

December 9, 2015

RVH and YMCA work together to improve care for residents who experience a cardiac episode

Heart patients from throughout North Simcoe Muskoka will now have access to rehabilitation services in the community thanks to a partnership between Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre (RVH) and the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka.

As a first step the newly established program, YMCA Healthy Hearts, will be located at both the Barrie and Innisfil YMCAs providing rehabilitation services to cardiac patients.

“Cardiac rehabilitation is a supervised program that includes an individualized exercise plan, nutrition counselling, smoking cessation, and stress management. These programs reduce both the risk of death and of a subsequent cardiac episode,” says Dr. Mohammed Haqqi, cardiologist and cardiac rehabilitation lead, RVH.

RVH currently provides an intensive 12-week rehabilitation program for moderate to high-risk heart patients. The YMCA program will focus on low-risk patients who do not need to participate in a hospital-based program and patients who have been transitioned from RVH’s rehabilitation program.

“The YMCA’s vision is to inspire people to reach their full potential. This collaboration between RVH and the YMCA achieves that goal,” says Karen Pulla, vice-president, Health, Fitness and Aquatics, YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka. “By providing cardiac patients with a smooth transition of care from hospital to community rehabilitation, we are helping them regain strength, prevent their condition from worsening, reduce their risk of future heart problems, and improve their health and quality of life. And ultimately, we’re helping these patients achieve sustainable wellness.”

This arrangement is just the latest building block in the foundation RVH is developing for a strong comprehensive cardiovascular program which includes an Advanced Cardiac Centre. Currently, North Simcoe Muskoka is the only region in the province without an Advanced Cardiac Centre. That means most heart patients in North Simcoe Muskoka must travel to centres outside the region for lifesaving heart procedures. RVH’s Advanced Cardiac Centre, expected to open in early 2017, will provide diagnostics and interventions such as angiograms and angioplasty, giving patients access to faster treatment, a shorter hospital stay and less travel time.

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

About the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka:

The YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka is a charity dedicated to building healthy communities. We are committed to nurturing the potential of children, youth and families, promoting healthy living and fostering social responsibility within the community. We serve 1 in 5 people throughout Simcoe County and District of Parry Sound and Muskoka. In keeping with our commitment to inclusiveness and accessibility, the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka offers financial assistance to those unable to afford program fees, including thousands of children and youth who experience YMCA camps and programs each year. For more information, please visit www.ymcaofsimcoemuskoka.ca.