

April 15, 2015

RVH provides urgent care for region's heart patients

Patients from across Simcoe Muskoka who may be at risk for a heart attack can now receive faster assessment and care thanks to a new clinic at Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre (RVH).

RVH's Urgent Cardiology Clinic provides specialized care to patients that come to Emergency, the Surgical Pre-Admission clinic or the Barrie Vascular Clinic with signs of a heart issue. Patients with symptoms are immediately assessed and if at high risk for a future heart attack, the patient is seen in the clinic within a week. In the clinic, they are assessed by a cardiologist and tests are performed or ordered, such as angioplasty or an angiogram at an advanced cardiac centre outside the region. The patients then receive follow-up care by RVH's team of cardiologists.

"Patients with cardiac symptoms arrive in RVH's Emergency department every single day," says Selma Mitchell, Operations director, Cardiovascular and Renal program. "The Urgent Cardiology Clinic provides proactive care to those patients who may not realize they have an issue but should be seen by a cardiologist quickly. Those patients have peace of mind knowing that when they leave RVH's Emergency department they have an appointment to see a cardiologist in our clinic."

This clinic is another important piece of the puzzle that will enable RVH to bring advanced cardiac care closer to home. North Simcoe Muskoka is the only region in the province that doesn't have a specialized cardiac centre, meaning 3,600 patients must travel outside the region for heart care every year. The health centre continues to work with the provincial government to develop an advanced cardiac program at RVH. The stand-alone unit will provide lifesaving heart diagnostics and interventions which are currently not available anywhere in Simcoe Muskoka.

"Developing an advanced cardiac program at RVH would ensure the majority of the region's residents who suffer a heart attack will have access to treatment within 90 minutes of a heart episode," says Dr. Brad Dibble, clinical director of RVH's cardiovascular program. "Most Simcoe Muskoka residents do not currently have access to this 'gold standard' of care. And when it comes to the heart, 'time is muscle'".

With a team of seven cardiologists, including the health centre's first interventional cardiologist, RVH is well-positioned to expand its cardiac program. As part of the \$450 million expansion, RVH included space to accommodate an advanced cardiac centre, right next to the specialized 32-bed Cardiac & Renal inpatient unit and a seven-bed Cardiac (intensive) Care Unit.

-30-

For more information:

Suzanne Legue
Chief Communications Officer
705-728-9090 ext. 41600

Jane Cocking
Corporate Communications
705-728-9090 ext. 41611

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