

HealthTime

Spring/Summer 2013

Gordon Pinsent

Six decades of challenges
and successes



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Six decades of challenges and successes



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Mackenzie Health
Transforming healthcare
in our community

SPRING/SUMMER 2013

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**Mackenzie
Health**

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Welcome from our CEOs

Welcome to the spring 2013 issue of HealthTime magazine. This publication has been created through a unique partnership between Mackenzie Health, Mackenzie Health Foundation and the York Region Media Group to provide you and your family with helpful information to prevent illness, enhance your personal wellness and learn about valuable healthcare services in your community.

Recently, Mackenzie Health became one of a handful of healthcare organizations in Canada to achieve “Accreditation with Exemplary Standing” from Accreditation Canada. Its assessment of our services showed an impressive 99.7 per cent compliance with the more than 2,000 required standards and practices. We are pleased to join the elite group of healthcare providers that have achieved Accreditation with Exemplary Standing, the highest possible accreditation award for a Canadian healthcare organization.

In this issue, we are pleased to have internationally acclaimed Canadian actor and author Gordon Pinsent talk to us about his incredible 60-year career in show business despite his lifelong struggle with anxiety. We know that many people struggle with anxiety and we applaud his courage in sharing his personal challenges. At age 82, he continues to inspire us with his creative talents and optimism.

Meet Dr. Ali Fiture, a vascular surgeon whose expertise is caring for patients who require highly specialized surgery on veins and arteries. Dr. Fiture enjoys the challenge of tackling difficult and complex surgical cases, achieving better than expected outcomes thanks to his exceptional skills. His patients appreciate his attention to detail and his caring manner.

Did you know Mackenzie Health has a pediatric urgent care clinic? This specialized clinic offers urgent care in a child-friendly environment. Staffed by pediatricians who work to quickly diagnose and treat their young patients, the clinic provides a family-focused experience ensuring that parents are present and included in every aspect of care.

We also want to share the amazing progress we have made toward the construction of the future Mackenzie Vaughan Hospital and how you can contribute to making it a reality. Recently, we submitted our Stage 2 plan to government a full month ahead of schedule, keeping the Mackenzie Vaughan Hospital project on track for a construction start in 2015-2016 and facility opening in 2019.

Learn how our community is getting involved and raising funds for Mackenzie Health Foundation and increasing awareness about our services and programs. Thank you to all the people, organizations and committees

Mackenzie Health Contact Information



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Chair, Board of Directors
Mackenzie Health Foundation

Altaf Stationwala
President & CEO
Mackenzie Health

who support our vision to create a world-class experience with events and contributions.

In May, we welcome Ingrid Perry as the new President and CEO for Mackenzie Health Foundation. In her new role, she will help us to launch a major capital campaign in support of the future Mackenzie Vaughan Hospital.

Recently, Mackenzie Health Foundation launched an innovative “Picture This” campaign to raise funds for our second permanent MRI scanner and we have had tremendous community support for this important initiative.

We hope you enjoy this issue of HealthTime and wish you and your family the best of health.

General hospital inquiries
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Hospital website
mackenziehealth.ca

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If you are interested in volunteering at Mackenzie Health, please visit the volunteer section of our website: mackenziehealth.ca for application details. You may also contact volunteers@mackenziehealth.ca or (905) 883-2057.

Careers at Mackenzie Health

To view current vacancies at Mackenzie Health please visit the Careers section of our website or email your resume quoting the appropriate competition number in the subject line of your email to: resumes@mackenziehealth.ca.

To provide feedback

If you have feedback regarding care you received at Mackenzie Health, please contact our Patient Relations office at patientrelations@mackenziehealth.ca or call (905) 883-1212, ext. 7494.

To make a donation:

Visit the Foundation section of the website or call Mackenzie Health Foundation at (905) 883-2032.





P.Gordon Pinsent

Six decades of challenges and successes

by Lee Ann Waterman · cover photography John Hyrniuk Photography

Gordon Pinsent has undeniable presence. He began developing it in his youth, when his determined passion for acting took him away from this small-town home in Newfoundland to Winnipeg theatres and CBC television studios. He has brought it to such memorable roles as Edgar Sturgess of *Gift to Last*, a television special he wrote and starred in that is now a play performed at theatres across the country during the holiday season; Paul Gross's ghostly father on *Due South*; and water taxi captain Hap Shaunessy on *The Red Green Show*. That presence is still there when he is asked to reflect on the challenges and successes of more than six decades in the spotlight.



The deep measured tones of his voice hint at his East Coast roots. A natural storyteller, he offers both wisdom and humour, interspersing his own thoughts and recollections with quotes from the likes of Major League Baseball's oldest rookie Satchel Paige and feminist, social and political activist Gloria Steinem.

At 82, Mr. Pinsent continues to take on projects that feed his passion.

"I like to feel as though I am a part of things," he says. "I can go on thinking the best things can still happen tomorrow."

He is currently starring in *Flight of the Butterflies*, a docudrama of an Ontario man's quest to track monarch butterflies to their nesting grounds in Mexico's Sierra Madre Mountains; awaiting the release of *The Grand Seduction*, an English remake of a popular Quebec comedy; and hoping for the chance to return to Newfoundland and a recurring guest role in the CBC series *Republic of Doyle*.

He is also enjoying the creative process of two lifelong pursuits, writing and painting—he has a computer in one room and an easel set up in another in his condo.

"Getting up at six makes the morning longer," he advises during our 11 a.m. interview. "I've already done four things I'm pleased with today."

That Pinsent anxiety

But that's not to say his journey has been an easy one.

It is telling that the legendary Canadian actor can still recall from memory a note he received from a woman backstage following a bad review of a performance in Winnipeg decades ago.

Quoting playwright Tennessee Williams, it read, "High station in life is earned by the gallantry by which appalling experiences are survived with grace." He stuck the note to his fridge, where it remained for years.

The story speaks to what he refers to in his recent autobiography, *Next*, as "that Pinsent anxiety"—which seems to combine a fear of rejection, a need to be loved and accepted and worry of the future with doubts of self-worth.

Anyone familiar with his work—which stretches back more than 60 years and encompasses many television, film and live theatre roles as well as stints as playwright, author and director—might think Mr. Pinsent would have resolved those issues years ago. That honours such as the

Genie Award for Best Actor for his role in the Academy Award nominated *Away from Her* or the Companion of the Order of Canada would have silenced these feelings. And yet, he says he can still be consumed by those same insecurities and anxieties.

Mr. Pinsent's lifelong struggle with anxiety surfaces often in his autobiography and he references it more than once in our conversation. He takes medication, but has also struggled with how the treatment might affect his emotions and his ability to channel them for his craft.

"I gave it up for awhile, I got my emotions back—I cried at everything," he recalls. He decided to resume taking the medication and strives to find a middle ground—not letting his anxieties rule him, but not blocking his emotions either.

"I want to enjoy what I am seeing and hearing, I want to feel what I am seeing and hearing," he says.

And, perhaps surprisingly, for someone with his considerable experience as an actor, one of those emotions continues to be stage fright. For a recent project, Mr. Pinsent teamed up with musicians Greg Keelor of Blue Rodeo and Travis Good of the Sadies to produce a CD, *Down and Out in Upalong*, based on his poetry. They tested the music at venues around Ontario.

