

Pembroke Regional Hospital Working Hard To Prevent Patient Falls Both In Hospital And At Home

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PEMBROKE – According to a 2017 report by the Renfrew County and District Health Unit, falls are the leading cause of injury among older adults in the region.

The report entitled “*Injuries Caused by Falls Among Older Adults in Renfrew County and District*” shows that the rates of fall-related emergency department visits and hospitalizations are higher in Renfrew County and District than in other parts of Ontario, with one in 10 emergency department visits being fall related.

“Falls are a serious public health concern and have a significant impact on injured individuals, their caregivers, families and friends, local health care providers and local hospitals. Falls can be prevented,” said Beth Brownlee, Director of Medical, Rehabilitation and Ambulatory Care programs at the Pembroke Regional Hospital.

PRH has made falls prevention a priority. All inpatients are screened on admission for their fall risk. Those who are identified as high risk for falling are seen by a physiotherapist during their stay. Signage in patient rooms and individual bracelets for high risk patients are also in place.

Medical program Manager Laurie Menard said her team has done a significant amount of work to determine why each fall happens and how to prevent them from happening again.

“The team gathers within 30 minutes of every fall for a thorough review and to develop a new care plan to help avoid another fall from happening,” Ms. Menard said, adding that this practice is now implemented on other units as well. To date, this process has resulted in a 27% reduction in the number of falls taking place.

Fall prevention screening also takes place in the Emergency Department, Diagnostic Imaging and in the Ambulatory Clinics.

“PRH has also recognized that there is a lot of opportunity for our team to educate the public and help prevent falls at home through our outpatient ambulatory services,” said Ambulatory Programs Manager Martin Burger.

A provincially developed fall prevention screening tool is now being used in the hospital’s Ambulatory Clinics which includes those in Tower D, Diagnostic Imaging, the outpatient Orthopaedic clinic and outpatient Rehabilitation services.

At registration, the clerk is prompted electronically to give all patients 65 years of age or older the “*Staying Independent Checklist*” to complete while waiting for their appointment. A healthcare practitioner then reviews the checklist with the patient during their visit.

All patients whose self-score indicates a risk of falling, are educated on fall prevention safety at home and are encouraged to follow up with their primary care practitioner.

Working together with healthcare partners to ensure patient safety by preventing patient falls not only in hospital, but in their homes and in the community is also helping to reduce the number of fall-related visits to the Emergency Department and hospital admissions – an outcome that benefits all involved.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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