

Community Connection



Pembroke Regional Hospital Spring 2020 Edition



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Big Changes Coming To Pembroke Regional Hospital's Surgical Space

In less than a year, renovations will be underway to modernize, improve and expand the surgical facilities at the Pembroke Regional Hospital.

Work for the 18-month long project which is valued at just over \$10 million is scheduled to begin in February of 2021. Project plans include construction of a new Surgical Day Care wing with 12 recovery stations, four new private inpatient suites, and a new family lounge, as well as upgrades to existing inpatient rooms and other space improvements.

"Nearly 60 years after its original construction, our surgical floor will be brought up to modern standards and provide a more comfortable environment with enhanced privacy for the thousands of surgical patients we care for each year," said PRH President and CEO Pierre Noel.



Pierre Noel

The renovation project, which Mr. Noel explains has been in the planning stages for some time, will not only meet the needs of today but has also been designed to accommodate expanded surgical services in the years ahead.

Highlights of the project include:

- Relocation of the Endoscopy Suite into new space
- Relocation of the Multi-Function (minor procedure) Room to the surgical floor

- Creation of a new Ophthalmology Suite
- Creation of a new Surgical Day Care Unit in the former operating room wing
- Creation of four new private rooms with private bathrooms
- Installation of central air conditioning and infrastructure upgrades
- Renovations to modernize existing surgical inpatient rooms with improved accessibility

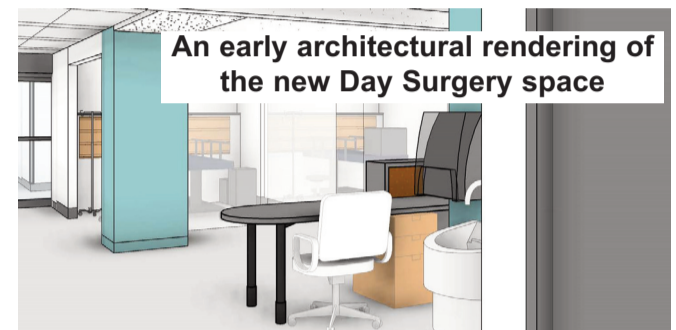
"A renovation project of this size requires an incredible amount of effort and planning in order to ensure we get everything right and to minimize disruption to our patients and services during the construction and renovation work," Mr. Noel said.

Francois Lemaire, Vice-President of Clinical and Support Services and Chief Nursing Executive, said the hospital is currently working with the Ministry of Health on the final phase of planning. Anticipating completion of this phase in November, with plans to go to tender in December of this year, Mr. Lemaire said outstanding requirements are now being reviewed and detailed work is being done on the mechanical, engineering and electrical aspects of the project.



Francois Lemaire

"We are also taking this time to evaluate our current and future equipment needs as we assess the types of procedures we will be able to offer in the future," Mr. Lemaire said.



An early architectural rendering of the new Day Surgery space

Mr. Lemaire said that one of the many great outcomes of the project will be the co-location of all surgical services and surgical patient space on the third floor of Towers A and D which are linked by an enclosed walkway. He added that the new layout will allow for better patient flow and will also result in a reduction in noise and traffic in the inpatient surgical space.

In order for all of this to begin next February, some early steps are required in order to free up space for the construction on the third floor of Tower A.

This includes the relocation of the hospital's chapel to the first floor of Tower A in space currently occupied by the hospital's administration offices. The administration offices will move into space previously occupied by the lab later this year.

"Moving our chapel will not only provide the space required for our new Endoscopy Suite, scope cleaning room and minor procedure room but will also allow us to create a modern chapel that will be welcoming and bright and in a more centralized location that is more accessible," said Mr. Noel. **Continued on Page 3**

Pembroke Regional Hospital Celebrates Investment In New X-Ray Equipment

The Pembroke Regional Hospital has made a significant investment in new state-of-the-art x-ray equipment for its Diagnostic Imaging department which will help meet expanded service demands while offering improved imaging and reduced radiation doses for patients.

"Our original x-ray equipment was installed over a decade-and-a-half ago when the new department was built as part of Tower B," said Diagnostic Imaging Director Jim Lumsden.

Since then, he said, imaging has come a long way and, with the launch of the hospital's Orthopaedics program in 2017 came a significant increase in patient volume and the need for improved imaging.

"With the launch of our Orthopaedics program, the number of x-rays in our Diagnostic Imaging department increased from approximately 2,500 to 3,000 per month. Our existing x-ray machines couldn't keep up with demand which caused some added delays. In addition, our existing equipment had reached an age where replacement was necessary so the timing for this investment was right," Mr. Lumsden said.