"I was terrified each time," Mr. Pinsent says of his return to the stage.

"I care about the audience," he continues. "Communication is what it is all about—if I can reach the audience, if I can befriend them."

In some ways, his age amplifies his anxieties. In his line of work, and indeed society in general, there are many who will judge your capabilities by the year on your birth certificate or greyness of your hair, he says.

"If you're anxiety-ridden, as I am, you're stopped in your tracks a bit."

He has the same reaction, he says, when he's given any sort of "lifetime achievement" award.

"As if I wasn't paranoid enough," he writes in *Next* of receiving one such award on the heels of another. "Here's your trophy, don't let the door hit your ass on the way out! ... It was Charm [Charmion King Pinsent, his wife of 40 years] who assured me, and then reassured me, that this was not a conspiracy to get me to quit show business. And at times I almost believed her."

Mr. Pinsent's relatively good physical

From top: Gordon Pinsent Shooting *The Rowdyman* (Lawrence Z. Dane); with Sarah Polley at the 2008 Genies, where he won best actor and she for directing for *Away From Her* (Rene Johnston, Toronto Star); at an ACTRA press conference at Queen's Park in 2009 (Steve Russell, Toronto Star); with Kevin Spacey on the set of *The Shipping News*; and with Julie Christie, co-star of *Away From Her* (Lionsgate Film).

health—he'll admit to the odd ache or ailment—he attributes to lucky genes and sheer determination.

He relates meeting neighbours in the lobby of the Toronto condominium where he lives. "How are you?" they'll ask with a tone that implies they know you're not doing as well as you were 10 or 20 years ago, that perhaps you have some complaint about a chronic condition or new illness you would like to share.

Rather than dwelling on the downsides of aging, Mr. Pinsent prefers the philosophy a friend who suffers with severe arthritis shared with him: "Be a friend to" or get used to your pain.

"Take it with you and get on with your life," he says.

It's a way of thinking that is harder to follow when it comes to emotional pain.

When his beloved wife died in January 2007, he spent a couple years "hiding out"—not working and avoiding social situations.

"After Charm passed," he writes, "I fell into a most natural state of, well, what's left? I didn't want to do anything. And for a while, I didn't. The world was not the same without her in it."

But he rebounded and again has a busy schedule that includes a variety of acting projects, writing, painting and spending time with his family.

Saying yes

Mr. Pinsent attributes the breadth and depth of his career to "saying yes."

His willingness to agree to just about any offer that came his way paid off many times.

Working as an understudy during the Stratford Festival's 1962 season—an offer he felt wouldn't showcase his talents but couldn't turn down—led to a first meeting with longtime friend Christopher Plummer. It offered a chance to join the cast of *Cyrano de Bergerac*, including Mr. Plummer and William Hutt, for a television special.

"Yes' still happens," he says. "I'm still drawn to good offers, good material, good work."

He is determined not to give in to his anxieties nor the tendency he says can come in your later years to say no.

"You can give yourself too many reasons not to do things," he says. "That's when you surrender to everyone else's idea of what age is."

Mr. Pinsent, in contrast, seems to find many reasons to still do things—to work with new talent or an old friend, to spend time in his homeland of Newfoundland or appear on unfamiliar stages, to learn or teach, to create. And to all these projects, he brings that unmistakable presence.



Gordon Pinsent and his late wife Charmion King Pinsent.

Tom Sandler photograph

Dealing with anxiety

Anxiety disorders are one of the most common mental health problems affecting both children and adults. If you think you or a family member has an anxiety problem, speak to your healthcare professional as there are many excellent, long-lasting treatments for anxiety. According to Dr. Rhonda Vardy, Chief of Psychiatry at Mackenzie Health, everyone experiences anxiety and stress from time to time. If you experience anxiety that is persistent, excessive,

seems uncontrollable or overwhelming, you may be dealing with an anxiety disorder.

Untreated, anxiety disorders can cause great distress, may interfere with daily life and can be quite disabling. There are many effective treatments for anxiety disorders including cognitive-behaviour therapy and/or medication.

In addition to treatment, making lifestyle changes can help reduce anxiety. Some strategies that could be beneficial include:

- exercising regularly
- healthy eating habits
- getting enough sleep
- limiting caffeine, nicotine and alcohol
- building some downtime into your schedule.



Dr. Rhonda Vardy, Chief of Psychiatry at Mackenzie Health



David Stolte, Vice-President of Strategy and Redevelopment, and Rosemarie Crisante, Director of Redevelopment, lead a discussion with Mackenzie Health's redevelopment team as they prepare to begin work on Stage 3 of the planning process for the future Mackenzie Vaughan Hospital.

Mackenzie Health:

Transforming healthcare in our community

On April 10, Mackenzie Health received a \$49.7 million planning grant for the new Mackenzie Vaughan Hospital project, demonstrating a solid financial commitment from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to the expansion of healthcare services in our community.

Hot on the heels of submitting its Stage 2 plan a full month ahead of schedule, the grant will enable Mackenzie Health to continue the impressive pace of planning for the new Mackenzie Vaughan Hospital. The funds will also help Mackenzie Health achieve its goals to go to market for competitive proposals on this project in 2014 and to begin construction in 2015/16.

"After consulting with over 2,000 people in our community and over 400 staff and physicians, we are now ready to turn the hundreds of pages of service and facility specifications into a highly detailed request for proposal document," says Altaf Stationwala, President and CEO of Mackenzie Health. "It

is a daunting task, but one that our team of experts is ready to embrace with the support of our front-line staff, physicians, volunteers and the people of our community."

Formally launched as a new regional healthcare provider in June 2012, Mackenzie Health offers a wide range of healthcare services through a unique two-hospital model of care that includes Mackenzie Richmond Hill Hospital (formerly York Central Hospital), the future Mackenzie Vaughan Hospital and a robust network of community health services.

A crucial component of Mackenzie Health's plans to bring new and significantly expanded and more specialized healthcare services to the people of southwest York Region, the Mackenzie Vaughan Hospital is the first new hospital built in York Region in over 20 years. Expected to break ground in 2015, Mackenzie Vaughan Hospital is on schedule to open its doors to the public in 2019, bringing much needed hospital care to Canada's fastest growing urban community.

Raising the bar: Mackenzie Health earns top awards

Squarely focused on its vision to "create a world-class health experience," Mackenzie Health's track record of achievements over the past three years has been nothing short of inspiring—shorter patient wait times, increased patient satisfaction, improved efficiency and sound financial management.

This February, Mackenzie Health added a new piece to the growing evidence of its remarkable transformation with the announcement that it earned top marks from Accreditation Canada resulting in "Accreditation with Exemplary Standing"—the highest rating that a Canadian healthcare provider can receive. Mackenzie Health was examined against more than 2,000 internationally recognized standards and achieved an unprecedented 99.7 per cent compliance during the rigorous accreditation process.

