QHC holiday celebration event - a time to say thank you for another year of providing exceptional care

Never underestimate the power behind the words “Thank you”. This small, simple phrase takes only a moment to express yet can make a tremendous difference in the lives of our colleagues.

Between December 16 and 19, QHC Senior Leadership, Directors and Managers came together with staff in a holiday celebration event to mingle and as a way to say thank you for another year of providing exceptional care to the people in our communities. Staff were invited to step away from their busy work environments, relax and to take in the beauty of the holiday season. Festive music piped in the background, holiday sweets were plentiful, and there was even the chance to win a prize for anyone who adorned their festive holiday sweater.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to be part of this event and again, thank you for all your hard work this past year.

QHC Vice President recognizes accomplishments at QHC PEMCH

It all started with a plea to help increase the flu vaccination rate among QHC staff. QHC’s newest Vice President, Jeff Hohenkerk, vowed that whichever QHC hospital had a staff flu vaccination rate of 51 percent or higher, the staff at that hospital would have the chance to win a day off with pay. As an added incentive, he also agreed to dress up as an Elf and spend the day at the hospital completing any tasks that were asked of him.

The staff at QHC PEMCH had a flu vaccination rate of 63.5 percent and the winner of the day off with pay was Tracy Brisley, who works in Hospitality Services. Jeff, who was decorated in an elf hat and a festive holiday sweater made by his daughter, cheerfully spent the afternoon of December 18 at QHC PEMCH completing a multitude of tasks including serving food and washing down a stretcher.

Lisa Mowbray, Manager of Patient Services at QHC PEMCH said that Jeff was a great sport. “The sweater he was wearing was unruly hot. I’m impressed that he kept it on the entire day.” Jeff said that the staff at PEMCH were a pleasure to be around and that it was a fun and festive day at PEMCH. “I had so much fun acting as Jeff the Elf,” he said. “The staff were all so welcoming and thankfully they didn’t have me to anything too embarrassing,” he added.

Kudos to the staff at PEMCH for achieving the highest flu vaccination rate of all four QHC hospitals and thank you to ‘Jeff the Elf’ for taking time from his busy duties at the ‘North Pole’ to recognize and celebrate in the achievements at QHC PEMCH and to spread holiday cheer.

QHC Vice President recognizes accomplishments at QHC PEMCH

I just want to take this time to thank all of the staff on Sills 5 who, during my battle with breast cancer, made Christmas something special for both myself and my 11 year old son. Thank-you very much for all of the wonderful Christmas gifts you bought. We were just amazed! Even just one gift would have been plenty, but my son was so excited to see that huge pile of gifts under the tree was entirely for him. Your generous spirit is incredible! It truly made his day to get all of those fantastic presents.

He especially loves his scooter and can’t wait to take it out once the weather is nice. Thank you also for the surprise gifts under the tree that were for me. The pajamas and housecoat are so lovely and have already been put to good use. Thank you so much for all of the love, time, and energy you put into selecting the perfect presents for us. You are all so thoughtful and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts for helping to make our Christmas morning a magical experience and definitely one we will remember.

Love and hugs,
Lisa McCumber (Daughter of Sharon Sallans, RPN on Sills 5)

More letters can be found on p. 4

Exceptional care at QHC
Preventing Malnutrition in Hospital

Written by: Sue DesJardins, R.D., Clinical Nutrition

Registered Dietitians are helping to improve patient outcomes. The Medication Pass program (MedPass) provides patients with a high calorie liquid supplement (Resource 2.0) in 60 ml portions (usually four times daily). The goal of the program is to reduce supplement wastage and improve patient compliance with taking supplements. These supplements prevent weight loss and malnutrition and all its associated complications for patients who are trying to heal and get well.

MedPass was initiated at QHC BGH and in 2013, was expanded to QHC TMH and QHC PECMH with great success. Supplement wastage has been reduced and reports indicate that patients are demonstrating increased consumption of the Resource 2.0 supplement. When given four times daily, the Resource 2.0 supplement provides patients with 480 calories and 20g of protein per day, along with other nutrients.

How does it work? Patients who are thought to be ‘at risk’ are identified by physicians, nursing staff and other health care professionals and a referral is sent to the Clinical Nutrition department. The Dietitians obtain a physician order for MedPass, and then nursing staff incorporate Resource 2.0 as part of the patient’s medication regime. “Nursing staff have been both supportive and successful at implementing MedPass on the designated floors. They have provided encouragement to patients to take the supplement as ordered, increasing overall consumption,” said Christine Strocel, Registered Dietitian.

The plan is to expand the program to other units and to capture measured weights on all patients receiving MedPass. Strocel says, “Obtaining measured weights (a minimum of once per week) is important in determining our patients’ nutritional and clinical status. It also provides an indication of the impact that MedPass has on the patient’s weight. In the areas where MedPass is rolled out, the nursing staff are to be commended for capturing measured weights – which is a very helpful and important tool in caring for our patients,” she added.

