

TALK IT UP

VICTORIA

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It's all about patient safety!

You come to a hospital to get better, and we want to make that happen in the safest way possible.

Let's face it, hospitals are busy places. By their very nature they can present new risks for patients who are feeling weak and vulnerable. There are the sneezes and coughs of other patients, and lots of moving people and equipment, for example.

Our job is to make this busy environment as safe as it can be for everyone. It's a responsibility we take very seriously, and this issue of *Talk It Up Victoria* highlights some of the many things we do to safeguard our patients.

If you have questions about how your safety is protected at RVH, please ask your caregiver. That's what we're here for!

Hand-washing posters deliver a personal message

Leadership roles come in a variety of forms. At Renfrew Victoria Hospital, 15 staff members have become poster pin-ups for a good cause.

They are leading their colleagues in good hygiene practices.

"Patient safety begins here," advises laboratory staff member Terry Mosco.

"Quality care is in your hands," proclaims the slogan accompanying a photo of Respiratory Therapist Maureen Magill at a hand sanitizer station.

"At RVH, scrubbing is job one," states Lois Thompson, a member of the surgical nursing staff.

"Clean hands are the first step in quality care," is the message on another poster featuring RN Margaret Demuth.

The posters are on display in each of the hospital units.

Kelly Hebert, the health, safety and emergency preparedness coordinator at RVH, says the displays serve as steady, personalized reminders of a basic ingredient of good health care.

In a 2005 publication on patient safety, the World Health Organization identified hand hygiene as the primary measure to reduce infections. "Clean hands prevent suffering and save lives," the document stated.

Cause and effect do not get much clearer than that.

So this year when RVH adopted a new focus on clean hands, it decided to keep the message personal and simple.

In addition to the posters, staff have been engaged in a number of educational activities.

The hospital is tracking how staff put good hand hygiene into practice at RVH. Nurses in various units have been trained to observe their co-workers and perform hand-washing audits on a regular basis. The audits include housekeeping and other support staff as well as hands-on caregivers. The results have improved dramatically over the past year, with approximately twice as many observations of hand-washing



Quality care is in your hands.

Please make the time to wash your hands.

RVH
RENFREW VICTORIA HOSPITAL

before initial contact with a patient, after any risk of exposure to patient body fluid and after contact with a patient.

Hebert says there is still work to be done, even with the latest results showing 92% compliance after a risk of body fluid exposure and 80% compliance after a patient contact.

"We're doing very well, and the staff's overall awareness is definitely on the rise," she says. "We'll be working hard now to continue to build on that positive momentum."



RVH surgical team members Dr. Greg Caza, Dr. Lance Miller and RN Linda Shaw review their safety checklist with a patient.

Surgical checklist provides reassurance for everyone

Hospital operating rooms throughout Ontario are adopting the procedure practised by airline crews before a jet takes off.

A surgical safety checklist is reviewed before each and every operation begins.

In a prompt huddle beside the patient, the full medical team ensures that the appropriate surgical equipment is ready for service. The patient's name, surgical site and surgical procedure are verified.

The process takes about two minutes and, according to everyone involved, it is time well-spent.

"We're all human beings and human error happens," says Cheryl White, manager of the RVH operating room.

"The main reason for the checklist is to facilitate communication and have safety checks built into the process," she adds. "Everybody has a voice and this makes sure that everything is in place."

The list continues as the operation progresses, ending with a standardized debriefing before the patient leaves the operating room.

The comprehensive process includes 32 items to be checked. Everything involved in the procedure is double-checked by the team.

Beginning this summer, hospitals will be required to publicly report their compliance with the surgical checklist requirement.

Research has shown that the use of a checklist in the operating room can reduce the incidence of complications or negative consequences by as much as 30 per cent. A standardized list makes sure that everyone is on the same wavelength and nothing has been forgotten. It's like doing your homework and being prepared for classroom discussions, or having all of the ingredients ready to prepare a big meal.