In March, Mackenzie Health was also



Celebrating the province's planning and design grant of \$49.7 million toward the future Mackenzie Vaughan Hospital are (from left): Vaughan Mayor Maurizio Bevilaqua; MPP, Vaughan Steven Del Duca; Mackenzie Health President and CEO Altaf Stationwala and Mackenzie Health Chair, Hospital Board of Directors Dina Palozzi.

awarded "Stroke Distinction" Status, making it one of only four hospitals in Canada to seek Stroke Distinction Accreditation and the only Ontario organization to receive both acute and rehab stroke accreditation. Mackenzie Health also received top honours from Ontario Laboratory Accreditation for achieving an amazing 98.97 per cent

compliance rate, an improvement over the already impressive 93.6 per cent compliance achieved during their last review.

"An important part of preparing for a new hospital is ensuring that Mackenzie Health is ready to meet the needs of a diverse and rapidly growing community and we are doing just that," Mr. Stationwala adds.

Did you know?

- Surgery wait times at Mackenzie Health for gastrointestinal and genitourinary cancers as well as those for shoulder, spine, tibia, ear and varicose veins procedures are among the 10 shortest in the province.
- Wait times for ultrasounds at Mackenzie Health have been reduced by 70 per cent over the past year and wait times for MRI scans are now at 63 days, well below the LHIN target of 90 days.
- Following three consecutive years of balanced budgets, Mackenzie Health is now a top 25th percentile performer thanks to its strong commitment to fiscal accountability and operating efficiency.
- The Registered Nurses Association of Ontario designated Mackenzie Health a Best Practice Spotlight Organization for implementing and evaluating 17 best practice guidelines—a record for the number of initial guidelines implemented, that is shared by only one other hospital in Ontario.
- Mackenzie Health is home to the District Stroke Centre and the only York Region hospital to offer life-saving tPA treatments to stroke patients, often successfully reversing the damaging effects of stroke before they result in permanent disability.



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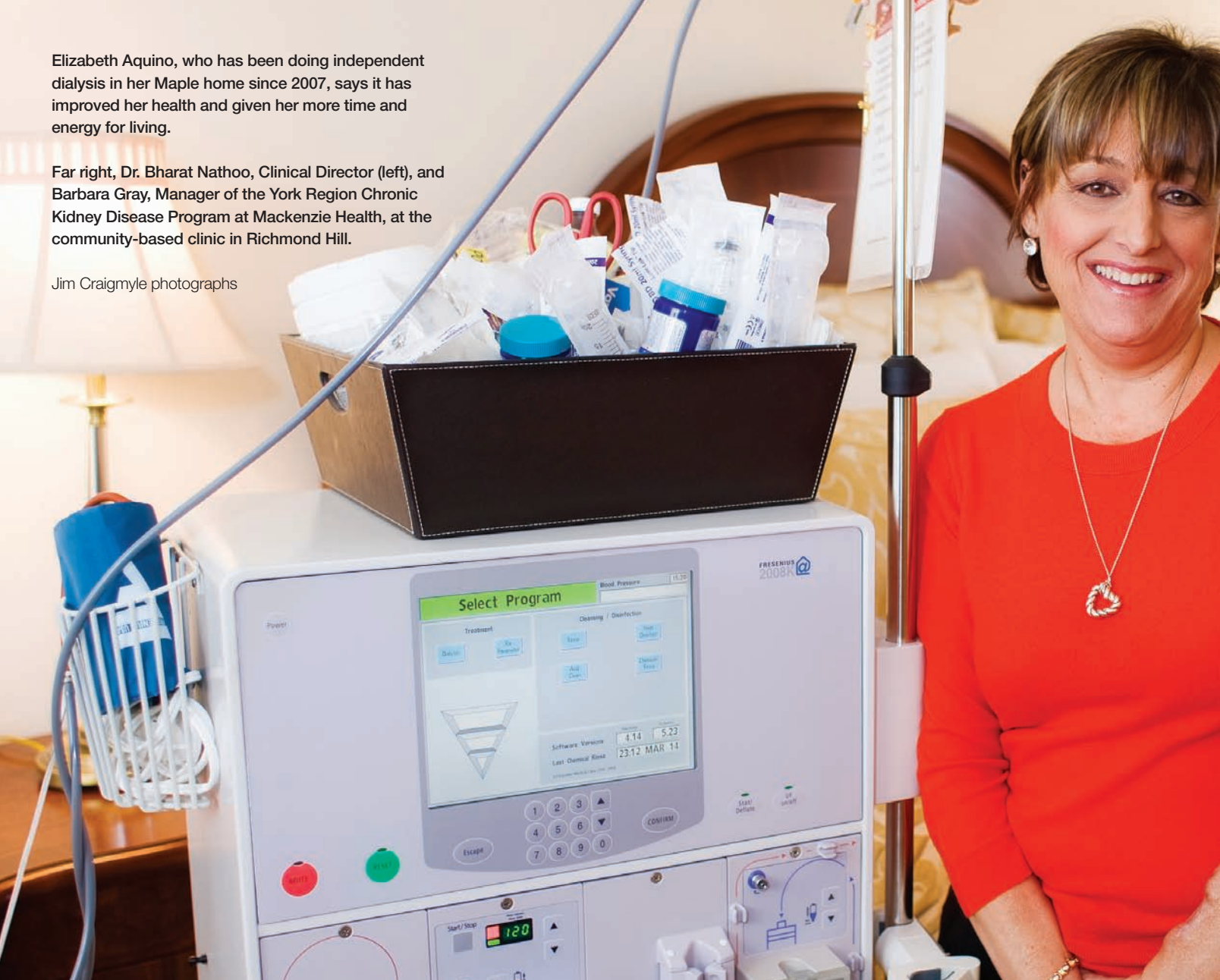
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Elizabeth Aquino, who has been doing independent dialysis in her Maple home since 2007, says it has improved her health and given her more time and energy for living.

Far right, Dr. Bharat Nathoo, Clinical Director (left), and Barbara Gray, Manager of the York Region Chronic Kidney Disease Program at Mackenzie Health, at the community-based clinic in Richmond Hill.

Jim Craigmyle photographs



Bringing it HOME

by Lee Ann Waterman

More time to focus on her career, to enjoy her family, including her four 20-something children, to travel, to volunteer, to share her experiences with others suffering from chronic kidney disease —as well as the energy and general well-being to do it all.

That's what nocturnal home dialysis has given Maple resident, Elizabeth Aquino.



herself up to the machine every night and it slowly cleans her blood while she sleeps.

Mrs. Aquino appreciates the extra hours in the week she has for doing the things she enjoys, but she is even more grateful for the positive impacts on her health. She awakes refreshed and has more energy through the day. She also no longer has to take medication to control her blood pressure.

“It’s about being in control of your life,” she says, “instead of the disease taking control of you.”

Mrs. Aquino still relies on the Chronic Kidney Disease Program for monthly assessments and ongoing support—and praises the doctors, nurses, dietitians and social workers there.

“With this healthcare team behind me, I always have someone to answer my questions, provide me with dietary tips and advice, lend an ear when I need to talk and help with any medical concerns I may have,” she says.

Mrs. Aquino also volunteers with the program—sharing her success with patients who could potentially benefit from dialysis at home.

