

Talk it up Victoria

Renfrew Victoria Hospital Your Community Healthcare Centre



Volume Five, Number Three

September 2006

Leading the way through collaboration

*This issue of **Talk It Up Victoria** focuses on how Renfrew Victoria Hospital works with other organizations to provide the best possible care to people in this region.*

Our partnerships in care allow us to move in new directions and deliver programs that wouldn't be possible otherwise. We are sincerely grateful to the organizations that have joined with us in such a positive way. This newsletter offers just a sampling of how integration comes to life at RVH.

New regional cancer program offers chemotherapy in the home

Chemotherapy treatments became a lot more convenient for some Renfrew County cancer patients this summer, thanks to the introduction of a new home-based service.

The Chemotherapy Home Infusion Pump Program (CHIPP) allows patients to receive all or part of their chemotherapy in the comfort of their own home using a continuous infusion pump.

The service is a three-way partnership of the RVH oncology team with Community Care Access Centre nurses throughout the county and The Ottawa Hospital Regional Cancer Program.

Tony Larmond of Pembroke is the first local resident to benefit from CHIPP. He is currently receiving 12 rounds of chemotherapy over a six-month period to treat his colon cancer. Thanks to CHIPP, he has been able to eliminate two trips to Ottawa each month which would have involved three-day stays at the Grimes Lodge while his chemotherapy was infused.

"This is so much better," he says, sitting at his kitchen table.

He points to the cupboard, where home-baked goodies have been delivered by a neighbour. His cat wanders through the room and he gives it a pet. He's thankful for the comfort of sleeping in his own bed.

"The time that they spend at home is time well spent," comments Josée Laplante, care facilitator with The Ottawa Hospital Regional Cancer Program. She notes that being at home can change a patient's outlook on life. It also encourages patients to become more involved in their own care.

Cathy DeGrasse, the Ottawa centre's senior advisor for regional cancer programs, agrees that there are many benefits to community programs.

"It's not just about care closer to home," she says. "It's about quality, safe care closer to home."

CHIPP has been available, but only within the Ottawa area, for the past 12 years. DeGrasse says this expansion to Renfrew County is the first in a series of services that will be regionalized.

"It's going very well," comments Cindy McLennan, RVH's head of oncology nursing.

"Everybody's stepped up to the plate and made us extremely proud," she says of the positive approach of various caregivers who have learned new skills.

"We don't just have the commitment of these people for this program, we have the dedication to make it work," McLennan concludes.



Tony Larmond of Pembroke is thankful for the comforts of home during his chemotherapy treatments.

Unique partnerships with social service agencies extend the circle of care

Hospitals are usually seen as places to care for physical injuries or ailments. But at RVH, that care is extended in a number of unique ways to deal with the psychological impacts of illness or trauma and the effects that can have on personal relationships.

The network of care extending from RVH includes the Regional Assault Care Program that responds through all five Renfrew County hospitals to the needs of men, women or children who have experienced domestic or sexual assault. The service is coordinated by Social Worker Belinda Holmes at RVH.

In 2004, the program expanded when RVH formed a partnership with the Phoenix Centre for Children and Families to provide psychological trauma assessment and counselling.

Phoenix Centre Executive Director Greg Lubimiv says the partnership has dramatically increased the number of youth benefiting from the agency's services. He estimates that referrals rose four- or five-fold since the agreement was signed.

"It allows us to provide that specialty service throughout the county," he notes.

"Renfrew Victoria Hospital has been great to work with," he adds. "Having a hospital that's creative and innovative and able to come out and work with community agencies is very refreshing."

"It works really well for everyone," comments RVH Vice-President of Patient Care Services Nancy Kelly, explaining that it would not be possible for the hospital to have such specialized services readily available on its own.

The hospital has also developed a ground-breaking relationship with Family and Children's Services (FCS) of Renfrew County, the local child protection agency.



Social Worker Belinda Holmes, left, is the coordinator of the RVH regional assault care program. Nisha Parekh, right, is a child protection worker and a valued member of the RVH team.

The arm of care reaches into county high schools

The growth of a teen counselling program into every Renfrew County high school this fall proves the power of partnerships.

The program called SLAMH (Students Learning about Addiction and Mental Health) was originated by the county-wide Alcohol, Drug and Gambling Assessment Referral Service (ARS) sponsored by RVH.

