and their two dogs until Edna's passing in 2007. John was known to be self-reliant with a mechanical aptitude that he readily shared when anyone was in need. When Edna fell sick, she spent much of her last days at Pembroke Regional Hospital. Upon Mr. Anderson's passing, at age 87, the Pembroke Regional Hospital Foundation received a generous bequest. A humble, loving husband and life-long resident of Pembroke, John Campbell Anderson's kind-hearted legacy will continue to enhance local health care and strengthen our community for many years to come.



Your help is vital as we pull together to bring our local health care to the Cutting Edge. Please visit www.prhfoundation.com or mail in your gift by filling out the form below.

Cutting Edge Campaign
Bringing Our Surgical Floor to the 21st Century



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For more information on how you can help, drop by our office at the Pembroke Regional Hospital (Tower A, Room 126), call 613.732.2811 Ext. 7408, email us foundation@prh.email or visit our website prhfoundation.com.

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 Pembroke Regional Hospital Foundation
 705 Mackay Street, Pembroke, ON K8A 1G8

A tax receipt will be issued for gifts \$10 or more.
 Charitable Registrations No. 870047610RR0001

PRH Achieves Silvers...Continued From Front

“As a health care facility, it’s important that we lead the way in providing healthy nutrition options where food is sold as well as the information required for people to be able to make informed decisions when it comes to the food that they are eating,” said Sabine Mersmann, Vice-President of Patient Services – Seniors and Community Care at PRH.

Hospitals need to be strong role models for health. Creating a “healthy nutrition environment takes the onus off individuals from constantly having to resist their surroundings to make healthy choices with the ultimate aim being to reduce the rates of diet-related diseases,” Ms. Mersmann said

Each level of the program comes with a set of progressively-phased nutrition standards developed by public health and hospital dietitians. With funding from the Champlain LHIN (Local Health Integration Network) and implementation support from the Champlain Cardiovascular Disease Prevention Network, hospitals have worked diligently and creatively to adjust their retail food offerings since the program was launched three years ago. To date, all 20 Champlain-area hospitals including PRH have voluntarily signed on to the program.

PRH Dietary Manager Judy Zilney noted that, going forward, her staff are excited to try new recipes for weekly menu items while introducing more varieties of healthy salad choices and vegetable options.



Expanded Urology Services ...Continued From Front

Five years ago, he returned to Ottawa for residency.

Dr. Setterfield spent the last five years completing his specialty training in urology which included clinical work and patient case management, all of which he found very rewarding.

“It’s a great group there, a great place where I received good training in all areas of urology – oncology, endoscopy, dealing with kidney stones, lots of niche areas too,” Dr. Setterfield said, adding that he successfully completed his residency in June.

“The number one reason I decided to establish my practice here was because of my positive experience during residency,” Dr. Setterfield said, noting that he did a two-month surgical rotation with Dr. Scott Graham, Dr. Colleen Haney and Dr. Adel El fitori in the hospital’s general surgery department in his second year and a one-month rotation with Dr. Murray in urology in his fourth year.

“Because of this, I knew the area and had the opportunity to grow quite fond of the work environment. Additionally, having an opportunity to expand service offerings in the department was an attractive feature,” he said.

Newly married, Dr. Setterfield’s wife Roo Deinstadt has just begun a PhD in Ottawa so proximity to the city was important too.

Once his practice has ramped up, Dr. Setterfield said he anticipates being able to handle 95% of urology cases right here in Renfrew County.

He added that another great advantage to working at PRH is the fact that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has recently been put in place with the Ottawa Hospital’s Urology department which formalizes a long-standing working relationship with the surgeons in Ottawa and ensures support for Dr. Setterfield and the team in Pembroke.

Under terms of the MOU, Dr. Setterfield remains a member of the department of Urology in Ottawa, can still take part in educational opportunities, and can liaise back and forth with colleagues. It also facilitates opportunities for Ottawa-based urologists to join him in Pembroke on larger and more unique surgeries.