“I played the hand I was dealt and I’m able to rise above and live a full and meaningful life,” she says. “I look at it as an opportunity to use my experience to educate and help others. For me, home dialysis is all about the freedom to live.”

Dr. Bharat Nathoo, Clinical Director of the York Region Chronic Kidney Disease Program, says home dialysis is a key part of the comprehensive care provided by the program—which ranges from clinics that educate patients on lifestyle changes that can delay the need for dialysis, to dialysis, to pre- and post-transplant care. Services are provided at the hospital and at community-

based clinics in Oak Ridges and Vaughan.

The proven benefits of home dialysis have led the Ontario Renal Network to advocate for its increased use and set a 2015 target of 40 per cent of new patients in the province using independent dialysis within six months of initiating dialysis.

“The clinical outcomes are better, the survival rate is better, quality of life is better,” Dr. Nathoo explains.

The greatest challenge to boosting the number of patients pursuing home dialysis, Dr. Nathoo says, is providing patients with the education and assistance they need to feel comfortable using a dialysis machine on their own.

While the program provides medical and technical support—including round-the-clock on-call nurses, supply delivery and machine maintenance—patients must be able to do tasks such as inserting needles, monitoring the machine and keeping records of treatments.

“Patients are hesitant,” agrees Barbara Gray, manager of the program. “Many have questions about their ability to operate a dialysis machine—but bringing in patients such as Elizabeth to share their successes goes a long way in alleviating their concerns.”

The results for patients who are up to the challenge are clear.

“It’s a better quality of life,” Ms. Gray says. “It’s a wonderful thing to enhance a patient’s experience and help navigate them through these chronic diseases.”

Mrs. Aquino is living proof.

“I have a better quality of life and continue to be active and independent,” she says. “Dialysis is not the end of the road—there is an amazing and wonderful life with dialysis!”

Diagnosed in January 2001 with multiple myeloma, a cancer of cells within bone marrow, as well as renal failure (an effect of the cancer), Mrs. Aquino has been on dialysis for the past 10 years. While the disease is currently dormant, a kidney transplant could cause it to become active, so Mrs. Aquino will rely on dialysis for the rest of her life.

“The goal for me is not a cure,” she says. “It is adaptation and symptom management.”

Home dialysis has helped her to meet those goals.

In 2007, Mrs. Aquino became the first patient of the York Region Chronic Kidney Disease Program, which is based at Mackenzie Health, to be trained in home dialysis. Soon she was receiving six to eight hours of dialysis nightly—significantly increasing the treatment time from the four or five hours, three times per week, she had been receiving in the hospital. She simply hooks

Continued on page 12.



Mr. Fraser Nelson, Chair of Mackenzie Health Foundation's Board of Directors, is pleased to announce the appointment of Ms. Ingrid Perry as President and CEO of Mackenzie Health Foundation, effective May 22, 2013. With over 30 years of experience in the not-for-profit sector, Ms. Perry brings a wealth of experience in capital campaign and annual fundraising as well as campaign leadership.

Mackenzie Health Foundation's mandate is to raise funds in support of Mackenzie Health, a new regional health provider in Southwest York Region which includes Mackenzie Richmond

Hill Hospital and the future Mackenzie Vaughan Hospital, as well as a network of community-based services. A key aspect of Ms. Perry's role will be to help launch a major capital campaign in support of the future Mackenzie Vaughan Hospital expected to open in 2019.

Ms. Perry is currently President and CEO of Bridgepoint Health Foundation where she helped to successfully launch a \$60 million campaign. Previously, Ms. Perry was President and CEO of North York General Hospital Foundation, President of Women's College Hospital Foundation and Executive Director of St. Michael's Hospital Foundation. She is a graduate of the University of Western Ontario, the Humber College Public Relations Certificate Program and the Not-for-Profit Executive Leadership Program at Harvard School of Business.

Mackenzie Health Foundation, formerly York Central Hospital Foundation, was established in 1977 and has raised more than \$70 million to advance healthcare in our community. For more information about Mackenzie Health and its Foundation please visit www.mackenziehealth.ca

What is chronic kidney disease?

Kidney disease describes a variety of illnesses and disorders that affect the kidneys, damaging their ability to eliminate wastes and excess fluids from the body.

Chronic kidney disease is the presence of kidney damage or a decreased level of kidney function, for a period of three months or more.

When the kidneys fail, wastes and fluids accumulate in your body and you need dialysis treatments (to clean your blood either by machine or in your abdomen) or a kidney transplant.

What are the risk factors?

Kidney disease usually progresses silently, often destroying most of the kidney function before causing any symptoms. People at risk of developing kidney disease should be evaluated regularly—including those with diabetes, high blood pressure or blood vessel diseases and close relatives of people with hereditary kidney disease.

Recent estimates suggest as many as 2 million Canadians have chronic kidney disease or are at risk for it—most are unaware of it.

Warning signs for kidney disease

Sometimes even people with serious kidney disease may not have any symptoms. A blood or urine test may be necessary to check for kidney problems. However, the signs and symptoms listed below may indicate kidney disease and if they are present, a medical assessment to check out the kidneys would be advisable.

- High blood pressure (hypertension)
- Puffiness of the eyes, hands and feet
- Passage of bloody, cloudy or tea-coloured urine
- Presence of protein in the urine
- Excessive foaming of the urine
- Frequent passing of urine during the night
- Passing less or difficulty passing urine
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite or weight
- Persistent generalized itching

Source: *The Kidney Foundation of Canada, kidney.ca*



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Seamless, compassionate care

Breast Health Centre benefits patients

by Lee Ann Waterman

Linda Ross is sitting at her kitchen island, her hands wrapped around a cup of coffee. Her pink manicure, highlighted by a familiar crossed ribbon on the thumb, is a reminder of a recent cancer benefit she attended with her sister.

She is scheduled to begin radiation therapy in a week's time, but is told her manner exudes calmness.

"You should have seen me in the beginning," she says with a laugh in response.

An abnormal, but ultimately benign, mammogram, four years ago prompted Mrs. Ross' family doctor to recommend yearly screening. A mammogram in November 2012 showed another irregularity and her doctor referred her to Mackenzie Health's Breast Health Centre.

The Breast Health Centre provides coordinated care to patients. Patients are referred to the centre following an abnormal breast screening. Next steps could include additional diagnostic imaging, a biopsy to determine whether a tumour is benign or cancerous and referrals for further treatment, including surgery, radiation and/or chemotherapy.

Surgeon Dr. Sarah Ortega says this coordinated care can shave weeks off the time between that first screening and treatment—which can alleviate some of the anxiety for patients facing diagnosis.

"Reducing the wait time is the most important thing," she says. "I hear from patients that finding out what the diagnosis is, is not as bad as the wait."

Mrs. Ross agrees: "That's the worst part—not knowing how bad it is."

"Your mind starts to go places where it shouldn't be going as soon as you hear the word cancer."

Her first thought was of her three daughters, and what genes she may have passed on to them. The Canadian Cancer Society says studies show approximately five to 10 per cent of breast cancers are thought to be hereditary;



Breast health surgeon Dr. Sarah Ortega (left) meets with Linda Ross to discuss her treatment plan after recent cancer surgery.
Jim Craigmyle photograph

the non-invasive type Mrs. Ross had is not considered to be one of them.

