

Community Connection



Pembroke Regional Hospital Spring 2024



Phone (613) 732-2811 Email/Version Françaises Disponibles au pr@prh.email

Website pembrokeregionalhospital.ca - Facebook/Instagram pembrokeregionalhospital - Twitter @PRHhospital

Pembroke Regional Hospital Welcomes Surgical Day Care Patients Into Newly Renovated Space Following Phase 2 Completion Of Redevelopment Project

With Phase 2 of our Surgical Redevelopment Project now complete, Surgical Day Care patients have been welcomed into the transformed space that is bright, modern and is already getting great reviews by those who have seen it.

Roger Martin, Executive Director of the Pembroke Regional Hospital Foundation who had the opportunity to view the space before patients moved in February 21st said he was amazed to see what has been created in areas formerly occupied by the old operating rooms and the hospital's original chapel on the third floor of Tower A.

"What was obvious right away is how bright the space is thanks to the abundance of natural light coming in from the large windows throughout the unit. The open concept layout is also a great improvement over the 1950s footprint that originally occupied the space," Mr. Martin said.

He noted that the endoscopy suite and minor procedure rooms which are now housed in the area formerly occupied by the chapel feature enhanced technology and up-to-date equipment. In addition, and as a tribute to the building's history, the beautiful terrazzo flooring that adorned the chapel and has stood the test of time was preserved and incorporated into the new design.

"This incredible transformation and upgrade was only possible thanks to the generous donations made by those in our community as part of the



Cutting Edge Campaign and while there is still work to be done on the inpatient side of the Surgical floor, this is a moment to celebrate as it will really enhance the patient experience and the environment in which we care for our family and friends," he said.

Valued at \$18 million, the three-phase Surgical Redevelopment Project is 90% funded by the province while community fundraising is covering the cost of equipment and the remaining 10%.

The construction began nearly two years ago with the relocation of the hospital's chapel to the first floor of Tower A in order to free up the space needed on the third floor to expand the Surgical program and make room for the area that now houses the surgical registration, endoscopy suite, multi-procedural room, Surgical Day Care unit and the hospital's medical device scope reprocessing area.

Beth Brownlee, Vice-President of Clinical and Support Services and Chief Nursing Executive (CNE) said the goal of the project is to co-locate and improve all surgical services and patient space on the third floor of Towers A and D, linked by an enclosed walkway.

Doing this will lead to improved patient flow as patients will register at the point of care and receive their surgical procedure and care all on the same level in newly updated patient space. **Continued on Page 2**



**One starting point.
One referral.
One assessment
process.**

Looking for Mental Health, Substance Use Health, and Addictions Support?

AccessMHA can help.

www.AccessMHA.ca
1-833-527-8207

Significant Investments Are Transforming Care Delivery And The Patient Experience

While only a few months have passed since my last update, I am very happy to share that there has been a great amount of activity at PRH, all of which continues to be focused on patient experience improvements, infrastructure upgrades and strategic planning to guide our care delivery over the next five years.



Sabine Mersmann

Timeline for Epic Implementation

Since announcing our hospital's investment in Epic, the new health information system which is best known as the system that features *MyChart*, I'm very excited to share that we now have a project team and implementation timeline in place. The initial phases of work will begin this September and, overall, given the magnitude of the change this represents to our hospital, we are anticipating a 14-month implementation period with a projected go-live date in November, 2025.

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.

Installation of Automated Dispensing Units (ADUs) for Medication

In February, our hospital completely transformed the way medication is dispensed with the installation of Automated Dispensing Units (ADUs) on all clinical units.

Recognized as best-practice in the health care industry and representing a \$2.2 million investment in the way we deliver medication to patients, ADUs are locked, automated cabinets that provide secure medication storage while making most medications immediately available to be safely dispensed right on the patient unit when they are needed, all while tracking drug distribution. **Continued on Page 2**

PRH Partners With Others To Help The Region's Vulnerable Population

Aligned with our mission, and in the spirit of collaboration, members of our Mental Health Services Mobile Crisis Team have joined with community paramedics and other partners to support vulnerable individuals within the community, in addition to their ongoing partnership with the OPP (Ontario Provincial Police).

They are part of a broader community-based approach named mesa (derived from the term used for a flat-topped hill; a formation in the landscape that is stable and supported) which addresses the root cause of substance use, addictions, mental health issues and homelessness. The team has recently been part of patrols in downtown Pembroke, responding to calls and offering assistance to those in need. The paramedics address immediate health concerns or injuries, while the mental health crisis workers provide crucial links to local resources. In response to the region's escalating drug crisis, education around drug safety is also an important part of their interactions.