Thanks to all who have participated in the successful implementation of the MedPass program to date. We look forward to ongoing support for this important initiative led by the Clinical Nutrition department.

15 Years for QHC

Recent Blog post written by QHC President and CEO, Mary Clare Egberts

This past November marked the 15th anniversary of Quinte Health Care. It was November 26, 1998 that Quinte Health Care was born from the amalgamation of the former standalone hospitals, under the direction of the Health Services Restructuring Commission. I can imagine the sense of loss that many community members, staff, physicians and volunteers felt at that time, when their local hospital – something so valued in their community – was being changed in fundamental ways and without their agreement. It would have been especially difficult when people couldn’t see the benefits that the new system could bring. I can appreciate why many people were reluctant to accept, let alone embrace, this new hospital system.

Perhaps the 15th anniversary of QHC is finally time when we can put any lingering resentment of the amalgamation behind us. It is an opportunity to acknowledge that while mistakes have been made and this system of four hospitals is not perfect (no system ever is), it does provide us with the ability to work even better together and deliver the best possible care to this entire region.

While we must always keep an eye to the future, the proud histories of our hospitals also need to continue to be acknowledged and celebrated. Each of our hospitals have a unique story of how and when they were created, but with some similar themes to all four:

• A group of committed and determined community members came together with the common goal of creating a hospital in their local community.
• The hospitals were built with the help of extensive community donations and volunteerism.
• Each hospital quickly became a point of pride in the community, with strong emotional ties for many people.

Rather than being a health care “corporation”, I prefer to think of QHC as being like a family with four siblings – each with its own personality, each bringing value to the family in different ways, but each vitally and equally important to the whole. Like a family, we can also always do a better job of supporting and respecting each other.

The first 15 years of Quinte Health Care were a challenging in so many ways. Given the state of Ontario’s economy and the health care transformation underway in Ontario, I certainly can’t guarantee that the next 15 years will be easy. However, I have great hope for the future of QHC and all four hospitals. Thanks to hard work over the past 15 years, QHC now has a strong foundation to build upon. Our team members have the tools, experience, processes, direction and dedication to continue to enhance patient care and improve the patient experience. We also have the commitment to improve the work life for every member of our team.

While we must respect and honour the proud histories of our hospitals, we also must commit to our shared future. The future of QHC is indeed bright thanks to the combined efforts of the teams at all four hospitals. Working together we will have one strong organization that can provide exceptional health care for our region and an exceptional workplace for the QHC team.

To read other blog posts written by Mary Clare, visit myqhc/QHC News

Mandatory e-learning

Do you have a few minutes to spare? Why not complete a module or two of your mandatory e-learning?

If you have not completed your mandatory courses or attended corporate education as a new employee since April 1, 2013, you have until March 31, 2014 to complete your courses. Visit myqhc Infonet page to learn more

Did you find all the hazards and errors at the patient safety station during the December skills fair?

Thank you to all who joined Joan Dorland and Shari Fish at the patient safety booth during the skills fair. Listed below are the hazards, errors or potential hazards that were on display at the patient safety station. Congratulations to Brandy Banford (IPU, PECMH) and Pam Hunter (Endoscopy, QHC BGH) on winning the gift basket prize.

1. No patient ID band
2. Allergy band did not list all allergies
3. Falls Risk Poster missing over bed
4. IV site not labeled with date of insertion
5. IV medication label for KCL was incorrect (40 not 20)
6. Water spill on the floor
7. Walker not within patient reach
8. Call bell was on the floor
9. IV line was not dated
10. Medication cup with pills left at bedside
11. Brakes not engaged
12. IV was running at the wrong rate
13. Bed in high position
14. No order for the IV solution
15. Having an IV increases risk for fall
Diabetes educators at QHC working to promote awareness of the new Canadian Diabetes Guidelines

By the year 2020, it is expected to jump to 1,903,000. This is a 37 percent increase from 2013 to 2020. The estimated cost of diabetes in 2013 is $5.6 billion in Ontario and by the year 2020 the cost will be $7 billion! Factors that are influencing the rise in diabetes in Ontario are higher rates of overweight and obesity cases along with high risk population groups such as Asian, African, Hispanic and Aboriginal descent.

The diabetes team at QHC, which comprises of Registered Nurses and Registered Dietitians, has an outpatient and inpatient component to the program. During the past couple of years the Diabetes Team has succeeded in reaching the ministry standards. To promote awareness of the new Canadian Diabetes Guidelines, Diabetes educators will be wearing slogan buttons to try to encourage patients and staff to talk about diabetes.