Mrs. Ross had a biopsy on Dec. 24, 2012; when the results confirmed cancer, she was scheduled for surgery with Dr. Ortega, Jan. 29, 2013.

"Seamless" and "compassionate" is how Teresa Sitlani, Manager of Surgical Ambulatory Clinics at Mackenzie Health, describes the team's goal for care.

"The clinic allows us to see patients in a more efficient manner and offer excellent patient-centred care," she says.

Ms. Sitlani says the clinic's nurse navigator is an important part of the process. The nurse navigator is there to provide knowledgeable support to patients by helping to guide them through their treatment journey.

Mrs. Ross had a network of support to help her through the past several months—friends and family, including her husband

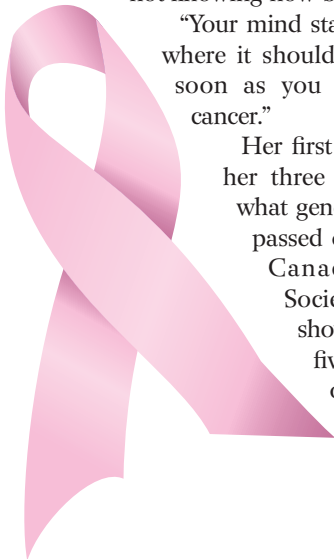
Don, daughters and eight grandchildren.

One day she arrived at the local arena to watch the Newmarket Redmen play a game (one grandson is on the team and Mr. Ross is the trainer). All the boys had used pink tape on their sticks and gloves that day in her honour. She tears up at the memory.

Support also came from the team at the Breast Health Centre. Mrs. Ross is appreciative of the care she received and also the information—about her cancer, details of procedures, what to expect following surgery, etc. Their knowledge and expertise made the journey smoother for her.

"They were amazing," she says of the clinic team members, offering specific praise of Dr. Ortega, who met with the Ross family before the surgery to answer questions.

"She was so patient with us," Mrs. Ross says. "I can't say enough about her and the team."



In good hands

Clinic provides expert urgent care for children

by Sue Kanhai



Mario Santos' four-year-old son is normally energetic and happy-go-lucky. In late October 2012, the young Vaughan resident was playing with his dad and running around the house, just as he normally would. But within 12 to 18 hours, he fell ill and was no longer himself.

The little boy wouldn't speak or move, eat or drink. He was extremely lethargic. His parents knew something was seriously wrong.

They went to see Dr. Norman Blustein, his pediatrician at the Richmond Hill Children's Clinic. Mr. Santos carried his son in his arms. The doctor took one look at the little boy and told his father not to sit down, but to go straight to the hospital. He received a referral and was sent to the Pediatric Urgent Care Clinic (PUCC) at Mackenzie Health.

"It was, to be brutally honest, quite a scary day as a parent," Mr. Santos says. "I had my son in my arms, I never even sat down."

Thankfully the hospital was right across the street.

They'd been told to ask for Diane Cole, the nurse in the PUCC. Triage is done right in the clinic itself. Mr. Santos says the nurse knew immediately what was wrong. They

would admit his son, treat him and he would be OK, she said. He was in good hands and they were going to look after him.

Her reassurances brought instant relief to the worried parents. They were told they could remain at their son's side through the entire process. Staff started treatment and the admitted the young patient right away.

"Diane included my wife and I in everything that was done," Mr. Santos says. Together, they went to get X-rays and ultrasounds, his son in his arms all the while. "They have a way of putting parents at ease. It takes the pressure off you and lets you focus on your child."

Their son, it turns out, had been hit hard by an uncommon strain of the flu and had become severely dehydrated and received lifesaving IV fluids.

The following morning his son was already improving.

"We started to see some colour back in his skin, he started to show signs of coming around," Mr. Santos says. The boy spent four days in hospital, nurses checking on him every two hours.

Mr. Santos is grateful for the highly skilled staff who specialize in working exclusively

with children.

"They are trained to understand the impacts of illnesses on babies, toddlers and children," he says. "Illnesses affect kids quite differently than they do you and I, as adults."

The clinic sees children with asthma, jaundice, rashes, urinary tract infections, headaches, abdominal pain, vomiting, dehydration and other illnesses that require further investigation. They take blood tests, provide IV rehydration and arrange timely X-rays and ultrasounds.

Dr. Gerald Friedman is the Medical Director of the Woman and Child Program at Mackenzie Health and one of the founders of the clinic, which first opened in 2007. It's not a walk-in clinic and is run exclusively by referral from family physicians and pediatricians.

Patients come from two main sources, he says. One is the emergency department. Often once children are initially diagnosed and treated, they are well enough to go home, but need a follow-up appointment with a pediatrician. "There's an expertise that's involved," Dr. Friedman says.

The second source is doctors' offices. Children are seen by their family doctor or



Dr. Gerald Friedman (left), Medical Director of the Woman and Child Program and Dr. Jeffrey Weisbrot, Chief of Pediatrics, are part of the team that provides expert care to children in Mackenzie Health's Pediatric Urgent Care Clinic. Jim Craigmyle photograph

Children and dehydration

Dr. Gerald Friedman, medical director of the Woman and Child Program at Mackenzie Health, offers advice to parents.

How do I know if my child is dehydrated?

There are two very important things parents need to consider in determining hydration status of their child. The first is simple math: What has the child had to eat or drink and what has the child lost by either vomiting or diarrhea? The second is age. The younger the child is, the greater the concern about level of hydration. Infants and toddlers are at greatest risk for dehydration.

What should I look for if I suspect my child is becoming dehydrated?

Symptoms children display with dehydration can be subtle. Look for a dry, sticky mouth. The level of energy of your child, especially an infant, is also an important clue. Be wary of the overly sleepy or tired child. Older children can describe their thirst, but in infants, look for decreased urine output such as no wet diapers for three hours or more.

When is dehydration severe and a potential medical emergency?

Parents should be concerned if an infant displays extreme fussiness or sleepiness. Sunken eyes or sunken "fontanel" (depressed soft spot on top of the head) could indicate severe dehydration. In older kids and teens, irritability and confusion are concerning symptoms.

How can I treat mild dehydration at home?

Mild dehydration can be treated at home by more fluids that contain electrolytes (salts) such as Pedialyte, Gatorade or Powerade. Drinking plain water or diluted juice is not recommended as it does not contain enough sugar or salt.

When should I seek professional help?

Treat infants with greater caution. Take your child to the family physician or pediatrician if they cannot keep down fluids or if vomiting/diarrhea exceeds what they are drinking. If the signs of severe dehydration (see above) are present, the child should be seen in an urgent clinic capable of administering IV fluids or an emergency department.

pediatrician and need care that goes beyond the average physician's office, but doesn't require a visit to the emergency department. Examples include mild dehydration or breathing difficulties such as asthma, croup or bronchiolitis.

"These are children who can't really go home, but need a few hours of intervention," he says. "It could be an IV for some fluids, inhalations for asthma, blood work or x-rays after which the pediatrician at PUCC decides whether to admit a child to hospital or enable him or her to return home."