"We are proud to collaborate with our many community partners on the mesa approach, working to find innovative ways to support the safety and wellbeing of those in our community who are most at risk," said Melanie Henderson, Vice-President of Clinical and Support Services, Partnerships and Integration at PRH.

Surgical Day Care Patients Welcomed Into New Space...Continued From Front

Phase 3 of the project, which is now underway, involves a complete reconstruction of the hospital's inpatient surgical space and should be ready for occupancy in early fall. In preparation for this phase, the inpatient Surgical program was temporarily moved to Tower A's second floor last June.

PRH President and CEO Sabine Mersmann said the final phase will result in another incredible transformation of a space built in the 1950s. The "new" wing, which has been completely gutted, will be built to all current codes, housing a mix of private and semi-private patient rooms which are larger than those there previously.

Two new isolation rooms will also be added along with all new infrastructure, and new and enhanced comfort and safety features including the following:

- Central air and large energy efficient windows
- Larger accessible bathrooms with modern fixtures, new plumbing, grab

bars, an upgraded nurse call system and safety doors that can open in both directions

- Brand new plumbing, improved electrical systems and terrazzo flooring

On average there are currently between 20 and 40 tradespeople working in the space each day.

"We recognize the impact that all of this work has had on our patient environment and while we have worked hard with our contractor to minimize disruption we know that, at times, it has been challenging. Being able to welcome patients into the transformed spaces has been wonderful and we look forward to being able to share with the community the final transformation that has taken place when the work is fully complete."

Mrs. Mersmann said that the hospital will make plans to host a grand opening celebration for the entire Surgical unit as well as a public tour opportunity once Phase 3 wraps up.



Patient Satisfaction Survey Goes Digital

To help gather timely feedback about the hospital experience through a new electronic survey, patients are now being asked to provide their email address at the time of registration.

Previously, paper-based satisfaction surveys were mailed to patients post-discharge.

The new tool which went "live" in early December surveys our inpatients and those visiting the Emergency Department. It is emailed post-discharge with consent, and is also available for completion on the units and in the ED via a QR code.



Being able to regularly assess how patients perceive the care we deliver helps to guide our Quality Improvement Plan while also ensuring that the patient voice is well represented in other improvement initiatives.

The switch to electronic distribution enables us to collect survey responses in real-time while the results automatically populate an accessible dashboard. Having the data in this format also enables us to share the real-time comments with those impacted in a timely manner.

New Process Improves Care For ED Patients With Heart Attack Symptoms

Thanks to a new process implemented in our Emergency Department last August, patients who are experiencing chest pain and other heart attack symptoms are now being assessed by ECG in record time.

An electrocardiogram (ECG) is a test that checks heart function by measuring and recording the electrical activity that passes through the heart. A doctor can then determine if this electrical activity is normal or irregular.

Under the previous process, patients presenting with these symptoms were required to complete a number of steps before they received their ECG. This often resulted in some delays between the patient's arrival time and when the ECG took place.

Recognizing that there was room for improvement, our Emergency Department team came together to look at ways to enhance the process by safely bypassing some of the steps, enabling patients to go directly into the department where a trained RPN (Registered Practical Nurse) does the ECG and the physician reads the results. If the results are not life-threatening, the patient is further assessed and registered, otherwise they are treated immediately based on the test outcome and medical assessment.

Now seven months in, the door to ECG time has been reduced to well within the 10 minute provincial target time, patients experiencing these symptoms are receiving answers in a more timely fashion and our RPNs are excited to perform this skill within their scope of practice.

"Being able to enhance the care we provide through improvement initiatives like this leads to a great outcome for all involved," said Beth Brownlee, Vice-President of Clinical and Support Services, noting that it enhances the skill level for our nurses, while ensuring safe, efficient, quality care for our patients.



RPN Alex M. sets up to perform an ECG.

Significant Investments...Continued

These ADUs have significantly enhanced our medication dispensing and administration processes, while improving efficiency, and ensuring the highest level of patient safety.

In addition to ensuring that 400 front line staff received training on this new technology, there was a great deal of work leading up to implementation that involved many of our team members throughout the organization from Pharmacy to Information Technology, Plant Services and Nursing.

