

# Horizons

Estate Planning Newsletter of the Colchester East Hants Health Centre Foundation

## Ears, Nose & Throat Clinic An Excellent Addition to New Health Centre

Adding travel to the worry over a possible health issue is never a good thing. However, it happens when certain services aren't available at your local hospital. Fortunately, a new addition is coming to the Colchester East Hants Health Centre that will allow more people to access the care they need closer to home. The Ears, Nose and Throat Clinic is expected to be up and running by mid-to-late April and will operate one day a week. Raj Makkar, who is the manager of Cardiorespiratory services at CEHHC, was part of the team assembled to look at bringing the ENT clinic to the local health centre. He says the demand is most certainly here for a clinic of this kind.

"The two physicians who will be here one day a week, Dr. Tim Wallace and Dr. Gerard MacDonald, approximately 12 to 15 percent of their clientele is already from the Truro area," explains Makkar.

Dr. Wallace and Dr. MacDonald are currently both stationed in Amherst. People from Colchester and East Hants who needed to see an ENT specialist were usually sent to either Amherst or Halifax after getting a referral from a family physician. While ENT services were offered

at one time at the Colchester Regional Hospital on Willow Street, it has been several years since they have been available in this area.

"This will definitely fill a void in terms of the healthcare we are providing to the local community," says Makkar. "We expect to average 25 to 30 patients a day at the clinic once it is fully operational. That's 100 to 125 a month."

This is a significant addition to the Colchester East Hants Health Centre and, according to Makkar, it would not have been possible without the generous assistance of the Colchester East Hants Health Centre Foundation.

"The Foundation has paid for the bulk of the equipment needed to operate the clinic," says Makkar. "Without that donation, the clinic wouldn't be happening. That's a given."



## Your hospital, your services – The Cancer Patient Navigator



Ryan Wynn

Cancer Patient Navigation is a free service, developed by Cancer Care Nova Scotia, to strengthen the cancer system for all Nova Scotians. The Cancer Patient Navigators are highly trained cancer nurses and they work closely with your family doctor, surgeons, cancer specialists and community

partners to make sure you have the knowledge to make decisions about your care. They are available for both you and your family to answer questions and concerns and can assist with emotional, spiritual, financial, transportation, or work related issues.

Darlene Holmes, BA, RN, BScN, CON(c), joined the staff of the

Colchester East Hants Health Authority in 2009 and has been assisting and supporting patients as our Cancer Patient Navigator since then.

"From my previous role as an oncology coordinator I have seen first hand the impact a cancer patient navigator can have on the

*cont'd on page 4*

### In this issue...

Medical Education in Truro . . . . . 2  
Palliative Care Unit . . . . . 3

Save the Date . . . . . 4  
Contact the foundation . . . . . 4

## From Vision to Reality — Medical Education in Truro



Photo Credit: Paul McCurdy

Medical Resident Dr. Aafiah Hamza (left) and her preceptor, Dr. Deanna Field.

The ability of small communities to recruit and retain family physicians has been a longstanding problem and one that is not unique to Truro or Nova Scotia. Research has shown that this has a negative effect on a community's overall health. That research has also proven that the best way to improve recruitment and retention of quality doctors is to have medical students and resident doctors live, study and work in smaller communities as part of their education and training.

Research found that students and residents who are from smaller communities are two-to-three times more likely to settle in small

towns and small cities if they are exposed to the experience during their education and training. The Colchester East Hants Health Authority (CEHHA) has been working to ensure that happens in Colchester and East Hants.

In 2009, CEHHA began working with Dalhousie Medical School and its distributed medicine program. Using some of the research mentioned above, the health authority set out to make an investment in medical education, believing that it would prove effective at improving the recruitment and retention of quality doctors, the overall quality of care and the general health of the community. With an increased focus over the last five years, the number of students and residents

coming to Truro for teaching and training has increased from five-to-ten per year to more than 55 in 2011.

In October 2012, the program took an important step forward when the Colchester East Hants Health Centre Foundation agreed to partner financially with the health authority. In January of 2013 the Colchester East Hants Health Centre welcomed its first medical students

studying their core curriculum in family medicine, emergency medicine, internal medicine, obstetrics/gynecology, pediatrics, psychiatry and the care of the elderly. It's anticipated that surgery may follow in the future.

