

November 21, 2014

RVH honoured for pediatric asthma clinic

A team from Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre (RVH) was recently honoured for their work to improve the health centre's Pediatric Asthma Clinic. At the recent Health Quality Transformation (HQT) conference, hosted by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, RVH was named to the Honour Roll for the 2014 Minister's Medal Honouring Excellence in Health Quality and Safety.

Criteria to win the medal, or be named to the Honour Roll, include demonstrated collaboration between care partners, sustainable results, and a focus on quality and safety.

"We are thrilled to be recognized for our work with RVH's Pediatric Asthma Clinic," says Dr. Brian Kuzik, medical director, Pediatric Asthma Clinic and clinical director, RVH Maternal, Child and Youth Program. "Asthma is a leading chronic illness among Canadian children. We were seeking a solution to reduce hospital admissions and trips to the Emergency department for this patient population. Our pediatricians and Certified Asthma Educators work collaboratively with the family's healthcare provider to help children better manage their asthma."

As part of being named to the Honour Roll, RVH's initiative was showcased at the Minister's Medal booth at Health Quality Ontario's annual conference November 20, 2014 and will be highlighted on the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care website.

"This recognition is another example of the many ways RVH puts the needs of patients and their families first," says Janice Skot, RVH president and CEO. "The entire team, led by Dr. Brian Kuzik, should be commended for their innovative thinking and most importantly, for developing a solution to keep our young asthma patients out of hospital and avoid trips to the Emergency department."

The Pediatric Asthma Clinic at RVH provides evidence-based treatment which includes patients being reviewed every three months, an assessment by a certified asthma educator, review of puffer technique, asthma control strategies and, if the child is over the age of five, spirometry or nitric oxide testing. After each visit, the patient's healthcare provider is given a written report and families receive an action plan to help them manage their child's illness. As a result of the asthma clinic, visits to the Emergency department have steadily declined since 2008 – in fact, less than three per cent of all pediatric Emergency department visits were asthma related between 2009 and 2013 – among the lowest rate in the province.

"The outstanding work that RVH has done to improve the management of pediatric asthma is a great example of how working together contributes to positive changes in the delivery of health services," says Jill Tettmann, CEO of the North Simcoe Muskoka Local Health Integration Network (LHIN). "This is the kind of collaborative effort we're encouraging among our health service providers, ensuring continuous improvement in quality and patient-centred care for the residents of North Simcoe Muskoka."

"The Pediatric Asthma Clinic is all about helping kids with asthma – and more importantly, keeping them well," says Kuzik. "The results speak for themselves – when children are enrolled in our clinic, their ED visits for asthma fall approximately 70 per cent. Over the past five years we estimate our clinic has prevented a minimum of 1,000 pediatric ED visits for acute asthma."

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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 safe, high quality care that puts patients and their families first. For more information visit www.rvh.on.ca