Cancer Care Project

As you will see in the Foundation's update, the \$3.5 million dollar *Cancer Care Campaign* has recently come to a successful close with funds allocated for the expansion, upgrade and overall improvement of our Chemotherapy and Medical Day Care unit – specifically the waiting and treatment areas, along with the Pharmacy where chemotherapy medication is prepared.

Phase 1 of this project involving the Pharmacy was completed a year ago and included the construction of two new state-of-the-art sterile rooms.

Phase 2 involving the Chemotherapy and Medical Day Care unit began in mid March and is scheduled for completion by late fall. This renovation work will significantly enhance the patient care experience with the creation of an open-concept unit, with an enhanced focus on patient safety and care.

The expanded unit will feature three additional treatment chairs, two patient washrooms, an infection control isolation room, a private examination room, a multi-use area where patients can obtain ice, water and light snacks, and a centralized nursing station.

This phase of the project will also include the creation of education space for patients and their families as well as a meeting room and comfortable waiting area for families who want to accompany their loved ones.

During construction, we will create some temporary space for our Chemotherapy area to ensure patients have uninterrupted service.

Tower C Main Entrance Project

Work has also begun on the ground floor of Tower C where a \$2.3 million investment will completely transform the space to create a distinct main entrance for our hospital as well as beautiful new space for The Sunshine Gift Shop and Mulvihill Drug Mart.

While things in that area may look a little different, ground floor access for those with appointments will not be impacted. The total timeline from start to finish for this project is anticipated to be about 12 months so we will be keeping our team and the public updated as things progress!

New Five-Year Strategic Plan

And last, but not least, I'm very excited to share that our new five-year Strategic Plan was approved by the hospital's Board March 27th.

Development of our five-year plan was a direct result of thoughtful, positive, collaborative engagement with more than 1,000 individuals including members of our health care team, partners, stakeholders, patients and families, and their voices are clearly reflected in the document that we are in the process of rolling out.

At its core, this version of our Strategic Plan revolves around caring. Our patients (all who receive services), their families, as well as the friends, neighbors, and caregivers they consider family are at the heart of our plan and will remain our focus as we enhance, build upon and shape the services we provide in the days, months and years to come.

Our hospital was built on a foundation of caring by its founders who vowed to address the unmet needs of the community and ensure the population's most vulnerable residents were cared for. While this mission has evolved, it's one we continue to uphold today, and our plan reflects this in so many ways.

I look forward to sharing more details of this plan with you in the coming weeks. Until then, know that we are working hard, through all of our endeavors, to ensure that the quality care you and your loved ones need and deserve not only meets, but exceeds your expectations.

PRH Works Hard To Ensure Evolving Accessibility Needs Are Met And Exceeded

For many years, our hospital has addressed accessibility through the work of a large committee with broad representation that creates and implements a plan to identify, prevent and remove accessibility barriers. This Board-approved plan can be found on our website.

The Accessibility Plan also addresses the evolving needs of our patients and ensures that we, as a health care organization, are compliant with provincial legislation.

Our accessibility work is broadly defined, referring not only to our hospital's physical space but also to policy development, employee and volunteer training, procurement of goods and services, customer service, employment (safety plans and recruitment), public information and the PRH website.

Some examples of the work that's been done in these areas over the past few years include:

- The re-design of the Rehabilitation patio
- The installation of new parking equipment in the Deacon and Mackay Street parking lots
- The addition of elevator audio cues
- The installation of accessible paper towel dispensers and electronic door openers
- Aligning action plans with our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee
- Visual audits with members of the Patient and Family Advisory Council to identify accessibility improvement ideas
- Ensuring that our website is compliant to meet the standards for persons with visual concerns
- Updating policies in HR for accommodation of workers with disabilities
- Establishing assessment processes for all purchased equipment to ensure it meets accessibility guidelines.

But the work doesn't stop there. With an aging population and recognition that accessibility goes beyond the physical attributes of our hospital, we are always looking for ways to improve above and beyond what is required.

This means finding better ways to provide direction and wayfinding throughout our buildings, introducing improved translation services, looking at the way we do things from a "senior-friendly" perspective, updating our Service Animal Policy and installing a hitching post in an appropriate area for those in our region who may travel to the hospital by horse and buggy.

In addition, we have launched a public-facing email address accessibility@prh.email, and an accessibility feedback form on our website's accessibility page. If there are ways in which we can do better, or if you feel some aspect of accessibility needs to be addressed, please be sure to let us know.