Dr. Murray agrees that having the MOU in place allows for better flow back and forth and really formalizes the relationship that he’s had with Ottawa for almost 40 years.

“I’ve always had a great relationship with Ottawa. I trained in Ottawa and they’ve continued to back me for all the time I’ve been here,” Dr. Murray said, as he begins to wind down his involvement in the hospital’s Urology department.

Looking back on his earlier days, Dr. Murray said that he was warmly welcomed when he came to Pembroke to set up practice in 1981.

While he had hoped to see his practice expand during his career, Dr. Murray said there was never much luck in terms of recruitment due to physician shortages – a situation that is only now starting to turn around with the introduction of new graduates like Dr. Setterfield in the field.

Reflecting on his career to date, Dr. Murray said that “The hospital’s been tremendous to me and my family and I’m really going to miss it.”

Rather than come to a complete stop, however, Dr. Murray will be transitioning into a community-based role in palliative care, a field he sees as having a real value as the population ages.

Ultrasound...Did you Know?



Our sonographers (from left): Sandy Farrell, Angela Keddy, Leah Poliacik, Trish Mohns, Jenn Bruynson, Kristine Millar (student) and Kerrie-Lynne Wilson. Missing from photo: Jodi Julius.

In the 1940s, ultrasound technology was developed and used in manufacturing to measure flaws in metal castings. The first medical ultrasound tests in Pembroke were performed in the early eighties.

Ultrasound as a medical imaging technology uses high frequency sound waves and the echoes that are made when the sound waves bounce off different structures.

Sound waves travel faster through liquid (blood, urine), so this appears black on an ultrasound.

Why do we use gel? Ultrasound waves don’t travel well through air. The gel is used to fill the space between the skin and the transducer (ultrasound camera) in order to allow the sound waves to pass through into the body.

For obstetrics ultrasounds, a scan verifies that the fetus is developing normally.

- At 20 weeks, more than 100 pictures are taken of the fetus to record all of the anatomy. At that time, the fetus is about the size of a grapefruit. The radiologist then reviews the images and generates a report for the physician or midwife.

- The fetal heart at 20 weeks is the size of a grape and the sonographer has to look at the structures inside the heart measuring several millimetres in size.

While ultrasound technology is most often associated with pregnancy and babies, it has many more applications:

- It can be used to look at almost any soft tissue structure in the body such as organs, tendons and blood vessels.
- With doppler ultrasound, blood flow through the vessels can be demonstrated.
- Ultrasound is used to guide needles into structures for injections and biopsies.

PRH Receives A Special Gift From Precious Angels Niagara

Pembroke Regional Hospital’s Maternal Child Care program was recently gifted with a beautiful selection of gowns and wraps from Precious Angels Niagara, a volunteer run charitable service supporting those who have suffered early term losses or stillbirths.

Each outfit is made from a donated white or cream wedding gown and comes with a detachable angel charm and crocheted bonnet, packaged elegantly in a clear top presentation gift box which can later become part of a baby’s memory collection.

“There is little we can do to reduce the pain for families experiencing perinatal loss, so every little gift we can give them means so much,” said Clinical Manager Dianne O’Connor of the hospital’s Maternal Child Care program. She noted that some of the other offerings available for families in this situation include use of decorative bassinet and a Cuddle Cot which allows families more time to grieve their loss, a Healing Wishes memory box, plaster castings of the infant’s feet and hands, and an invitation to a special memorial service for those who have suffered perinatal loss.



A Spotlight On...The Hospitalist Program At Pembroke Regional Hospital

When it comes to the care of admitted patients, Pembroke Regional Hospital is on par with its peers across Ontario by having a strong team of hospitalists; physicians trained in family medicine – some with additional specialty training, who primarily offer hospital-based care.

As described by the Ontario Hospital Association, hospitalists care for acutely ill patients which results in a workload that has a significant level of complexity. At PRH, the evolution of the hospitalist program began in 2006 as a way of ensuring hospital-based care was in place for admitted patients who didn't have a family physician.

