

Pembroke Regional Hospital Has Sights Set On Silver Status In Healthy Foods Program

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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By the end of September, retail food offerings at the Pembroke Regional Hospital will be a lot more enticing as a fresh salad bar, new beverages, and oatmeal and yogurt toppings for breakfast, among other things, are introduced as part of a plan to advance the hospital's status in the Healthy Foods in Champlain Hospitals program.

Since achieving the Bronze level designation in 2015, PRH has continued to work closely with its Dietary staff, vendors and the PRH Auxiliary to seek out new recipes and products which are both healthy and appetizing to sell in The Lunch Box, vending machines, The Mural Café and The Sunshine Gift Shop.

Now, as the hospital closes in on achieving Silver level designation, it's a great opportunity to be able to offer new and exciting products along with menu items which are also good for your health.

"As a health care facility, it's important that we lead the way in providing healthy nutrition options where food is sold as well as the information required for people to be able to make informed decisions when it comes to the food that they are eating," said Sabine Mersmann, Vice-President of Patient Services – Seniors and Community Care at PRH.

"Hospitals need to be strong role models for health. Creating a healthy nutrition environment takes the onus off individuals from constantly having to resist their surroundings to make healthy choices with the ultimate aim being to reduce the rates of diet-related diseases," Ms. Mersmann said.

Each level of the program comes with a set of progressively-phased nutrition standards developed by public health and hospital dietitians. With funding from the Champlain LHIN (Local Health Integration Network) and implementation support from the Champlain Cardiovascular Disease Prevention Network, hospitals have worked diligently and creatively to adjust their retail food offerings since the program was launched three years ago.

To date, all 20 Champlain-area hospitals including PRH have voluntarily signed on to the program. Most have achieved Bronze and the Deep River and District Hospital was the first to achieve Silver.

Some of the benchmarks for achieving Silver include:

- Expanding provision of calorie and salt information at point-of-purchase.
- Reducing salt in soups and entrees.
- Reducing processed meats and high-fat cheeses.
- Introducing calorie, fat, salt and sugar targets for snacks, baked goods and desserts.
- Removing all high calorie beverages.

PRH Dietary Manager Judy Zilney noted that her staff are excited to try new recipes for weekly menu items while introducing more varieties of healthy salad choices and vegetable options.

“We also plan to engage those we serve by welcoming healthy snack suggestions and inviting staff to submit their favourite healthy food recipes. If they meet the Silver level criteria they may be featured on the menu and in our staff newsletter,” Ms. Zilney said.

With the goal of achieving Silver level designation by the end of September, Pembroke Regional Hospital hopes to be able to showcase many of its improvements in retail food offerings with a hospital-wide celebration in early October, complete with healthy treats.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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