Staff And Physicians Gather To Celebrate Hospital-Wide Achievements

Recently, we gathered to celebrate a cross-section of achievements for which our hospital and health care team have been recognized. Each represented either an enhancement to the patient experience, an improvement in the care we deliver or a way in which we give back to the broader community. Four of these are showcased below.

Advancements Made In Stroke Care

Last October, in consultation with the Regional Stroke Centre, our District Stroke Centre rolled out an improved Code Stroke process, utilizing TNK (Tenecteplase), a powerful blood-thinning medication given to patients experiencing a stroke caused by a sudden blockage of an artery that supplies blood to the brain. With this change in medication, there's been a noticeable 7-8 minute decrease in our "door to needle" times - meaning, on average, patients are receiving treatment, if eligible, within 48.7 minutes. In addition to improving the process, because TNK is given as a single dose, it means faster treatment for our patients.

In addition, PRH continues to be a provincial leader with 98.7% of stroke and TIA patients treated on our inpatient acute stroke unit during their hospital stay. These same patients who may need rehabilitation are quickly transferred to our inpatient Rehabilitation program within four days of admission - this is one quarter of the time that other patients in the Champlain region are waiting to receive stroke rehabilitation services.

Surgical Services Team Recognized For Participation In National Quality Improvement Initiatives

Our Surgical Services team has participated in the *National Surgical Quality Improvement Plan* and the *Ontario Quality Improvement Plan* since

2018. This program provides surgical patient outcome information enabling the team to identify and implement quality improvement initiatives.

This year, PRH has received the distinction as an *American College of Surgeons Surgical Quality Partner*. This designation means that PRH has demonstrated adherence to the most rigorous standards in surgical quality showing commitment to maintaining, evaluating, and improving surgical quality standards for patients. Department representatives regularly review our data and seek out opportunities to improve, while the team as a whole helps implement all necessary changes to drive improvement.

Two primary areas of focus showing great success to date have been a reduction in opioid prescribing post operatively and surgical site infection rates.

Pharmacy Upgrades Contribute To Success Accreditation

We are proud to share that, as a result of the latest Pharmacy department renovations, our hospital has one of the region's first hospital-based pharmacies to be completely compliant with the standards of the National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities (NAPRA) and the Ontario College of Pharmacists (OCP).

Materials Management Department Supports Hospitals In Need

Our Materials Management team has been recognized for their ongoing support of several Cuban hospitals, including a paediatric hospital and a heart institute, through the donation of used and expired medical products.

The donations are facilitated through non-profit groups, *Not Just Tourists* and the *Canada Cuba Care Connection*.



Staff from multiple departments attended our recent ceremony to speak about their teams' achievements, celebrate those involved and accept the awards to be displayed on the units.

Orthopaedic Surgery Helped White Lake Resident Get His Life Back On Track



Steve Waterston

White Lake resident Steve Waterston says that he has finally regained his life and his freedom thanks, in part, due to the life changing surgery he had at PRH and the care he has received from all of his health care professionals.

Two years ago, the 58-year-old year old was skating with family when he heard a "crunching" sound in his hip and experienced pain that radiated into his back and leg. After multiple diagnostic tests and physician consultations, an MRI at PRH confirmed a hip injury and the need for hip replacement surgery.

Steve was waitlisted for the procedure and suffered excruciating pain for the better part of two years. While he praised the care and compassion he received through community-based physiotherapy, the pain worsened. As a result he had limited his mobility and was forced to make

the difficult decision to step back from his automotive shop, doing what he could virtually while his son managed the business in his place.

Thankfully, an opportunity arose to have his surgery in Pembroke with orthopaedic surgeon Dr. George Mathew. Following an initial assessment, Steve said it wasn't long before he got the call that the surgery would take place December 6th.

As part of his preparations, Steve heeded the doctor's recommendations and did what he could to prepare his body for surgery and recovery, while also connecting with local resources to ensure that he would have the equipment he required at home post-op.

Acknowledging that the surgery itself couldn't have gone better, Steve had nothing but praise for all involved in his care – noting that they were a "wonderful team" with a high level of professionalism, knowledge and compassion. He also appreciated Dr. Mathew's transparency in what to expect throughout the process and said that once the initial surgical pain was managed, he

was very pleased to see that his hip and back pain that he had lived with for so long, was now gone.

