QHC is hard at work on the hospitals’ strategic direction of enhancing the quality and safety of care. As of September all hospitals are using new armbands and staff continue to be reminded to always use two patient identifiers. On September 17, QHC Belleville General Hospital was the last QHC hospital to eliminate the blue hospital cards. This means all QHC hospitals are using new armbands. The old armbands were embossed using the blue cards, which is like taking a photocopy and was not always as legible.

The new armbands are laser printed clearly in a bigger font and they are easier for QHC staff to put on the patient. The armbands say the patient’s name, date of birth, health card number, sex and hospital unit number. Alongside these changes, all QHC staff are being reminded to use two patient identifiers every time they provide a service. Patient identifiers are full name, hospital number, health card number, and date of birth. This is important even when the staff member knows the patient, which is of course common when the patient has been in QHC’s care for several weeks and in the smaller communities the hospitals serve.

“This work is just one of the ways that QHC’s employees are living the value of always strive to improve. We’re reminding our staff to use two patient identifiers each and every time they provide a service. Along with this, we’re asking our patients and their family members to not be offended when we check their identity many times during their care here, and often it will be the same person checking their identity more than once. We are committed to providing high quality and safe care to our patients, and this is just one of the ways we’re working with our patients to keep them safe,” said Debbie Mora, Director Professional Practice and Corporate Practice Leader (Nursing).

QHC is hard at work on the hospitals’ strategic direction of enhancing the quality and safety of care.
The elephant in the room

Have you spotted the little blue elephants at Quinte Health Care? If not, keep your eyes peeled, as these small objects are rapidly appearing at locations across Quinte Health Care. The elephants help signify a safe place to talk about mental illness.

By displaying the little blue elephants, Quinte Health Care is helping show that their hospitals are a safe place for someone to talk about any mental health issues they or their family may be having. The elephants signify that someone can voice their concerns without fear of being looked upon differently.

The elephants have been supplied by the Mental Health Support Network South Eastern Ontario (MHSN).

Garry Laws, Executive Director of MHSN, said, “The little blue elephants are a fun way to help reduce the incredible stigma associated with mental illness. Stigma can seem invisible but its effects are sadly not – a true elephant in the room. Some people with mental illness say that that stigma can be far worse than the illness itself. The elephant is a small but powerful symbol and we are thrilled that Quinte Health Care is taking action to help reduce stigma related to mental health issues.”

Pat Gray is a board member with MHSN and works part-time at Sils 5 at QHC Belleville General Hospital. She said, “It would be lovely if these elephants could help reduce the stigma that regrettably still surrounds mental illness. I hope that the elephants give our patients and their families some freedom through this simple but effective gesture.”

Linda Moore-Cann’s brilliant idea

Submitted by: Lori Pike RN BScN ICP
Linda Moore-Cann, Physio Assistant on the Inpatient Unit at TMH, has been busy implementing an innovative way to separate clean wheelchairs from those that require cleaning after patient use.

Recognizing the need to stop the spread of microorganisms, Linda was never quite sure when she found a wheelchair in or near her department if it had been cleaned and ready for reuse. She felt she had to track down staff who could give her that information and in some cases wheelchairs were possibly being cleaned for a second time if there was no one available to ensure a wheelchair was in fact clean.

Linda came up with an easy way to track wheelchair cleaning using laminated green tags for clean and red tags for wheelchairs that require cleaning. When a wheelchair is returned to the department after use, a red tag is attached to the handle. This tells HSR staff the chair requires cleaning. Once cleaned, the red tag is removed and a green tag is placed on the handle to indicate the chair is ready for reuse. The green tag is removed when the chair is reassigned.

In addition, Linda has started using a laminated orange tag as a name tag on wheelchairs and walkers to ensure the correct piece of equipment remains with the correct patient. For infection control, this also helps to stop the spread of microorganisms.

Using a staff huddle to introduce her initiative, her colleagues in physiotherapy, staff on the Inpatient Unit and HSR staff have jumped on board to support this initiative.