Sharon Crowe, Colchester East Hants Health Centre

Foundation executive director, says this program is a natural fit. "When we were first approached about this opportunity just over a year ago, it seemed very different from the equipment and capital improvement funding we've done, but it also seemed like a natural extension of the capital campaign. Funding this program was taking the next big step in healthcare for our community. Our new hospital is the primary reason that this program is even possible here, and with concerns about access to healthcare practitioners always on everyone's mind, it seemed a logical next step. The new facility is such a natural fit for the program with its wireless technology, its conferencing and presentation features, and

the ability to adapt space into teaching and learning studios."

Crowe says while the program seemed like a good fit, it required a significant amount of consideration from the Foundation's Board of Directors.

"Our support is truly rooted in our community so our Board wanted to ensure that the direction we were taking was one that would be of real value to our community. At the end of the day, we all felt the potential reward made it something we couldn't say no to."

Currently more than 40 Truro physicians in family practice and specialties are faculty members of Dalhousie Medical School. Each core clinical department has a physician director of medical education who sits on the strategic CEHHA Medical Education Cabinet and who also links with their counterparts at the medical school.

Expectations for the program over the next few years are high. With continuing effort it is hoped that Truro will emerge as a major centre for medical education in Nova Scotia and Atlantic Canada. Because of its size and relationship with Dalhousie and due to the skill and enthusiasm of its medical staff team, the hope is it will become a centre for educational innovation to serve as an example to other small communities.

The bigger the success in these activities, the more attractive Truro will become for future physicians and surgeons who will want to make it home for themselves and their families.

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*More than 40  
Truro doctors are  
part of Dalhousie  
Medical School  
faculty.*

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# Palliative Care Unit a Major Improvement for New Health Centre

Being able to provide care, comfort and support to palliative care patients and their families is a privilege and source of pride to local health care providers. So, it is not surprising that a new palliative care unit and other opportunities to improve services are among the greatest benefits of the new Colchester East Hants Health Centre.

“Palliative care is a very special area of service that focuses on both patients and the needs of their families,” says Mark Scales, manager of CEHHA’s Palliative Care Service. “Our new unit adds to the programs that we offer with our partners in our facilities and communities, allowing us to enhance palliative care for those we serve.”

Care providers played a major role in the planning for the new Palliative Care Unit, which includes six private rooms. Patient rooms are spacious, allowing for privacy and offering family members an opportunity to stay with their loved one. New comfortable chairs that recline are available to family members who choose to stay overnight. The Colchester East Hants Hospice Society, one of the partners involved in the new unit, is providing well trained Palliative Care Volunteers who are there to help support both patients and families during this challenging time in their lives.

Among the features is a solarium area nestled at the end of the unit which provides patients and their loved ones an inviting area to spend time together, meet with their care team or visit

with other families. The solarium leads to a rooftop balcony and garden that offers access to fresh air and sunshine for patients and their families.

In order to further enhance the care being provided, the Colchester East Hants Health Authority launched a new Palliative Care Education Program in the Spring of 2011 which involves classroom-based education with a Canadian program called Learning Essential Approaches to Palliative Care or L.E.A.P. The program was coordinated and sessions facilitated by members of CEHHA’s Palliative Care Team in partnership with the Colchester East Hants Hospice Society. A number of CEHHA registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, physicians, social workers and pharmacy team members participated in LEAP. In addition to the intense classroom work, participants are also involved in a preceptorship program that allows them to further develop their skills working with palliative care clients under the guidance of the palliative care team.



*Rooftop balcony, off the solarium, for patients and family members. A balcony garden will be planted this Spring.*

“The best practitioners are those who have had the opportunity to take the theory and put it into practice,” says Ann McKim, Palliative Care Consult Nurse. “Those who have had the opportunity to take the program to date indicate that they feel more confident and equipped to care for palliative care patients.”

