

May 10, 2016

RVH cancer program nurses earn prestigious designation

Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre (RVH), the Simcoe Muskoka Regional Cancer Program (SMRCP) and the de Souza Institute recognized two oncology nurses for excellence in cancer care during Nursing Week (May 9 – 15). Christine Hipgrave and Amanda MacDonald are the first two nurses in the region of Simcoe Muskoka to receive the prestigious de Souza Nurse Designation. They join a distinguished group of only 21 other nurses in Ontario to obtain this achievement.

“At RVH, it is a priority to support our staff in continuing their education,” says Lindsey Crawford, vice president, Patient Programs, RVH and regional vice president, Cancer Care Ontario. “In the case of the de Souza designation, the skills and the insights learned directly benefit our patients and the safe, high quality care our cancer program provides to them. As an organization, we are very proud to have nurses like Christine and Amanda be a part of our team because through furthering their education, they are putting out patients first.”

de Souza Institute is an innovative learning centre dedicated to cancer care excellence. Since 2008, it has provided ongoing educational support and professional development to approximately 9,000 clinicians. In order to obtain the de Souza Nurse Designation, candidates must complete extensive course work averaging 200 learning hours, as well as a 75-hour clinical fellowship.

“It is so timely that these two extraordinary nurses are being celebrated during Nursing Week, this year’s theme is *With you every step of the way* as it is symbolic of commitment nurses have to their patients and families,” says Dr. Mary Jane Esplen, executive director of de Souza Institute. “We are proud to say that de Souza stands with nurses in every step they take. We support them in their journey to advance their knowledge and expertise, enabling them to confidently and safely handle every situation from managing a reaction to chemotherapy medication, to managing anxiety and fears, or to managing pain and other symptoms.”

Nurse Christine Hipgrave remarked, “I chose to pursue the de Souza designation because it provides a well-rounded education that meets patient’s physical, psychological and social needs. Before I even started working in oncology, I knew I wanted to achieve this designation for myself and more importantly, for my patients. It is a long process, but so well worth it.”

“I decided to pursue my de Souza nurse designation in order to enhance my knowledge, skill and judgment required to support those living with cancer,” says Amanda MacDonald. “It has also allowed me to see the value in professional development and in supporting colleagues in continuing education.”

Cutline: Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre (RVH), the Simcoe Muskoka Regional Cancer Program (SMRCP) and the de Souza Institute honoured two oncology nurses for excellence in cancer care during Nursing Week (May 9 – 15). Registered nurses (RN) Christine Hipgrave and Amanda MacDonald are the first two nurses in the region of Simcoe Muskoka to receive the prestigious de Souza Nurse Designation. They join a distinguished group of only 21 other nurses in Ontario to obtain this achievement. Front row (from left) – Amanda MacDonald, RN, RVH/SMRCP; Deyan Kostovski, de Souza Institute; and Christine Hipgrave, RN, SMRCP. Back row (from left) – Lillian Morrison, manager, Access, Nursing Reserve Unit & Staffing Office, RVH; Lindsey Crawford, vice president, Patient Programs, RVH and regional vice president, Cancer Care Ontario; and Carole Beals, manager, Systemic Treatment Unit, Diagnostic Assessment Programs, & Oncology Nursing, SMRCP.

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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

About de Souza Institute:

Established in 2008, de Souza Institute, in partnership with University Health Network, Cancer Care Ontario and funded by Ontario's Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, provides ongoing educational support, professional development and career counseling to nurses caring for cancer patients and families.

de Souza Institute is providing cancer care excellence by: delivering innovative continuing education and mentorship programs; helping nurses to achieve national specialty certification; funding graduate scholarships to develop tomorrow's leaders, and supporting in self-care and career development. To learn more about de Souza Institute visit www.desouzainstitute.com