As part of the hospitals’ strategic direction to enhance the quality and safety of care, Quinte Health Care is replacing the paper based HIRS (Hospital Incident Reporting System) with an electronic event reporting system named “QHC Cares.”

QHC Cares is focused on improving patient safety and helps staff to report patient events, which may involve falls, medications, tests, treatments or procedures, infection prevention and control, patient care equipment, nutritional services, and environmental conditions, in a timelier manner.

It is critical that QHC provides the safest care possible to patients and the community. When an event or a near miss event occurs action must be taken which leads QHC to a learning.

Melanie Maracle, Manager of Corporate Risk, said, “QHC Cares is part of QHC’s dedication to encouraging a culture of patient safety and transparency. It is important that when all of our staff do have access to QHC Cares by the end of 2012, they report all events including near misses so we can learn from them and take action.”

QHC Cares is now in the second phase of the pilot project. The pilot groups include Laboratory Services; Belleville General Hospital Diagnostic Imaging, Medical Device Reprocessing Department (MDRD), OR and ICU; Prince Edward County Memorial Hospital Diagnostic Imaging, Inpatient Unit and Emergency Department; and Trenton Memorial Hospital Diagnostic Imaging. Staff not included in these areas will continue to complete the HIRS paper based form as the electronic version is phased in.

Cheryl Harrison, Corporate Manager of Laboratory Services and Infection Prevention and Control, is currently using the system as part of the pilot and said, “Lab staff found QHC Cares easy to use which helps ensure that the event is quickly brought to the attention of supervisors and managers and allowed staff to began reporting right away. It makes an event easier to investigate if it is reported and followed up on close to when it occurs. Additionally, reports can be run so trending will be easier.”

QHC Cares: Event reporting system now being piloted

Linda Moore-Cann with a tagged wheelchair along with HSR staff members James Gibson and Bonnie Wilson (left to right)

Pat Ford enters a report into QHC Cares as Cheryl Harrison and Gina Hendrick look on (right to left)
Participants enjoyed face painting at the Take Back the Night event, organized in part by QHC’s Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Response program. Take Back the Night is part of efforts to end sexual violence and lend support to survivors. The event at Zwick’s Park also included poetry reading and music.

The Prince Edward County Quilters Guild presented the MacSteven Dialysis Clinic at Prince Edward County Memorial Hospital with comfort quilts for the patients. Patients of the clinic receive treatment three times a week, for three to five hours. Pictured are (left to right) Teresa Sager, Dialysis Clinic charge nurse; Lori Broad, nurse in the Dialysis Clinic; Gisele Feuillault, who led the group making the quilts; Deelia Evans, public relations representative for the PEC Quilters Guild; and Sandra Root, nurse in the Dialysis Clinic.

Christanne Lewis, District Stroke Manager, celebrated her 50th birthday this month and is recruiting 50 new monthly donors. For more information on this fundraiser for the Belleville General Hospital Foundation, see www.bghf.ca

The On Air for Health Care radiothon raised almost $27,000 for the Prince Edward County Memorial Hospital Foundation, Trenton Memorial Hospital Foundation, and Belleville General Hospital Foundation.

Quinte 6 won the Marathon Man t-shirt contest with 120% of the team buying t-shirts - yes, some people bought more than one! As their prize, Senior Leadership Team members Mary Clare Egberts, Katherine Stansfield, Jan Richardson, and Susan Rowe baked the team cupcakes and presented them along with Wynand Bekker, Marathon Man. Over 200 shirts were sold to QHC employees and Wynand raised more than $27,000 for the Oncology Clinic.

The BGH Foundation’s British Invasion gala raised over $250,000 net to help purchase life-saving medical equipment. Attendees included (left to right) Christy Russett, Administrative Assistant Stroke Prevention Clinic; Christanne Lewis, District Stroke Coordinator; Jeanne Ernst, Clinical Educator ICU/Recovery; and Michelle Slapkauskas, Stroke Prevention Clinic Nurse.
**Prince Edward County Memorial Hospital Auxiliary scholarships**

Prince Edward County Memorial Hospital Auxiliary awards three scholarships annually to deserving secondary school graduates who live in Prince Edward County. This year, thanks to the generosity of the Auxiliary Board, the Auxiliary was able to award an additional scholarship to another qualifying student.

