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RVH IN MOTION GETS PATIENTS MOVING

Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre (RVH) has implemented a new inpatient program – RVH in Motion – to minimize physical decline among older patients and ensure patients are at the centre of everything RVH does.

“We know that for every day an older adult is in bed, without any activity, he/she will lose one to five per cent of their muscle strength. We also know that for every day in bed, it will take a senior between three and five days to regain their base-line mobility,” says Catherine Petch, manager, Interprofessional Practice Program Development at RVH.

In an attempt to address this shocking reality, the North Simcoe Muskoka Local Health Integrated Network (LHIN) and the province made it a priority to address the risk of functional decline in hospitalized older adults through the Senior Friendly Hospital Initiative.

The focus of RVH in Motion is to educate physicians, frontline staff, patients and families about opportunities to integrate mobility into day-to-day patient care. What may seem like small tasks, such as sitting up for meals or taking medications, participating in daily hygiene activities and sitting up in a chair when reading or watching television, actually contribute to improved overall mobility.

RVH is using tools provided through the provincial program to raise awareness and to assist staff in completing mobility assessments within 24 hours of a patient’s admission. The patient’s mobility status is monitored throughout their stay, with the plan of care adjusted in response to changes in their condition.

In addition to helping patients return home and maintain their independence, the benefits of mobility for elderly hospital patients are remarkable. It improves mood and sleep, lessens dizziness and confusion, encourages stable blood pressure and better circulation, contributes to better breathing and ability to fight infection, there is less skin breakdown (i.e. pressure ulcers), increases appetite, improves weakness, lessens pain in joints and reduces falls.

“We must always do what is best for our patients,” says Petch. “There is a common misconception that when you come to hospital and you’re sick, you should stay in bed. We know now this is not the case and the benefit of getting patients out of bed far outweighs the many reasons we may have to keep them in bed.”

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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, 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