

## **Pembroke Regional Hospital Continues To Help Patients Who Smoke While Maintaining A Smoke-Free Property For The Health Of Its Patients, Visitors And Staff**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**For over a decade, the Pembroke Regional Hospital has remained committed to helping patients who smoke while maintaining a smoke-free property for the health of its patients, visitors and staff.**

**Ambulatory Programs Manager Martin Burger says staff are trained to help patients who smoke to deal with the symptoms of nicotine withdrawal as well as those who are interested in quitting. The program used to help patients quit smoking was developed by the University of Ottawa Heart Institute (UOHI) in 2002.**

**It follows a systematic process to identify, provide treatment, and offer follow-up to patients who smoke. This program has since become a standard of care. PRH has partnered with UOHI in the use of this program since 2006.**

**“All inpatients are asked if they smoke upon admission,” said Sara McKean-Schulthies Respiratory Therapy Team Lead. “If they are identified as a smoker, counselling to assist with quitting smoking (smoking cessation) is offered and provided.”**

**As part of the smoking cessation program, nicotine replacement products are offered to all inpatients identified as smokers. Upon discharge from the hospital, patients are offered a referral to a community-based smoking cessation program.**

**From April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018, 1,078 tobacco users who were admitted to PRH were offered tobacco addiction treatment. Of those, an estimated 229 people quit smoking.**

**More recently, Mr. Burger said that counselling for those quitting smoking and referrals to community-based resources has been offered to outpatients through several of the hospital’s outpatient clinics.**

**Since doing so, 300 tobacco users were referred to community-based smoking cessation counselling. This has led to an estimated additional 54 people quitting smoking in the past year.**

**“We continue to have the tools, the system, and a team approach to more effectively support smokers while they are admitted to hospital,” said Mr. Burger, adding that a representative from the Heart Institute also comes to PRH twice a year to provide education to staff on available therapies and counselling methods.**

**For the health and safety of PRH staff, nicotine replacement and smoking cessation counselling is readily available through employee support programs.**

**Recognizing the dangers of second-hand smoke, PRH was an early adopter for going smoke-free property-wide, including all parking lots in 2010; a movement that was provincially legislated effective January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016.**

**As a smoke-free facility, as mandated through the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, no person shall smoke tobacco products, vapour products or a prescribed product or substance on hospital property.**

**PRH works together with staff, commissioners, PRH parking authority and the Renfrew County and District Health Unit's Enforcement Officer to enforce the smoke/vapour free environment.**

**PRH is committed to providing a smoke-free environment which promotes a healthier community and a healthy workplace.**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:**

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