Under the old model, children requiring advanced services were referred to the emergency department.

"This could often cause a delay of several hours and children would often deteriorate during that time," Dr. Friedman says.

The clinic has two major goals: caring for kids in a child-friendly environment and not overwhelming the emergency department with children who need specialized attention.

The busy clinic is staffed by a nurse and one of 10 rotating pediatricians. Almost 2,000 patients are seen at the clinic each year.

Dr. Jeffrey Weisbrot, Chief of Pediatrics, is one of the pediatricians who staff the clinic. Because patients register and then go directly to the PUCC, he says wait times can be as little as a few minutes to half an hour.

The clinic builds good rapport between local family doctors and hospital pediatricians, he says, who work together to treat these patients. It's also an excellent follow-up for kids who were treated in the emergency department but do not have a regular family physician.

"The benefits of this clinic are huge. There's no waiting in emergency, you get urgent immediate blood work, X-rays and ultrasounds and diagnosis as well as expert follow-up for conditions such as asthma," Dr. Weisbrot says. "We even provide parent education, helping them understand what is happening and what their child will need once leaving the hospital."

PUCC runs from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday to Friday. Mr. Santos would love to see a bigger facility with more equipment that operates 24/7. He is currently raising funds to that end.

"Thankfully, my son is a happy, healthy little boy today with no permanent effects from what he went through," he says. "I can't imagine any parent not wanting to help. I felt as if they were looking after one of their own children; they cared that much."

For more information on how you can support Mackenzie Health's Pediatric Urgent Care Clinic, please call the Mackenzie Health Foundation at (905) 883-2032.

It takes a community

Hospital benefits from fundraising ventures

It takes a village, the well-known proverb says, to raise a child. Similarly, community-based initiatives and events are crucial to raising awareness and funds for local hospitals.



Franca Deluca and daughters Adelina and Paola at last year's Vaughan in Motion to Cure Cancer walk. Both Franca and Adelina are Vaughan in Motion committee members.

Vaughan in Motion to Cure Cancer

Founded in 1997 by Peter Badali and Dr. Greg D'Orio as a way to support a friend diagnosed with cancer, Vaughan in Motion to Cure Cancer began as a walk in Maple. Local students collected pledges and hit the streets. Proceeds were donated to the Canadian Cancer Society.

More than 15 years later, the event has grown to include three signature events: the walk, a gala dinner and dance and a golf tournament. Funds raised today are directed to local cancer care. The volunteer-staffed, not-for-profit organization is dedicated to supporting cancer patients and their families who live in the community by raising money for equipment and programs aimed at prevention and treatment of all cancers.

"It has gone beyond our wildest dreams," Mr. Badali says of the \$900,000 the group has raised for cancer care.

Currently, \$225,000 has been placed in a trust for cancer care at the future Mackenzie Vaughan Hospital, and proceeds of the 2013 events will be split between the chemotherapy unit at Mackenzie Richmond Hill Hospital and cancer care at the future Mackenzie Vaughan hospital.

Last year, Vaughan in Motion donated \$25,000 to Mackenzie Health Foundation's "Picture This" campaign to bring a second permanent MRI scanner to the Richmond Hill hospital.

The equipment, Mr. Badali says, is key to the early detection of many cancers, which is why the group chose to back the campaign.

"Our first priority has always been cancer care for our community, for our family and friends," he says. "This falls in line with the passion and goals of our organization."



Styles Q. Weinberg, chairman of the Mackenzie Vaughan Hospital Motorcycle Ride.

Mackenzie Vaughan Hospital Motorcycle Ride

Motorcyclists, says Styles Q. Weinberg of the All Canadian Motorcycle Enthusiasts, have a long tradition of supporting worthwhile causes.

When club members, many of whom live in the Vaughan area, learned a hospital would be built in their community, they were eager to lend their support.

"This is a common denominator," Mr. Weinberg says. "It doesn't matter who you are, the hospital is for everybody."

The first Mackenzie Vaughan Hospital Motorcycle Ride was held in 2011. The third annual event, which features a 160-kilometre ride, as well as a break for lunch and entertainment, will take place on Sunday, June 9. Organizers have set their sights on attracting 100-plus riders and raising \$35,000 this year.

Mr. Weinberg hopes progress reports on the Mackenzie Vaughan Hospital will encourage others in the community to become involved—with the ride or their own fundraising initiatives.

"Now is the time to step up," he says. "It has to be a team effort."

"Good things happen when we're all playing our part," says Jamie Shen, special events manager at Mackenzie Health Foundation. "The Foundation is here to support [community initiatives] in the best way we can."

For example, the foundation can create individual fundraising pages on its website where groups can promote events and collect donations.

Mackenzie Health Foundation: mackenziehealth.ca/foundation, foundation@mackenziehealth.ca, (905) 883-2032

Vaughan in Motion to Cure Cancer: vaughaninmotion.com, info@vaughaninmotion.com, (905) 832-8298

Mackenzie Vaughan Hospital Motorcycle Ride: vaughanhospitalmotorcycleride.com



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In the spotlight: Dr. Ali Fiture

A surgeon with an eye to the future

by Sherene Chen-See

Lifestyle habits such as unhealthy diet, physical inactivity and smoking, as well as conditions such as high blood pressure and cholesterol, diabetes and obesity all contribute to high rates of cardiovascular disease in Canada. With that comes a need for specialized treatments, including surgery.

Dr. Ali Fiture, vascular surgeon at Mackenzie Health, offers surgical techniques to help treat a variety of conditions associated with cardiovascular disease. Vascular surgery is a specialty dealing with the diagnosis and surgical management of

diseases of the vascular system (arteries and veins) throughout the body, excluding those of the heart and brain.

Dr. Fiture has been a general and vascular surgeon at Mackenzie Health for the past 14 years. He helped pioneer the creation and implementation of the vascular surgery program at the hospital.

Becoming a surgeon

Dr. Fiture became interested in surgery as a teenager.

"I think my interest started following

surgery when I was 16 years old," he says. "I had a ruptured acute appendicitis and I always admired the surgeon who operated on me and saved my life. At that point, I started thinking about becoming a surgeon. Then, during my general surgical practice and training, I found vascular surgery interesting and exciting. Working with the blood vessels has always been very rewarding and satisfying for me. I enjoy helping others."

Dr. Fiture obtained his vascular surgery fellowship in 1999 from McMaster



Dr. Ali Fiture examines patient Dipti Patel, who recently received a carotid endarterectomy. She was very pleased with his care and attention to detail.

Jim Craigmyle photographs

University in Hamilton, after completing a fellowship in general surgery at the same university.

Working at Mackenzie Health

Dr. Fiture chose to work at Mackenzie Health because of its location in a large multicultural community. The community also offers the quiet suburban lifestyle that he prefers for his family.

Teamwork and collaboration are high priorities at Mackenzie Health.

“There is excellent collaboration with the rest of the doctors at Mackenzie Health. There are also interdisciplinary teams working with the patient during their stay at Mackenzie Health, including the operating room, intensive care and regular patient care units,” Dr. Fiture says.

