

February 13, 2017

RVH approves 8th consecutive balanced budget

Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre's (RVH) Board of Directors has approved its 2017-'18 operating plan which will enable RVH to achieve its eighth consecutive balanced budget. The plan avoids any bed closures and preserves patient programs. In fact, the budget strategy allows RVH to invest significantly in patient care, which will improve access to specialized services and reduce wait times for North Simcoe Muskoka residents.

Ontario hospitals are required to balance their budgets, despite rising costs such as, drugs, supplies, energy and compensation. This year RVH had to find \$4.4 million in cost savings to balance its \$340 million operating plan.

"RVH is in a privileged position in the province. The health centre continues to grow and this operating plan allows us to make significant investments in key areas, bringing specialized care closer to home," says Janice Skot, RVH president and CEO. "Hospitals continue to face challenges with ongoing fiscal constraints and increasing patient volumes, but by leaving no stone unturned in finding non-clinical efficiencies, RVH is able to protect patient services and quality care."

The budget plan will increase the number of bassinets in the health centre's neonatal intensive care unit from nine to 12 to ensure RVH can meet the region's demand for high risk births. Additional surgeries, CT/MRI scans, and outpatient cardiac diagnostics will further reduce wait times, meanwhile RVH's advanced cardiac care and child and youth mental health programs, services not currently offered in North Simcoe Muskoka, will both open in 2017-'18.

In keeping with best practice across the healthcare sector, RVH will continue to expand scope of practice to ensure patients are being cared for by the right professional, using the right skills. As technology and processes change, RVH continues to adjust its staffing compliment accordingly. As part of this year's operating plan, RVH will hire 42 full time equivalent (FTE) positions, half of them nurses, while reducing its staffing compliment by 22 FTEs, eliminating some vacant and active positions and reducing part time hours. Overall there will be a net increase of 20 full time equivalent positions as a result of this budget. As staff exercise their rights under collective agreements and take advantage of the new postings, vacancies, retirements, leaves and regular turnover, the actual number of job reductions will decrease significantly.

"As a dynamic organization in a rapidly-changing industry RVH must continue to evaluate how we do business and look for efficiencies throughout the health centre," says Skot. "Healthcare faces many challenges, including an aging population, high incidence of chronic disease, increasing costs and limited financial resources. But RVH is committed to improving access to safe, quality, patient-focused care."

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About RVH:

RVH is a regional health centre in Barrie, Ontario, located 80 kilometres north of Toronto. As the largest hospital in the region of Simcoe Muskoka, RVH's team of over 350 physicians, 2,500 employees and 850 volunteers provides exceptional care and specialty services to almost half a million residents, including cancer care, stroke services, orthopedics, intensive care, mental health and interventional radiology. RVH is focused on delivering safe, high quality care that puts patients and their families first. For more information visit www.rvh.on.ca