To prepare for the new procedures, two members of the RVH surgical nursing team attended a regional training session in early March. A template provided by the Canadian Patient Safety Institute was modified to meet RVH's needs and the procedure was introduced on a trial basis later in the month.

"There will be ongoing opportunities for change as required," White says, adding that the practice has been well-received by the staff who take part.

"It's reassuring to the patients too," she says. Patients have commented positively about hearing the messages being shared and knowing that everything is on track. Patients are sometimes even part of the discussion, White notes.

"It sets the tone for full team collaboration," she concludes.

Your protection reaches all corners at RVH

Your safety is our concern from the moment you walk in the door.

Here are just a few of the ways the RVH team creates a safe environment for your care:

- Maintenance staff make sure our entrances are well-lit and clear of ice and snow.
- The housekeeping department keeps the hospital hallways and waiting rooms clean and uncluttered.
- Patients who might be contagious are identified on arrival and instructed to follow protective procedures.
- Our environment is scent-free to avoid unnecessary allergic reactions.
- Lighting and signs are regularly reviewed to make sure all services are accessible to everyone.
- Hand hygiene stations are located throughout the building.
- Needle-less intravenous systems are used to help both patients and staff avoid accidental jabs. RVH's leadership in this initiative earned the hospital a national safety award in 2007.
- Disposable gloves and other personal contact items have been adopted hospital-wide to reduce the risk of exposure to contaminants.
- The physiotherapy department has provided leadership for all staff to help prevent patient falls. This program identifies any patient with an increased risk of falling and alerts staff to the risk. Staff also engage in regular education programs to heighten their awareness of hazards that could cause falls and how best to help patients stay on their feet.
- A medication reconciliation program provides a full history of each patient's prescription or non-prescription medication history, decreasing the risk of an adverse drug reaction.
- Staff use two separate identifiers for all patients and a new reporting system has been adopted to improve communication about patients who are transferred from one unit to another.



Just like the real thing

Practice makes perfect, and the RVH acute care team took advantage of a special opportunity to “practice” medicine earlier this spring. In a simulation exercise, staff were called to respond to a life-saving situation for a 60-year-old patient suffering a heart attack. Between 20 and 30 staff were rapidly deployed to provide care, including doctors, lab and x-ray staff, the respiratory therapist and members of the nursing team. The response was tracked and the information will be used to make sure everyone is up-to-date on all the necessary information to respond to a real-life “code”. Organizers are planning more mock codes in the future to help keep the response techniques fresh in the minds of all staff. “This type of exercise is an excellent way to practise the life-saving work that is done at RVH,” says Vice-President of Patient Services Chris Ferguson.

Tailgating takes on a new meaning at RVH

Tailgate parties began as spur-of-the-moment events in football stadium parking lots.

Fans were ready to have a good time, and seized the opportunity of “found time” to share their enthusiasm for the sport and their team.

Seizing the moment is also the theme of RVH’s new “tailgate” tradition.

In this case, the shared element is a commitment to patient safety, and nursing staff throughout the hospital are invited to join in “tailgates” on various topics related to the theme.

The tailgate notices go out monthly to all department managers, who are invited to find creative ways to share the information with staff. One-pagers are posted on bulletin boards, conversations take place in hallways or over lunch, questions are asked, and ideas and practical tips are shared.



More than 100 RVH staff members participated in an “education blitz” in late March. In-house experts led sessions on topics such as hand hygiene, dealing with domestic violence and safe operation of intravenous pumps.

Accreditation is a national partnership that delivers a focus on quality

The provision of quality health care depends on a closely-woven net of professional partners.

At the local level, different organizations provide a variety of specialized services to make up the full basket of care options.

At the national level, Renfrew Victoria Hospital has an influential and well-respected partner to help ensure the highest quality of care and regard for the safety of the people we serve.