Debbie Donahue, Diabetes educator and Team Leader, said that clients often say that they do not have to monitor their blood glucose; they depend on how they feel. “Our button slogan is that if you don’t have superpowers, then use a glucose meter,” she said. “We hope that this message will encourage discussion for people with diabetes and help them learn why they should use a blood glucose meter.”

The diabetes team works with staff, physicians, professional practice and patients to spread the word about diabetes. If you see one of the diabetes educators walking in the hall, you are encouraged to stop and speak with them about diabetes. With statistics showing that one in ten people have diabetes, we all likely know someone who has it.

Meet Peggy Payne, PECMH Auxiliary President and one of QHC’s extraordinary volunteers

Peggy first realized how much she loved to travel and learn when she spent a year in Baltimore as her father studied at John’s Hopkins - a world class University. Peggy gained her B.Sc. at the University of Toronto, learned teacher training in Exeter, England then worked as a beginner teacher near Cambridge and Bristol. When she returned to Toronto she began a 33-year career in teaching and school administration and went on a teaching exchange to Melbourne, Australia. She furthered her education by gaining a Master’s in Education in Curriculum Studies, which included a focus on reading disabilities and developed experience with students who had special needs.

Peggy and her husband both retired from teaching and shortly following her retirement, she began volunteering with the PECMH Auxiliary in the Coffee Shop, Dialysis, Meals on Wheels, Tag Day and with the Festival of Trees. After two years as a volunteer and one year as Vice President she was elected President in May of 2013. The PECMH Auxiliary has 11 Board members, 22 managers of projects/services and four treasurers, so Peggy feels that the work is shared among a well-organized, future oriented group of individuals who works hard at maintaining a balance between their volunteer work and other interests. “It is so much easier to join an Auxiliary where the Past Presidents have done the heavy lifting on organizational structure, By-Laws and legislative compliance,” said Peggy.

Peggy Walker, Volunteer and Spiritual Care Liaison, said that all QHC volunteers are to be commended, especially those who take on leadership roles within our Auxiliaries. “It takes an enormous amount of dedication and professionalism to handle the many issues, decisions and legal requirements of operating a non-profit organization within a hospital setting,” she said. “Peggy is a wonderful example of a competent leader investing her diverse skill set supporting QHC Prince Edward County Memorial Hospital. We are extremely fortunate to have her onboard,” she added.

Peggy spent years learning and drawing on experiences from watching her parents help and care for people so it’s no wonder why Peggy’s personality and her ability to help people seems to come so naturally. Lisa Mowbray, Manager of Patient Services at QHC PECMH, said that Peggy exemplifies what it means to be a great volunteer. “With her warm smile, kind heart and tireless dedication, Peggy provides exceptional leadership to the PECMH Auxiliary,” she said. “Patients, families and staff are grateful for Peggy and the many other volunteers who touch the lives during their often difficult times in hospital,” she added. Peggy claims that staying positive and maintaining a healthy sense of humor can often mean the difference to brightening ones day. “The executive role takes more time than I had imagined but I try to stay in touch with my skeleton - particularly my wishbone, my backbone and my funny bone.”

Thank you to Peggy and to all our volunteers at QHC for your ongoing work and dedication to helping the people in our communities while under our care.

QHC is a reduced scent environment - Please respect our reduced scent policy

There continues to be instances where staff, due to severe allergic reactions to scented products worn by other health care providers, patients or visitors to the hospital, have developed serious symptoms and have had to leave the workplace.

In response to these health concerns, we would like to again remind staff that there are people who work at QHC who are severely allergic to scented products. Products such as perfume, hair spray, cologne and aftershave can trigger reactions such as respiratory distress and headaches. Even a small amount can trigger an attack. Staff and visitors are asked to refrain from wearing heavily scented products while on QHC premises. We also ask that when you make follow up calls to clients regarding future appointments at the hospital, that you remind them of QHC’s reduced scent policy. In a situation where someone has a concern about a staff person wearing scented products to work, they are asked to complete a QHC Cares Incident Report. Only then can a proper investigation be carried out and we try and eliminate these events from reoccurring.

Please remember that QHC is a reduced scent environment and we ask that you review the reduced scent policy under the Occupational Health and Safety policy manual. We thank you for your cooperation in our efforts to accommodate this health concern.
Thank You!

Improving the Patient Experience at QHC PECMH

In an effort to improve the patient experience at QHC PECMH, a vacant and former birthing suite was recently transformed into a waiting area. Thank you to everyone who have more of a voice in their local hospital? Let them know about the opportunity to become a volunteer...

Advisory Council of QHC - 6 vacancies

Do you know someone who would like to have more of a voice in their local hospital? They would like to become a volunteer member of the Advisory Council of QHC? The 64 members of the Advisory Council of QHC serve as an advisory group for the Board of Directors and Senior Leadership Team and provide periodic advice on planning and priority setting. Members receive regular updates on hospital activities and can also apply for appointment to Board Committees.