Dr. Philip Solomon, Chief of Surgery at Mackenzie Health, says Dr. Fiture has a reputation among staff as a hard-working, technically excellent surgeon who is committed to his patients.

“As soon as Dr. Fiture started working here, he began taking on challenging cases,” Dr. Solomon says. “He was a great addition to the growing department, bringing with him specialized skills in vascular surgery. Ali has helped fill a big void in providing vascular surgery services at Mackenzie Health. These skills have benefited the department of surgery, our emergency department as well as the chronic kidney disease program.”

One type of vascular condition Dr. Fiture addresses at Mackenzie Health is abdominal aortic aneurysm. This occurs when the major artery to the abdomen, pelvis and legs becomes unusually large and weak, and sometimes ruptures. Dr. Fiture uses a minimally invasive technique called endovascular repair to pass a tube called a stent graft through the groin to the artery where the rupture occurred. The stent is attached to healthy arteries above and below the aneurysm to stop bleeding and form a new channel for blood flow.

“It is a low-risk procedure and allows faster recovery and return to previous lifestyle than previous techniques,” Dr. Fiture explains. He also performs open surgery on about half of patients with abdominal aortic aneurysm. Open surgery requires less monitoring than endovascular repair and is suitable for young, low-risk patients.

Dr. Fiture also performs carotid endarterectomy, a procedure that helps prevent stroke, by removing material from the inside of an artery to the head and neck that has become narrowed; as well as peripheral vascular bypass, to reroute blood flow around a blocked artery to the legs.

Maple resident Dipti Patel recently had a carotid endarterectomy, and appreciates Dr. Fiture’s considerate nature and attention to detail.

“After my surgery, I was told my case was more complicated than originally expected,”

she says. Through it all she felt well cared for and reassured by his abilities.

“Dr. Fiture and the entire team did a remarkable job and took exceptional care of me while I was an inpatient. This care continues while I am recovering.”

Staying motivated

Dr. Fiture is excited by the challenges he encounters in vascular and general surgery.

“I find it personally rewarding and satisfying to take on the care of complex and complicated cases,” he says.

He introduced major laparoscopic procedures—surgery done using tiny incisions with the help of a camera—for general surgery on the colon, stomach, spleen and gallbladder at the hospital.

“The innovations Dr. Fiture has brought to Mackenzie Health have helped make the hospital a best choice when patients are faced with vascular and other surgical needs,” Dr. Solomon says.

Dr. Fiture is also helping to plan for future vascular services at Mackenzie Health as part of a formal collaboration between Mackenzie Health and Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre in Toronto.

Dr. Fiture is a driven and goal-oriented surgeon, who is also caring and committed to his patients.

“I stay motivated by positive outcomes and helping to restore the health of my patients,” he says.

Chef-worth meals Expressly For You

by Sue Kanhai



Red Seal Chef Dale Frederick is one of a team of chefs who prepare healthy, fresh meals made to order, three times a day at Mackenzie Health.

Patients at Mackenzie Health may not realize it, but a team of 10 highly skilled certified Red Seal chefs prepares every one of their meals.

“It’s made from scratch cooking, prepared fresh daily from fresh ingredients,” says Gay Magrath, Food Services Director. “The food is not being shipped here from someplace else. It’s prepared here and plated hot.”

Since the hospital moved to the Expressly for You program in 2010, patients and families have raved about their meals.

Food Services Manager Rafina Baksh oversaw the move away from traditional “retherming” systems. Both women say the new menu is a huge improvement over what was offered before—and what continues to be offered in many hospitals throughout the GTA.

“I’ve only been here for a little over a year,” Ms. Magrath says. “One of the reasons I came to Mackenzie Health was the quality of the food service. It was a draw for me.

“We decide on recipes including spices used, portion sizes, amount of sodium, etc. Previously our menu was dependent on

what our suppliers offered and we had little influence on the content and recipes.”

The move to fresh, made to order food not only improves the taste and texture of food presented, it also preserves the nutritional quality of the food furthering the healing process for patients.

Made to order improves satisfaction

Since the hospital began actual cooking, patients have been happier and more satisfied. The team gets a lot of positive feedback and has started a “brag board” in the kitchen. It has improved staff morale, Ms. Baksh says.

“Our staff feels they’re presenting something really wonderful to patients. They’re proud of the food we’re preparing.”

“We are very pleased with the improvements to the patient and staff experience offered through this food program,” says Richard Tam, the hospital’s Executive Vice-President. “Our patients receive the best quality food and get to choose what they like, while our staff are happy to serve delicious and nutritious food.”

Hosts get to know patients

The program has two components: the first is the food itself; the second is the host system.

Being assigned to specific units allows hosts the opportunity to get to know patients. They come to the bedside with a handheld device that tells them the day’s menu and which options are compatible with the patient’s diet. From the patient room, the host enters the patient’s meal choice, alerting the kitchen to their requested meal, much like a restaurant.

The same host delivers meals, prepares and delivers snacks and collects dirty dishes. They are professionally trained in customer service and certified in safe food handling. They carry mobile phones so they can respond immediately to any requests or changes. The approach helps build relationships. Patients interact with their hosts anywhere from nine to 11 times a day.

“Many of our patients really enjoy this interaction and think it’s a wonderful service,” Ms. Baksh says.

“We look at this as a high-touch, customer service, patient-focused program. It’s world

class food service at its best.” Ms. Magrath adds.

Red Seal chef Dale Frederick is from Trinidad and did his culinary training at Liaison College. He has been cooking since the age of nine or 10 and credits his mother as his first teacher.

Red Seal training for chefs is rigorous and represents a standard of excellence. Mr. Frederick has worked at Mackenzie Health for almost three years but before joining the hospital, he worked at hotels and the CN Tower.

“It’s an excellent program,” he says. “Everything here is done fresh from scratch. You are getting quality food and you have options to choose from.”

He likes that he’s helping change perceptions. “People are surprised to hear I’m a chef and that I work in a hospital,” he says.

He’s also grateful for the excellent working environment: “We have a great team here and we love what we do.”



Host Vicky Gilroy (left) presents Richmond Hill resident and recent patient Robert Miller with one of the fresh meals prepared by chefs at Mackenzie Health. Jim Craigmyle photographs

What patients have said:

“The dinner looked good, tasted great, nicely presented and colourful.”

“When I am asked for my choices, I feel special, like you guys care that I can eat what I would like to eat.”

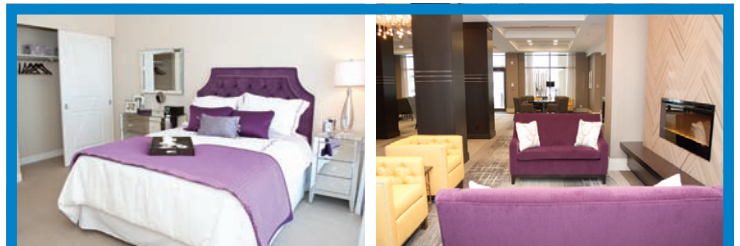
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Making Strides for Stroke

Run/walk supports District Stroke Centre

by Lee Ann Waterman

Sometimes the simple ideas are best.

A family-focused run/walk to raise awareness and funds for the prevention and treatment of stroke—the risk of which can be lowered through regular physical activity—just makes sense.