To allow it to grow, ARS joined forces with the Phoenix Centre for Children and Families, Columbus House and Pembroke Regional Hospital. Their cooperative SLAMH program was pilot tested in four high schools last year, and will be available in every English secondary school in the county this school year.

SLAMH focuses on both prevention and counselling.

Students self-identify to attend group sessions where they receive information about addiction and mental health issues and discuss things that affect them. Those in need of more intensive help are referred to other programs.

"We're getting a core set of youth and they're feeling pretty safe," Phoenix Centre Executive Director Greg Lubimiv says.

"This wouldn't happen without partnership," he adds. "None of us individually have the resources to do it. Individually, we can go a mile, but together we can go four – without using any more gas."

"More and more, that's the way we're going to work," he concludes.

Working together to expand surgical services at RVH

A new gynecological surgery program at RVH extends the network of care for area women.

Until now, a trip to Ottawa was required for procedures such as endometrial ablations to deal with uterine bleeding or operative hysteroscopy to remove polyps. Often, women had to wait as long as a year for a gynecologist to perform the procedure they required. Now, two surgeons from Ottawa will be in Renfrew twice each month to perform day surgery.

"Our patients will now be able to avoid those long waits," says Alison Collins, the nurse practitioner who coordinates the Women's Wellness Clinic at RVH.

"This day surgery program adds a new dimension to women's health services at RVH," adds Vice-President of Patient Care Services Nancy Kelly, noting that the hospital has

purchased new equipment, opened a second operating room and increased surgical nursing hours to make the service possible.

"It's a wise investment for our hospital," Kelly says. "It gives women in this area access to care closer to home."

Surgical nurses from RVH travelled to the Riverside Hospital in Ottawa this summer to observe Drs. Gihad Shabib and Nathalie Gamache and their teams in action. They were also able to familiarize themselves with the new equipment they will be handling.

Those nurses were following in the footsteps of the founders of the RVH Women's Wellness Clinic.

Local organizers began planning the service with Dr. Elaine Jolly just as she was beginning to set the stage for the development of the Shirley E. Greenberg Women's Health Centre in Ottawa. Nurses in Dr. Jolly's menopause clinic worked closely with the local caregivers, who made several trips to Ottawa to learn from the team there. Collins and Dr. Ellie Morsch both went on to become credentialled menopause counsellors and practitioners.

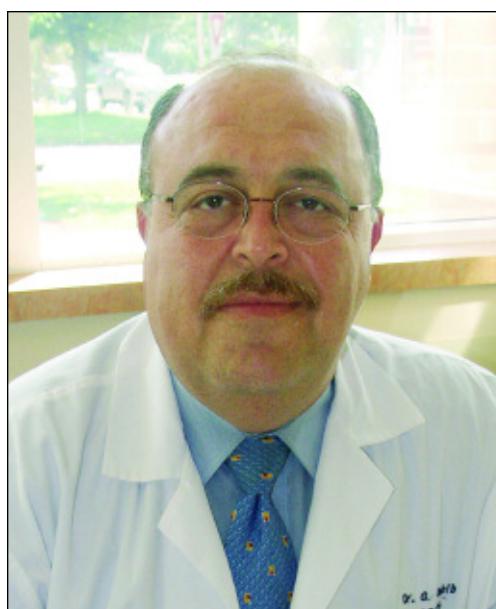
"That's a very prestigious accomplishment. There are very few in Canada," comments Dr. Jolly. "It speaks to the dedication of the people in Renfrew."

"I am thrilled to have been part of the development and expansion of the Renfrew women's program and to see it come such a long way. It's truly a feather in my cap," adds the internationally acclaimed specialist who has been invested as an Officer in the Order of Canada for her achievements in women's health.

Volunteer Nancy Gagne sees the RVH program through local women's eyes.

"They're in familiar territory," she notes. "The women in Renfrew are very fortunate to be able to address their health issues in such a friendly way, in a fulfilling way, and on such a high-quality professional basis."

The Women's Wellness Clinic run by Collins, RN Sharon Arbic and Dr. Cathy MacDonald operates on a monthly basis, providing education, counselling and physical assessments for midlife and older women. Most patients are referred to it by their family physician, but women can self-refer. A referral from a family physician is required for a clinic appointment with Dr. Shabib or Dr. Gamache.