The four recipients are Alison Stenhouse, a P.E.C.I. graduate who is continuing her education at Trent University (Bachelor of Science, Nursing); Emma Windfeld, a Nicholson Catholic College graduate who will attend McGill University (Bachelor of Science, Nutrition); Natalie Lockyer, a P.E.C.I. graduate who is continuing her education at the University of Ottawa (Bachelor of Science, Psychology, leading to pre-med studies); and Curtis Burns, a P.E.C.I. graduate (2011) who will attend St Lawrence College in Pre-Health Sciences.

The Auxiliary extends each of these students their best wishes for success in their chosen field.

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**Living QHC’s values: Imagine it’s you**

Rose Bebe, Manager of Patient Registration at TMH, is a great example of QHC’s imagine it’s you value. As Wendy Warner, Executive Director of the Trenton Memorial Hospital Foundation, says, “Rose has championed, not once but twice, a collection for one of our staff members who has taken seriously ill. I also want to recognize all the staff who have contributed to this fund and shown their support too. It demonstrates what a great sense of community we have here at TMH when so many staff have gone out of their way to show their support for this family during a difficult time in their lives.”

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**Belleville General Hospital Auxiliary quilt raffle**

A beautiful quilt was made and donated by BGHA member Doris Granger for the Belleville General Hospital Auxiliary’s raffle. Raffle tickets are two for $5. Raffle tickets are now on sale in the BGHA Gift Shop located at the Main Entrance of BGH (Hastings 3) and in the Volunteer Office on Quinte 2 (near the cafeteria and Occupational Health & Safety). The quilt will be on display in the Gift Shop until the December 11 draw.

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**Thank You!**

**Kudos to Prince Edward County Memorial Hospital team**

I have worked in the health care setting for over 40 years and wanted to say all the staff from admitting to the nurses and doctors in the Endoscopy Unit were wonderful. I was more than happy to attend your hospital.

**Compliment on cleanliness from TMH patient**

This is the cleanest and nicest smelling hospital I’ve ever been in.

**Thank you to Sills 3 Inpatient Rehab at BGH**

I benefited from what could be considered one of the best staffed, equipped, patient-oriented facilities of its type in Ontario.

The apparent commitment to professionalism and out-performing expectation seems to be understood and delivered by all employees with, from my observation, no exceptions.

My recovery was both facilitated and even accelerated due to the excellent care provided by all involved on Sills 3, an outstanding rehabilitation entity, here, in our community.

Correction: Please note the recent steam trap survey resulted in Union Gas giving QHC a rebate of $2,400.

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**Retirements**

**Janice Hitchon**

After 33 years with QHC, Janice Hitchon is retiring. She started in 1979 as an ACC clerk on Quinte 6 and since then has been in Finance. Although Janice will “miss the people at QHC for sure,” she is looking forward to volunteering and spending more time with her six grandchildren.

**Margaret Lepp**

Margaret Lepp is retiring after working at QHC since 1980. Her favourite part of her role at QHC was “the satisfaction of working with patients.” She worked in the ICU for 20 years, was then head nurse of Q5 medicine for five years, then PACU staff, and finally QHC’s first nursing educator. Her last year and a half has been spent in Diabetes Education. In her retirement Margaret will do more travelling and spend more time with her two grandchildren.

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**Children’s Holiday Party**

for children of QHC staff

November 25 at Belleville Empire Theatre

Sign up no later than Friday, October 26 outside the cafeteria at each of the hospitals, QHC BGH Human Resources or Sills Admin Office

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**QHC VITAL SIGNS NEWSLETTER**

Published by QHC Communications Department

Editor: Miranda Germani

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**Prince Edward County Memorial Hospital Auxiliary’s Festival of Trees**

Silent auction of trees, bake sale (Saturday), entertainment. Second Time Around shop and Santa! November 30, December 1-2 Isaiah Tubbs - West Lake

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**Children’s Holiday Party**

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