QHC Board of Directors - 4 vacancies

Quinte Health Care is also accepting applications for its volunteer Board of Directors. This is an excellent opportunity to serve your community in a significant way. Be part of the team of skilled, experienced and committed members of our community who provide essential leadership, stewardship and oversight to QHC and enable us to meet the community’s health care needs now and into the future.

If you know someone whose skills and expertise would be an asset to the Advisory Council or Board of Directors, they can find more information and an application form at www.qhc.on.ca or by contacting Jennifer Brook at 613-969-7400, ext. 2199 or jbrook@qhc.on.ca. The application deadline is February 17, 2014.

TMH Auxiliary presents cheque toward Regional Comprehensive Breast Assessment Centre

In honour of their 60th anniversary, the Trenton Memorial Hospital Auxiliary recently presented a cheque for $10,000 to the TMH Foundation. The TMH Auxiliary pledged $60,000 over a six year period toward the Comprehensive Breast Assessment Centre and this cheque marked their fourth installment.

Auxiliary President, Pat Lafferty presented the cheque to TMH Foundation Executive Director, Wendy Warner. Pictured with the “big cheque” are Dr. Susan James, Wendy Warner, Pat Lafferty, and Lori Farrington.

Kudos to David Watters on a job well done!

On December 23, a representative from the Ministry of Environment visited QHC North Hastings Hospital to complete an inspection with a focus on waste and air facility.

Following the inspection, she met with David Watters, who works in Facility Maintenance, and Tammy Davis, Manager of Patient Services, to give a preliminary report of her findings. During the meeting, she complimented David on how knowledgeable he is related to the facility and its operations, and how organized he is with his record keeping and log books. Please join us in congratulating David Watters on a job well done. His attention to detail, intricate knowledge of the operations of the facility, and waste management made the inspection a great success.

Happy retirement to Lois Stather Thank you for 32 years at QHC

After dedicating 32 years as a Registered Nurse at QHC Belleville General Hospital, Lois Stather is retiring. Lois is well known for her kindness and compassion, and she is a person who always goes above and beyond for her team, patients, families and doctors. With her constant reassurance and “pats on the back,” she helped to develop a team whose reputation exceeds itself. Lois worked on WCA 4 and WCA 3 at QHC BGH at the start of her career as an incharge nurse. She spent her final years at QHC working on Sills 3 in Rehab as the Team Leader. Lois has set her sights on a new challenge outside of the corporation which will allow her more time to focus on yet another new role - that of a new Grandma. Lois, we wish you the best of luck. Your positive attitude and energy will be missed!

Sincerely,
Your friends at QHC

Thank You!

Thank you to the staff at NHH and BGH

I am a nurse practitioner residing and working in Bancroft. I would like to share my recent experience as a patient of QHC. In December 2013, I was diagnosed with a partially obstructing kidney stone, which was causing me a significant amount of pain. In total, I had three ED visits (two at NHH and one at BGH), an ultrasound, pre-op blood work and ECG at NHH, and a visit to same day surgery at BGH.

My attending physician was Dr. Ed Woods and he was excellent. I will recommend to him to all of my patients who need a Urologist. QHC NHH emergency department - Dr. Trozzi, the ultrasound technician and the many nurses providing care during my various visits were fantastic, attentive and caring. At QHC BGH, the staff in Same Day Surgery, OR and in Recovery were all excellent and attentive. I was very impressed with the safety measures and the general desire to explain what was happening and look after my comfort. Overall my experience as a patient of QHC was positive. All staff were friendly, the facilities were clean, and the teamwork at QHC made me well again.

Sincerely, C.M.

Thank you to the staff of the Oncology Clinic

(My wife and I) have been spending a considerable amount of time at the Oncology Clinic at QHC BGH and I must say we are impressed. The design of the facility was clearly very well thought out from both a staff and patient perspective and the design was implemented wonderfully. Dr. Levesque is a remarkable individual and gained (my wife’s) confidence immediately. The staff are caring, courteous and professional. We both come away from visits delighted by the culture of kindness we experience while undergoing a very difficult time.

Kind Regards, S.W.

Thank you to the individuals and teams who dealt with challenging circumstances on the weekend of December 21 and 22

Responding to the circumstances took the combined efforts of everyone from Intensivists and Surgeons, to the critical care and ER teams, maintenance, numerous support areas and management. Even people who were not on call that weekend took calls or came into the hospitals to help. KGH also provided crucial support for the moderate surge by taking a number of QHC’s critical care patients.

We greatly appreciate everyone’s efforts to ensure the safety of our patients and staff in these difficult circumstances.

“A message from QHC Senior Leadership

Thank You!