Over the past decade, the PRH hospitalist team has expanded to the point where it now provides inpatient care for all patients on the Medical, Acute Mental Health, Rehabilitation and Intensive Care units, as well as some surgical patients.

"The hospitalist role is extremely important in terms of filling a gap that has evolved due to changing pressures in community care," said Dr. Tom Hurley, Chief of Staff.

Dr. Hurley described the current hospitalist team comprised of Dr. Hanene Ben Amor, Dr. John Davies, Dr. Mylene Gagne, Dr. Margarita Lianeri, Dr. Cameron O'Connor, Dr. Wasantha Ratnayake, Dr. Yubo Ren, Dr. Kathy Reducka, Dr. Graeme Rodgman and Dr. Anne-Marie Savoie as "extremely well functioning", adding that they do a substantial amount of work for the size of the team and that the PRH group is one of only a small number of hospitalist programs providing regular evening coverage in addition to being on-call 24-hours.

Hospitalist and Chief of Family Medicine, Dr. Anne-Marie Savoie explained that the local group typically works in teams of two to four hospitalists on seven to 14 day rotations in order to provide continuity of care to patients. "Ultimately, our goal is to give great care and get our patients home or discharged as soon as safely possible based on the health of the patient, while ensuring that the appropriate services and supports are in place when they leave," Dr. Savoie said, adding that there are times when patients could be under the care of more than one hospitalist during their stay.

She explained that, on a daily basis, the

hospitalists help coordinate the multi-disciplinary team providing care to an individual throughout his or her hospital stay. Part of this includes consultation with specialists. On every floor there are daily rounds where the whole team, including those behind the scenes, discuss patient care to ensure that appropriate services are in place and the right tests are being done. In some situations, hospitalists also provide followup with patients post-discharge.

Patient Flow Coordinator Annette Davidson is one of the individuals who works closely with the hospitalists, meeting with them on a daily basis in order to discuss patient caseload and assist them in removing barriers that may prevent patients from getting back home safely.

Laurie Menard, Clinical Manager of the hospital's Medical program said that having the hospitalist program has benefitted patients in many ways. "The hospitalists are readily available to patients, families, and nurses to address immediate concerns. We have seen more physician involvement with patient and family care conferences, providing better collaboration within our interdisciplinary team," Ms. Menard said.

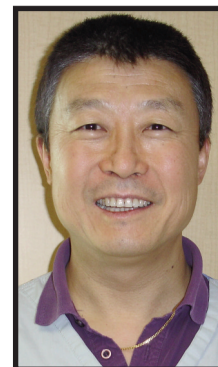
And while she also noted that some patients may receive care from more than one hospitalist during their stay, she remarked that sometimes a different perspective can contribute to a better treatment plan.

Long-serving hospitalist Dr. Wasantha Ratnayake described her colleagues as a dedicated group of individuals who are able to "allocate their sole attention towards their patients both upon admission as well as throughout their follow up during the rest of their stay in the hospital" which greatly improves the quality of patient care.

"We encounter very sick patients, and I find that it is so rewarding to watch their recoveries; this is markedly evident in acute care," Dr. Ratnayake said. While she acknowledges that patients outcomes aren't always positive, she said it's very satisfying to be able to give to others so generously while working as a team to help improve patients' health and comfort their families. "The Pembroke Regional Hospital is such a great environment to work in. With

everyone being so friendly and kind, it is very easy for me to say that the individuals at this hospital are like my family."

Lead Hospitalist Dr. Yubo Ren who previously practiced as a neurosurgeon in China and currently has a family practice in Ottawa said he enjoys the hospital-based work because he has an opportunity to care for patients with a higher level of acuity which, in turn, aids in his abilities to look after more complex patients in his clinic because of his acute care experience.



Dr. Yubo Ren

Another one of the long-standing members of the local hospitalist team, Dr. Ren said he sees a real benefit for patients as hospitalists can dedicate more time to their care and coordinate various aspects in a far more timely manner because of their function and availability.