Accreditation Canada will be making a professional visit to RVH at the end of this year. Over the course of three days, two inspectors will review all aspects of the services we provide.

They will interview caregivers, board members and patients. They will meet with teams for in-depth discussions about policies, procedures and practices. They will observe our hospital in action and

they will provide a report on what we do well and where we might improve.

It sounds a lot like an examination and many people consider it in that light.

But we prefer to think of it as an opportunity to collaborate in our constant quest for quality improvement.

Patient safety is at the forefront of the accreditation process and RVH's strategic direction for the year. RVH teams are already focused on accreditation, making sure we meet the 31 required organizational practices for patient safety that are part of the national accreditation criteria.

Those teams are meeting regularly to discuss what we do and how we do it. They are documenting our success, and they are identifying new ways to serve our patients better.

"By participating in accreditation, our RVH teams are evaluating their

performance against national standards," explains RVH CEO Randy Penney. "Our country enjoys a wonderful health care system and accreditation has played a major role in helping to shape many of its positive aspects," he adds.

Penney is clearly a believer in the accreditation process, having volunteered many times to travel nationally and internationally as an Accreditation Canada surveyor.

"As a surveyor, I have witnessed first-hand how accreditation has been driving major changes in all aspects of the industry, from small to large academic organizations, from the North to British Columbia to Newfoundland, across all sectors," he says. "It's a privilege to bring that standard of excellence home to Renfrew and to see our teams meeting and exceeding those national levels of care."

NEW I.D. BANDS



The newest information technology is being used with new wristbands being sported by RVH emergency patients. The barcode on the bands can be scanned and used to confirm patient information throughout their stay and verify information entered in their charts. The technology is more robust and foolproof than the blue card system, and could reduce costs. A team at RVH is reviewing various applications, including labelling of lab specimens, as the potential for hospital-wide use is studied.

Cookbooks are a recipe for fund-raising success!

In the medical world, CT stands for “computed tomography”, a three-dimensional imaging process commonly used to diagnose injuries and disease.

At RVH, CT could also stand for “cooking treats”, since local food enthusiasts have seized opportunities to expand their

recipe collections and support the hospital’s CT fund-raising campaign.

Sales of two popular new cookbooks played a big part in RVH’s CT project, both by adding to the dedicated CT fund and helping get the word out about the significant local undertaking.

The CT fund-raising initiative has now been deemed a success, with donations in the \$1 million range and the diagnostic suite now in its sixth month of active service for local patients.

Here’s how things really got cooking for CT in Renfrew:

“Recipes of the Week” passes the \$5,000 fund-raising mark

When Jeff and Judy Dick published their first cookbook, the title was never in question.

As the editor of the Renfrew Mercury, Jeff’s mother, Elaine, had published the popular “Recipes of the Week” column for years. It was a local tradition, and each week families in the Renfrew area would enjoy common meals at their separate tables, all inspired by that week’s recipe from Elaine.

Jeff and Judy found themselves with boxes of recipes, both published and unpublished, following Elaine’s death. Collecting them in a single book and dedicating it to Elaine was the natural thing to do.

Dedicating any funds raised through the book sales to a local community cause was equally natural.

“She would have put her heart into something like this,” Jeff says. “This captures her spirit and her philosophy.”

And “Recipes of the Week” has clearly captured the imagination of Renfrew area cooks.

Profits from the book sales have now passed the \$5,000 mark and customers still arrive at the Dicks’ J&J Chocolate Sensations store looking for their own copy.



Auxiliary cookbook in second printing

When their first shipment of 500 cookbooks arrived last October, RVH Auxiliary members felt they had a big sales job ahead of them. Within two months, they found themselves completely sold out of stock.

A second shipment of books was recently received, so avid cooks in the area will be relieved to know that copies are once again available for \$15 each at the RVH gift shop, Scott’s Hardware and Stone Meadows Kitchen Shop in Renfrew as well as at Somethin’ Special Gift Shop in Burnstown and O’Reilly’s Treasures and the CandleWick Shop in Cobden.