Drs. Gihad Shabib, top left, and Nathalie Gamache, top right, will be in the RVH operating room on a regular basis, assisted by staff members, including, from left, Sadie Smith, Lois Thompson, Brad Sammon and Laura Mick.

Integration with partners improves care throughout the Valley

There is not enough space in a single newsletter to give full justice to the many cooperative efforts taking place within RVH and beyond.

"It's a corporate philosophy," explains RVH Board Chair Kent Tubman. "We can and do provide our own level of excellence and we encourage every member of our team to reach their fullest potential. But we know that we can't do it alone. By recognizing the great work that others are doing, and seeking out ways to work together, we can all do so much more."

"Partnerships make for a very powerful dynamic," he adds. "They bring out the best in everyone, and they are a breeding ground for creativity and innovation."

Here are just a few of Renfrew Victoria Hospital's partners in excellence:

- Over the past few months, four medical staff from **CFB Petawawa** have gained hands-on experience in the RVH emergency department and lab. They are participants in a new partnership designed to keep their skills up-to-date and give them a broader range of medical experience. In most cases, they spend six weeks working shifts at the hospital.

"The benefits of their experiences in those six weeks are being put to good use," comments Captain Lorna Nichol. "It's awesome that we're able to do this. The door is open, and the flexibility of the RVH staff is making it a very positive experience for our personnel."



Master Corporal Ralph Morgan of CFB Petawawa, left, with RVH Emergency Nurse Manager Jim Legree.

- In-patients who are smokers will now receive specialized counselling to help them kick the habit. RVH staff, including nurses and doctors, have worked with **Ottawa Heart Institute** specialists to develop the program, which is expected to eventually expand into a Champlain Smoking Cessation Network involving hospitals throughout eastern Ontario.

• **St. Francis Memorial Hospital in Barry's Bay** partners with us in both administrative and clinical services in a relationship that predates the current provincial trend toward shared programs and integration. The most recent development in this partnership is the expansion of digital diagnostic imaging in Barry's Bay. RVH's million-dollar investment in PACS (Picture Archiving and Communications System) is now reaping dividends throughout the region. Images can be electronically shared, improving access to health care information for everyone. The diagnostic images can also be read by radiologists off-site, reducing the turn-around time for diagnoses and opening the door to quicker specialist consultations.

"This is extremely good news for our patients in Barry's Bay," comments St. Francis Memorial Director of Operations Darlene Sernoskie. "It would have been impossible for us to afford such a service on our own. This is a great example of the power of partnerships."

- **CareConnect** provides telehealth links between our caregiving team and specialists in Ottawa and beyond, saving our patients' the thousands of hours and miles in travel that would otherwise be required.
- The new William H. Higginson Hemodialysis Unit at the **Pembroke Regional Hospital** is a great new link that takes our kidney care to patients in that part of the county.
- **Off-site radiologists** as far away as Hamilton have been equipped with the computer hardware and software they need to read our electronic diagnostic images.



Respiratory Therapist Maureen Magill has been training with the Ottawa Heart Institute to help patients break the smoking habit.

Talk it up Victoria - the Renfrew Victoria Hospital newsletter

CARING for TOMORROW

News from the Renfrew Victoria Hospital Foundation

If you would like to learn more about the various ways you can contribute to Renfrew Victoria Hospital, please contact us:

Renfrew Victoria Hospital Foundation, 499 Raglan Street North,

Renfrew, Ontario K7V 1P6

Phone: (613) 432-4851, ext. 263



RVH auxiliary makes the difference for patients and staff

Janet Osborne has a word of advice for anyone wanting to make a contribution to their community.

"Get involved," she says. "It feels good."

And if Janet were to take that message one step further, she would invite you to join the Renfrew Victoria Hospital Auxiliary. (Anyone interested can call Janet at 613-432-9177.)

"They're wonderful people," says the current president of the group. "They're quiet workers who are all there when you need them."

The auxiliary is the single largest financial contributor to RVH, having provided more than \$600,000 over the years.

