

Pembroke Regional Hospital Achieves Silver Status In Healthy Foods In Champlain Hospitals Program

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PEMBROKE - Retail food offerings at the Pembroke Regional Hospital have become 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 Silver status in the Healthy Foods in Champlain Hospitals program.

“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.

“While making healthy eating the easy choice is not without its challenges, the behind-the-scenes work that was required in order to meet the Silver level criteria provided both the hospital and the PRH Auxiliary with opportunities to make positive changes and modernize retail food selections,” Ms. Mersmann said, adding that the hospital was awarded Silver status in early November following a successful audit by representatives of the Healthy Foods in Champlain Hospitals program.

In a congratulatory letter from Dr. Andrew Pipe, Chair of the Champlain Cardiovascular Disease Prevention Network, it was noted that 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.

At PRH, some of the other healthy yet delicious additions to the menus in The Lunch Box and Mural Café have included fresh fruit grab and go cups, flavoured cottage cheese portions, new beverages, veggie omelettes at breakfast, flatbreads and different vegetarian options at lunch.

In The Sunshine Gift Shop healthier snack options have been introduced.

“Our buyer, Pat Bennett, has worked very hard to research items which are not only appealing to our customers, but also meet the Silver criteria and are easy to source,” said PRH Auxiliary President Diana Gagne.

“Some of the new items such as the flavoured cottage cheese and fresh fruit have been selling well and we are very pleased to be part of the success of this program, even though we recognize that change is never easy. Being able to offer healthier choices through our retail outlets and being a leader in this respect is something our members are proud of,” Ms. Gagne said.

Each level of the Healthy Foods in Champlain Hospitals 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 acknowledged the engagement and buy-in by the hospital’s Dietary staff, vendors and the Auxiliary and noted that, going forward, her staff are excited to introduce more varieties of healthy menu items and said they welcome food suggestions which could be introduced so long as they meet the Silver level criteria.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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