

July 18, 2017

RVH'S FUTURE CARDIAC CENTRE HEADS INTO THE HOMESTRETCH

Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre (RVH) has reached a major milestone in the construction of its Advanced Cardiac Centre. Construction on the 14,000 square-foot centre is now 50 per cent complete.

The centre is part of a comprehensive regional program - a partnership with Southlake Regional Health Centre in Newmarket - and once complete, interventional cardiologists will conduct diagnostic angiograms for heart patients.

"We must ensure all the many pieces are in place to have a safe, smooth opening of the first and only Advanced Cardiac Centre in the region," says Janice Skot, president and CEO, RVH. "We have always planned for a gradual ramp-up of services, so we will start with diagnostic angiograms and will later begin providing angioplasty procedures. This cautious, phased approach to opening a complex new program ensures patients will receive safe, high-quality care."

North Simcoe Muskoka is currently the only region in the province without advanced cardiac services within its boundaries. That means most of the region's residents cannot get to the nearest cardiac centre in Newmarket within 90 minutes of a heart attack to receive the "gold standard" of care.

Currently in the centre, located in RVH's expansion which opened in 2012, drywall is being installed and painted. In early August air handling units will be lifted onto the health centre roof, back-up systems for the diagnostic camera and above-ceiling structural supports for the camera arm – a C-shaped arm that enables the camera to move above and below patients during scans – will be installed.

As construction continues into the final stretch, equipping the cardiac centre with leading-edge technology and staffing the new regional program are additional priorities. RVH begins installing and safety testing equipment this fall and is currently recruiting an interventional cardiologist for the two new catheterization suites.

RVH's Human Resources team has also been actively recruiting specialized staff to operate the centre, including nurses, a regional care coordinator, a data management analyst and a clinical educator. Once recruited, these staff will begin orientation and training in October to be ready for patients by the end of the year.

Within the first year, RVH anticipates approximately 1,250 procedures will be performed at the Advanced Cardiac Centre.

"Every year, approximately 3,600 North Simcoe Muskoka heart patients must travel outside the region for advanced cardiac services," says Dr. Stephen Pizzale, cardiologist and medical director of the cardiovascular program at RVH. "Having these cardiac services available in Barrie will be a game changer for heart patients throughout Simcoe County and Muskoka."

The RVH Foundation's \$25 million Hearts & Minds fundraising campaign has already raised more than \$21 million from donors throughout the region.

Quick Facts:

- An angiogram is a test to check for narrow or blocked coronary arteries. During an angiogram, a dye that can be seen on an X-ray is injected into the blood vessels of the heart through a catheter.
- Cardiac angioplasty is a non-surgical procedure that uses a catheter (a thin flexible tube) to dilate the blood vessel with a small balloon and place a small structure called a stent to open up blood vessels in the heart.

Photo: Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre (RVH) has reached 50 per cent completion in the construction of its Advanced Cardiac Centre. Dr. Stephen Pizzale, RVH cardiologist and medical director of the cardiovascular program, takes a tour of the future centre, checking out some of the floor plans and progress. Once complete, the centre will begin performing diagnostic angiograms and later, angioplasty procedures. Within the first year, RVH anticipates 1,250 procedures will be performed at the Advanced Cardiac Centre.

For more Information:

Jennifer Moore

Corporate Communications
705-728-9090 ext. 41618

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, orthopaedics, intensive care, mental health and interventional radiology. RVH is focused on delivering high-quality, safe care that puts patients and their families first. For more information visit www.rvh.on.ca

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