The money is raised through a variety of ventures:

- **The RVH gift shop** is open six days a week, staffed by auxiliary volunteers.
- **HELP lottery tickets** are sold at Aikenhead's Drug Store, and provide substantial proceeds to the RVH auxiliary.
- **The Valentine raffle** features tempting gifts donated by local businesses.
- **Rootbeer floats** are an old-fashioned treat that have become an RVH auxiliary tradition at Valleyfest.
- **Homemade tortiere sales** are an auxiliary Christmas tradition.
- **Special events** are always a possibility. Please take special note of the information on this year's **Christmas house tour** on the flip side of this foundation newsletter.

Auxiliary activities are not limited to fund-raisers.

- **The Teddy Bears' Picnic** is an annual event that always attracts a large crowd of local children anxious to provide their stuffed toys with the best of care. As they watch the doctors examine their toys and prescribe such treatments as x-rays or Smartie pills, the children unravel some of the mysteries of health care and get to know the friendly people at their community hospital.
- **Meals on Wheels** are delivered to local homes by auxiliary members each Friday, as part of their partnership with other organizations in town that share the delivery duties.



RVH auxiliary executive members include, from left, Joan Hilliard, Jean Sills, Christine McNaughton, Bev Welsh, Janet Osborne, Ann Young, Rosemary Cooke and Pat Blandford. A highlight this fall will be hosting as many as 150 visitors for a regional conference on October 18. RVH staff will be among the speakers, profiling various hospital programs.

Renfrew house tour will have a festive theme

The RVH Auxiliary house tour this fall is bound to have something of interest for everyone.

Featuring new and heritage homes, ranging from 6,000+ square feet to compact living space, the tour will inspire anyone looking for new decorating ideas.

"These are beautiful homes and we are delighted that the owners have graciously offered to open their doors for us," comments Barbara Symington, member of the RVH auxiliary and convenor of the tour.

"This will be a fun day for all participants, and we're confident that it will be a significant fund-raiser for the auxiliary and our hospital."

The tour includes:

- the three-storey 1870 Deslaurier residence on Raglan Street South. This home sits on 5.5 acres of land and was once owned by Tom Barnet, the son of one of Renfrew's original lumber barons. It features five bedrooms, four bathrooms and a full-size billiard room on the third floor.



- Harvey and Lesley Murray's custom-built family home at 81 Haramis Drive. It features a three-season porch to catch the morning sun and plenty of fun space for family gatherings that now include 15 grandchildren.



- Kevin and Kathryn Bossy's 1916 neo-classical home at 560 Raglan Street South. This couple spent 10 months lovingly renovating this Renfrew



classic in keeping with its original era. Be sure to check out the lighted china cabinet with leaded glass doors in the dining room and the English manor style of the den.

- Gerry and Patricia Blandford's home at 118 Haramis Drive.

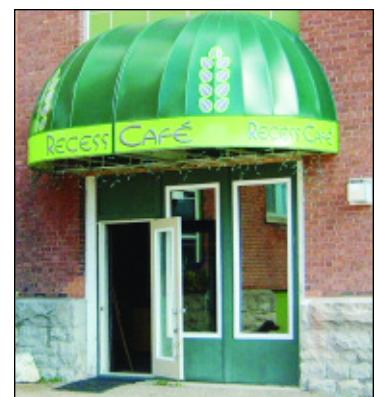
Gerry Blandford designed this bungalow specifically for their family's comfort and Patricia has added to its warmth with her handiwork.



- Marlene Thompson's delightful home on Raglan Street North right across from the hospital, this home and garden could be featured in any decorating magazine. The smallest residence on our tour, this house proves that small packages can hold big delights.



- The Renfrew Corporate Centre is creativity in action, providing office and commercial space for a variety of tenants. Original artwork by members of the Renfrew Art Guild will be on display here as an added attraction for the day.



As a special treat, your ticket entitles you to a complimentary "Christmas Tea" in the newly renovated Café Victoria at Renfrew Victoria Hospital from 1:00 p.m. until 4:30 p.m. While you are there, please take time to visit the beautiful gift shop that is operated by the RVH Auxiliary on the first floor of the hospital.

**Sunday, November 26, 2006
1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Admission: \$25.00 per person**

Tickets are available at Aikenhead's Drug Store, the RVH Foundation Office and the RVH Gift Shop, or by phoning 613-432-2448.