Perhaps that's why the Richview Manor Strides for Stroke 5K has garnered the support of so many in the community since it began in 2007.

But simple doesn't mean easy. To bring people together and bring in more than \$600,000 in seven years for the local hospital requires the commitment of volunteers, sponsors and participants.

People support the run/walk for two reasons, say Jaimie Shen, Mackenzie Health Foundation's special events manager and Joseph Gulizia, who sits on the foundation board and has chaired—and championed—the event since 2010.

One, the event is accessible to all—social walkers, joggers and experienced runners, teens, parents with babies in strollers and older adults.

Two, the cause resonates. Stroke, says Judy Murray, Coordinator of the York Region District Stroke Centre at Mackenzie Health, has touched so many in the community. According to the Heart and Stroke

Foundation, more than 50,000 strokes occur yearly in Canada (one person almost every 10 minutes), more than 300,000 Canadians are living with the effects of stroke. Stroke is the third leading cause of death as well as the leading cause of adult disability.

The District Stroke Centre provides the complete continuum of care for stroke patients from across York Region as well as stroke prevention services across the Central Local Health Integration Network (LHIN).

Some patients may be eligible for a clot-busting drug (commonly referred to as tPA) that can reverse a stroke almost immediately, but it must be administered at Mackenzie Health's emergency department within the first few hours after stroke to be effective.

Upon diagnosis of stroke, a team that includes physicians, nurses, speech language pathologists, occupational and physiotherapists, social workers and others provides patient-centred care within an integrated stroke unit at Mackenzie Health. This unit offers acute and rehab beds on the same floor, which supports immediate initiation of rehab to give people the best chance of recovering and improving their function.

Funds from Strides for Stroke go toward ensuring that stroke patients have access to

the latest equipment such as a state-of-the-art stretcher scale used in the emergency department to weigh patients to determine the correct tPA dose and biofeedback machines for rehabilitation and recovery treatment.

Information on the District Stroke Centre is included in each run kit to raise awareness about stroke risk and prevention.

"The run/walk," Ms. Murray says, "really promotes our commitment to stroke prevention and making people aware of the warning signs. This helps people recognize when time is of the essence and to get to hospital as quickly as possible if they experience signs of stroke."

Mr. Gulizia and his committee recruit local businesses—including Richview Manor, which makes an annual generous donation as the naming sponsor and others who support the event by giving money or prizes or by fielding volunteers and teams. Hundreds more runners and walkers sign up as individuals.

Together, they have raised more than \$600,000 for the hospital, with funds directed to the stroke centre since 2010. This year's goal is to raise \$100,000 for the stroke centre and other areas of greatest need at Mackenzie Health.

Thank you to our donors, sponsors and participants who supported the 2013 Richview Manor Strides for Stroke on May 4. If you would like to support the event, you can still make a donation at stridesforstroke.ca.



Recent stroke survivor Bill Savage regains function and his physical stamina under the careful supervision of Occupational and Physiotherapist Assistant Remy Panahi. Jim Craigmyle photograph

Stroke Distinction

Mackenzie Health recently achieved Stroke Distinction from Accreditation Canada.

Mackenzie Health is one of only four organizations in Canada to receive stroke distinction and is the only Ontario hospital to receive acute and rehab stroke accreditation. The hospital met all protocols required for this distinction and was commended for its use of best practices and innovation.

The surveyors thanked the team for their enthusiasm and for providing a wonderful learning experience. They also highlighted the organization's collaboration within the hospital and with community partners in ensuring patients receive the best possible care. Patients told the surveyors Mackenzie Health is the "place to be" and everyone's dedication to their work shines through.

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Members of the Stepping Stones program at Mackenzie Health include (left to right): Amanda Franklin, Elizabeth Bates, Anne Schaffer-Pullan, Thomas Jones, Cindy Mosey, Jessica Konyen and Simone Papernick. Jim Craigmyle photograph

Building mental health awareness

by Cathy Hillard

Joseph Yu thinks he could probably write a book about mental health. When his university-aged son started behaving “differently” a while back, Mr. Yu didn’t know where to turn, so he set about informing himself about what his son was experiencing.

It took a year of uncertainty and trips to the family doctor before his son was admitted to hospital. From this experience Mr. Yu has learned just how important it is to support and nurture young people suffering from mental health disorders.

This is a message he now wants to share with others. Generously donating \$30,000 to the Mental Health Program at Mackenzie Health, Mr. Yu hopes to increase awareness of mental health issues and make a difference.

He also hopes his donation will encourage others to support mental health issues.

“I know that the situation for mental health patients is not easy,” he says. “There are a lot of patients and only a small number of psychiatrists and some patients have to wait a long time to be referred, so for me, I see the problem and I want to help.”

Mr. Yu says he is “heartily grateful” for all the help he received from the team at Mackenzie Health. However, he feels strongly that a patient’s family also plays a crucial role in a patient’s well-being—both while awaiting treatment and afterward.

“It is important to let the person know that you love them and are concerned,” he says, adding that patience and communication are critical. “A patient cannot support themselves

when they are going through this, so they need support, and the families need support too from the family doctor, their friends and the community.

After his son left hospital, Mr. Yu made sure he got him involved in the outside world as soon as possible, a strategy he credits for speeding up his son’s recovery. Mr. Yu’s business gave him the opportunity to take his son along with him to meet clients.

“I had him working, getting him to do what he could, without pressure” he explains. “I was told it could take a long time for him to get back into society, but for him it was quick, because he got involved in the community.”

Having been through this experience with his son, Mr. Yu says he would like to see more education on the issue.

“I was told that if things were serious, I should take him to the hospital, but I didn’t know what constituted ‘serious,’” he explains. “There are a lot of different mental health problems: anxiety, depression, bipolar. Sometimes it is serious and sometimes it is not so serious, but they still need help. People need to know more, parents need to know more.”

Mr. Yu wanted his donation to make a difference and it already has. Thanks to him, staff at Mackenzie Health, and ultimately the patients and families they serve, are benefitting from several training initiatives. One of them, dialectical behaviour therapy (DBT) training, will boost the skill level

of staff in the Mental Health Program’s Stepping Stones program, equipping them to deal with different levels of patient behaviour. DBT is an effective treatment for those who struggle with intense or difficult emotions and impulsive behaviours, including those diagnosed with borderline personality disorder.

“Without this donation we would not be able to do this training,” explains Thomas Jones, Manager of the Mental Health Program at Mackenzie Health.

On top of that, thanks to Mr. Yu, additional staff have undergone non-violent crisis intervention training, an essential tool for dealing with patients in crisis.

All new staff in the mental health program require this training,” Mr. Jones explains, “but it also benefits staff in other areas, like emergency, who come into contact with high-risk patients.

“This donation has made a difference in the care within the mental health program and the services being provided to patients throughout the hospital.”

Other items Mr. Yu’s donation has provided include a television screen for staff training and teaching patients about issues such as anger management as well as additional resource books for the Mental Health Program’s library, which acts as a reference for patients, families and staff.

Maybe one day, Mr. Yu will write that book and it will be on the shelves at Mackenzie Health as well.



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