"Our team of hospitalists offer our patients regular support throughout the day and can respond to new information in a much quicker way," said Sabine Mersmann, Vice-President of Patient Services – Seniors and Community Care.



Sabine Mersmann

She said that having an administrative lead in Dr. Ren for the hospitalist program enables better communication between the hospital's Senior Leadership Team and the physician group, as do monthly meetings where they can discuss ways to address operational issues such as best practices.

"These physicians provide around the clock coverage and, as a result, can respond in a timely manner to test results for example, or assessments from the medical team. They are a group of physicians with a huge amount of interest in hospital medicine," Ms. Mersmann said. "And ultimately they look after the complete needs of the patient, working with the team to achieve best patient outcomes and providing the bridge from hospital to home."

Get To Know...Hospitalist Dr. Anne-Marie Savoie



Dr. Anne-Marie Savoie

Hospitalist and Chief of Family Medicine, Dr. Anne-Marie Savoie began practicing medicine when she moved to Pembroke in 2011. Her path to Pembroke included post-secondary studies in chemical engineering and biochemistry after which she earned a Master's degree in biomedical engineering.

Dr. Savoie worked as a public servant for the Government of Canada for a few years after she graduated, notably in the field of international finance and

trade relations. She returned to school to pursue her medical degree at the University of Ottawa and completed her residency training in family and emergency medicine in Montreal and Amos (in northern Quebec).

Dr. Savoie said she chose family medicine so that she could follow her patients through all stages of their lives, get to know them better and offer more individualized acute and preventative care. From a workload perspective, Dr. Savoie believed that family medicine would offer diverse and interesting opportunities, as well as a chance to work in small communities where the need is greatest. At PRH she enjoys the variety of work and the people she has met along the way. "Every

day is different as I work seeing inpatients as a hospitalist one week, then see patients in the office the next; cover chemotherapy one day and attend meetings the next as Chief of the family medicine department," Dr. Savoie said. She added that PRH is a big enough facility to offer all the necessary services to our patients yet small enough to feel like a close knit family.

Dr. Savoie is a single mom who is kept on her toes by the "funniest and smartest little girl". "She motivates me to follow the advice I give my patients such as eating well and returning to yoga (which allows me to unwind) and running (which I am desperately trying to love!)."

Heart Function Clinic Going Strong

The Heart Function Clinic was established in July 2014 for patients diagnosed with recurrent, new and/or suspected heart failure. Staffed by Cardiologist Dr. Ronald Vexler and Registered Nurses Lisa Keon and Annette Gorr, the goal of the clinic is to improve the quality of life and outcomes for patients living with heart failure, significantly reducing the number of readmissions, length of hospital stay, and mortality rates. Referrals are generated through Emergency departments, hospital in-patient units, and family physician offices.

Those referred to the clinic are given rapid access to Dr. Vexler, diagnostic services, health assessments and treatment. In addition, nursing education and counselling about risk factors for vascular disease is provided, along with referrals to other services if required, ongoing follow-up and support in managing heart failure.

"When the heart can't pump properly, the engine which powers everything we do in life is just not working well. So, our task is to identify the cause and help the patient to get things working normally again. It's certainly more than

simply taking a pill. Treating heart failure requires all hands on deck," said Dr. Vexler.

PRH Vascular Health Coordinator Karen Roosen said since 2015, close to 600 people have been seen through the clinic which represents a growth rate of greater than 50%. "The Heart Function Clinic is empowering patients to take control through healthy eating, stress management and exercise and we are pleased to see such good patient and system outcomes as a result," Ms. Roosen said, adding that because of an increase in patients, Dr. Vexler has also increased his monthly availability for both in-person appointments and those via telemedicine. As part of the Vascular Health Program, Heart Function Clinic patients benefit from referrals to other services offered at PRH and in the community such as vascular health education classes for common risk factors for heart, stroke and diabetes, as well as common symptom control and self-management strategies.



Dr. Ronald Vexler