Licensed Practical Nurse Cathryn Coulter often encounters palliative care patients on her unit but wasn’t confident in her skills. “I felt unprepared and that I needed more education to do a better job,” she says. “Now I have the confidence to deliver care and to share my knowledge and experience with others.”

Dr. David Henderson, who is the medical director of the Palliative Care Unit, is very pleased with the program as well.

“We are fortunate to have palliative care consult nurses in our district with a tremendous amount of experience and expertise,” he says. “This program is helping us share their knowledge and wisdom.”

## Hospital Stats *First three months of operation — December 1, 2012–February 28, 2013*

<b>Inpatient Statistics</b>	<b>Dec</b>	<b>Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Outpatient Statistics</b>	<b>Dec</b>	<b>Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Average Length of Stay (Days)	3	5	6	<b>5</b>	Day Surgery Visits (December includes scheduled closure)	353	665	592	<b>1610</b>
Average Census	98	105	106	<b>112</b>	Emergency Dept. Visits	2786	2777	2415	<b>7978</b>
Percent Occupancy	85	92	95	<b>89</b>	Diagnostic Imaging Exams	2373	2957	2737	<b>8067</b>
Admissions	341	358	327	<b>1026</b>	MRI Exams	96	256	276	<b>628</b>
Discharges	328	356	338	<b>1022</b>	Inpatient Laboratory Tests				<b>31,274</b>
Births	38	33	33	<b>104</b>	Emergency Department Laboratory Tests				<b>28,344</b>
					Outpatient Laboratory Tests				<b>179,686</b>

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# Patient Navigation

lives of cancer patients and their families. When the opportunity became available in the Colchester East Hants area, I was excited to be able to become a part of their oncology team."

Debbie Wynn knows first-hand what the services of a Cancer Patient Navigator could have meant to her and her family. She and her husband, Evan, lost their son, Ryan, to Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma in August 2005. He was just five-years-old.

Throughout their ten-month ordeal, Ryan was a patient at Colchester Regional Hospital, as well as hospitals in Halifax and Toronto. Although her son had a team of doctors, a social worker, a physiologist and nurses available to him at the facilities in Halifax and Toronto, many times these people were not available or accessible to his parents or to his eight year-old sister.

Debbie shared her experience and explained how isolated she and her family felt when they were away from home,

"Some days we felt so alone, so lost and the thought that knowing someone was helping us, guiding us and there for us when we needed them, would have made a world of difference." They had many questions and wanted information on what to expect during the many different tests, procedures and operations their son was receiving, but so little was shared with them at the time.

Having someone to simply sit down and speak with them, explain and help them to sort out the many situations they encountered and assist with even the little things, would have brought them much comfort during their very traumatic experience.

Debbie and her family are very pleased that the opportunity to access a Cancer Patient Navigator is now available to cancer patients and their families in Colchester East Hants. She urges people to take advantage of the support this wonderful and invaluable service has to offer. 

For more information on the Patient Navigation program please contact Darlene.holmes@cehha.nshealth.ca

If you are interested in supporting this very necessary program please contact the Colchester East Hants Health Centre Foundation by email at crh.foundation@cehha.nshealth.ca or by phone at (902) 893-5541.

## Save the Date!

### Wednesday June 19, 2013



### Our 18<sup>th</sup> Annual On Course Fore Health Golf Classic

at the Truro Golf Club



Help the Foundation help the environment by reducing the use of paper. If you wish to receive this newsletter by e-mail instead of by mail, please contact us at

[crh.foundation@cehha.nshealth.ca](mailto:crh.foundation@cehha.nshealth.ca)

The Colchester East Hants Health Centre is pleased to provide this newsletter to assist you with your estate and financial plans. While we believe that the information and opinions contained in this newsletter are accurate, we strongly urge you to consult with your own professional advisors to verify both the accuracy and the relevancy of the information to your situation.

The Colchester East Hants Health Centre Foundation and its employees and agents assume no responsibility for errors or omissions, or for damages arising from the use of the published information and opinions contained in this newsletter. The Foundation's Estate Planning Newsletter is provided as a special service to donors and friends through the planned giving program.

Your comments and suggestions are welcome. Please direct them to:

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