The cookbook is one of a variety of popular fund-raising initiatives led by the RVH Auxiliary.

Members were pleased to present a \$50,000 cheque to the hospital at its volunteer appreciation lunch in April, representing one-third of the auxiliary’s \$150,000 pledge for the CT project.

Making the donation to CEO Randy Penney in the photo above are, from left, Fran Bonner, Doris Handford, Ruth Stewart and Jean Sills.

What a celebration! The area’s response to the Celebration of Life event resulted in donations of \$13,500 to both RVH and Hospice Renfrew. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this very special community initiative!



The Renfrew
Victoria
Hospital
Foundation

Make RVH your charity of choice. Please call the RVH Foundation office at 613-432-4851 ext. 263, or visit us online at www.rvhfoundation.com to learn more about how you can contribute to the RVH difference.



Spring is bursting with special events

What is your choice of the perfect leisure activity?

- an afternoon on the golf course
- a wild ride through river rapids
- a gala celebration with fine dining, music and champagne
- or maybe doing a turn around the dance floor to your favourite country music tune

Whatever your pleasure, RVH supporters have got something lined up that's sure to suit. Here are just a few of the fund-raising events coming up in the next few weeks:

Auxiliary Gala

The RVH Auxiliary is celebrating its 65th anniversary with a gala evening of dinner and entertainment on **Saturday, May 29**.

Gem Hall at Groves Park Lodge will be decorated in style for the occasion, which will begin with champagne and hors d'oeuvres and continue with dinner, music and entertainment throughout the evening.

In special honour of the auxiliary's 65th anniversary, tickets will be available for \$65 each. All proceeds will support

the group's \$150,000 commitment to the RVH CT project.

Tables of eight are available for those who would like to organize a group outing for the event.



The RVH Golf Classic

The Renfrew Golf Club will be abuzz with RVH supporters on **June 11**, when it will host the 12th annual RVH Golf Classic tournament.

Spaces are available for 36 teams of golfers. Eighteen holes of golf with special prizes, a putting competition, dinner and plenty of fun will all be on the agenda.

With the help of local and corporate sponsors, the event is the hospital's single biggest fund-raising day of the year. Last year, nearly \$42,000 was raised and directed to the CT fund.

Proceeds this year will support the purchase of new dialysis equipment for RVH's region-wide nephrology service.

RiverRun supports RVH

RiverRun is teaming up with the RVH staff wellness committee to offer an RVH Family Day at the popular



rafting resort on **Sunday, June 27**. The day will feature special discounts for hospital employees and their families as well as a contribution to the hospital from funds raised through regular rafting sales. Participants will be invited to select from variety of activities, from a barbeque picnic in the gardens to the roar of the rapids for adventurous types. Watch for more details as the day approaches.

Opera returns

Renfrew's own Kathleen Radke is inviting her colleagues from the international opera community back to Renfrew for a special performance on **Saturday, June 26**. Proceeds will be donated to the RVH Foundation. Mark your calendars now for this fun, cultural event.

Contact the RVH Foundation office for details on any of these events

Also keep an eye for:

Bargains and new finds at the RVH gift shop.

There's always something new on the shelves of the RVH gift shop. Don't forget to stop in and browse the merchandise the next time you visit our hospital. It's a great place to find unique gifts, or maybe just a special treat for yourself.

Healing Garden events

An enthusiastic local group is raising funds for a healing garden at RVH. They envision a quiet outdoor space where patients, staff and visitors can pause, enjoy nature and release stress. A series of special events will raise funds for the project. Watch for details in local media as plans for the next event take shape.



Talk it up Victoria: the Renfrew Victoria Hospital newsletter

Renfrew Victoria Hospital,
499 Raglan St. North,
Renfrew, Ontario K7V 1P6
www.renfrewhosp.com