In fact, Steve felt so good that he was up using his walker and baking a cake two days after discharge much to the amusement of his family who credited that to the pain medication while Steve called it testimony to the excellent work of Dr. Mathew.

He adds that having a support system in place to assist with recovery, especially in the first 2-3 weeks was very important and he feels blessed that his family was there for him.

Now a little more than four months post-surgery, Steve continues with physiotherapy in the community, has made some transformative lifestyle changes and even returned to light duties at work on April 1st.

He said that his surgical experience at PRH helped get his life back on track and he is now looking at life with a renewed sense of optimism as a result.

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

Patient advisors volunteer in various capacities to provide feedback and ideas that help us improve the quality and safety of the care we provide.

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




Cancer Care CAMPAIGN

YOU DID IT!

\$3,500,000.00

Raised for local cancer care!

The Cancer Care Campaign will fund the expansion, upgrades and overall improvements for the Pembroke Regional Hospital's Chemotherapy and Medical Day Care Unit! Renovations are now underway!

Thank you!

The Pembroke Regional Hospital Foundation is very excited to update you on the success of our *Cancer Care Campaign*. This incredible campaign of \$3.5 million dollars was launched in early 2021 and, thanks to supporters in our community just like you and some incredible fundraisers like *Catch the Ace* and our signature *Black & White Gala*, the campaign has come to a successful close.

Renovations to the Chemotherapy and Medical Day Care unit have already begun!

We thank our community for their incredible support!

Help Keep Healthcare Close to Home!

Building on the Pembroke Regional Hospital's commitment to having quality care closer to home, we are focused on raising the necessary funds that will advance and expand our ability to provide top quality patient care, and ensure our teams have access to the very best equipment and advanced technology to serve our community.

As the purchase of equipment is not funded by the government, it is up to the generous support of the community to ensure that we have state-of-the-art equipment available at PRH. In continuing the Foundation's mission of raising, managing and distributing funds to our hospital for it's highest priority equipment needs, here are some of the upcoming items we are raising funds for:



Our hospital's high priority needs:

- **Replacement CT Scanner:** PRH's existing CT Scanner (purchased in 2012) currently services 12,000 cases per year and is approaching end-of-life (estimated date of 2026). An updated CT Scanner is required to ensure patients have continued access to this critical diagnostic imaging service at Pembroke Regional Hospital.
- **Health Information System (EPIC):** Recognized as the system with **MyChart**, all information will be transferred from a primarily paper-based system to a connected digital system that receives and organizes all patient information. Having this system will improve staff and physician access to patient information from other sites in the region that use this technology, while patients will be able to access their information through **MyChart**, a patient portal that enables access to health information including appointments, lab and diagnostic imaging results, and discharge/medication instructions.
- **Other equipment needs:** Bone Density Test Unit, Thyroid Uptake System, Ultrasound machines, patient beds, Maternal Fetal Monitor, GlideScope and more.

You can be part of this remarkable journey to advance local healthcare by making a donation using the attached donation form or becoming a **Monthly Donor**.

Thank you for your support of local healthcare!

YES, I will help my Pembroke Regional Hospital

- Here is a one-time gift to help my PRH when it needs me the most.
- I want to make a monthly gift to ensure the continued health and well being of Renfrew County families for the foreseeable future.
- I wish to make a pledge gift of \$_____ per year for 3 years to act as a transformation gift towards the greatest equipment needs at the Pembroke Regional Hospital.

Gift Amount: \$30 \$50 \$100 Other: _____

Please use my credit card: VISA MasterCard AMERICAN EXPRESS

DONATE ONLINE: www.prhfoundation.com/donate

Full Name	Card #	Expiry Date
Phone Number	Email (for electronic newsletters and tax receipt)	
Address	Municipality, Province	Postal Code

Charitable registration #: 870047610 RR0001 705 Mackay Street, Pembroke, ON K8A 1G8 (613) 732-2811 x 7408

More ways to help:

DONATE ONLINE: prhfoundation.com/donate



Catch the Ace:

prhcatchtheace.ca



Spring Lotto For Healthcare:

prhspringlotto.ca

Charitable registration #: 870047610 RR0001
705 Mackay Street, Pembroke, ON K8A 1G8
(613) 732-2811 x 7408

By selecting "Recurring Monthly Donation", you can make a gift that keeps on giving and help us purchase our highest priority needs, as we need them! For additional information, please call (613) 732-2811 extension 7408 or email: foundation@prh.email. To make an online donation visit www.PRHFoundation.com.