He added that the MRTs (Medical Radiation Technologists) did a great job managing the disruption over the past year to ensure there was minimal impact on the patients.

Melissa Hellmig, the department's X-Ray Team Lead said staff appreciated the public's patience while replacing equipment in the hospital's two x-ray rooms over the past year. Work included the demolition and removal of the old x-ray units as well as the installment of the new equipment.

Ms. Hellmig said the new equipment is fully automated and provides far better imaging quality and options, while greatly reducing the risk of musculoskeletal injuries for staff who, previously, had to move a number of pieces of equipment manually.

Dr. Abram Choi, Chief of Diagnostic Imaging, said the image quality output from the new machines is impressive, and the leg length views are dramatically better which is important for the Orthopaedics program.

"Overall, the processing of imaging is far better now than it was before. When the original equipment was new,

digital imaging was cutting edge – we can now say our image quality is state-of-the-art," Dr. Choi said.

PRH President and CEO Pierre Noel said the new equipment is an important part of the hospital's efforts to bring high quality care close to home for our community. "While we recognize that upgrades and renovations do impact our patients, even in a minimal way, we are thankful for their understanding and we are pleased that they will benefit from our investment in leading edge technology."





Pembroke Regional Hospital Foundation
Fondation de l'Hôpital Régional de Pembroke

Health Care Together



www.prhfoundation.com



THE CUTTING EDGE CAMPAIGN

will bring your surgical floor to the 21st century. As we pull together to raise the last \$100,000 for the upgrading and modernizing of our inpatient surgical floor and support the Orthopaedic Program at the Pembroke Regional Hospital, we want to thank you for your unwavering support to date.

JOIN OUR VOLUNTEER 2020/2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ARE YOU a community philanthropist who is interested in helping to shape the health care in our community?

For more information, call (613) 732-2811, extension 6223 or visit www.prhfoundation.com

Images From the March 6th Connect To Care Radio-Telethon



Pembroke Regional Hospital Foundation
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Connect to Care
Radio-Telethon
\$60,101

A special *thank you* to all donors, attendees, sponsors and volunteers. With your help, together, we raised...

towards the *Cutting Edge Campaign* to fund the reconstruction of the surgical floor and equipment purchases for the orthopaedic program

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UPCOMING FOUNDATION EVENTS

September 26 — Turkey Trot
October 17 — Black & White Gala



*Don't forget to save the date for the Pat Harrington Golf Classic on Sept. 9th

YES, I WANT TO SUPPORT THE CUTTING EDGE CAMPAIGN

Please complete this donation form and return it with an enclosed payment, if applicable, to Pembroke Regional Hospital Foundation at 705 Mackay St, Pembroke, ON, K8A 1G8
A tax receipt will be issued for gifts of \$10 or more. Charitable Registration No. 870047610RR0001

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For information on charitable giving, including leaving a legacy gift in your will to your hospital/community, please contact us at (613) 732-2811, extension 7408 or foundation@prh.email, or visit www.prhfoundation.com

Know The Facts About Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

COVID-19 is an illness caused by a coronavirus. Human coronaviruses are common and are typically associated with mild illnesses, similar to the common cold.

Symptoms of human coronaviruses may be very mild or more serious, such as:



FEVER



COUGH



DIFFICULTY BREATHING

Symptoms may take up to 14 days to appear after exposure to the virus.

Coronaviruses are most commonly spread from an infected person through:

- respiratory droplets when you cough or sneeze
- close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands
- touching something with the virus on it, then touching your eyes, nose or mouth before washing your hands

These viruses are not known to spread through ventilation systems or through water.

The best way to prevent the spread of infections is to:

- wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds;
- avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth, especially with unwashed hands;
- avoid close contact with people who are sick;
- cough and sneeze into your sleeve and not your hands; and
- stay home if you are sick to avoid spreading illness to others.

For the latest information and updates on the novel coronavirus, including information on what to do if you feel you have symptoms, please visit the Renfrew County and District Health Unit's website (rcdhu.com) or call Telehealth at 1-866-797-0000.

If you have an appointment at Pembroke Regional Hospital:

If you have fever and symptoms of respiratory infection, or if you have vomiting or diarrhea, please call the hospital in advance and ask if you should still attend your appointment.

Visitor Information:

Please do not visit friends or family who are in the hospital if you feel ill or have any symptoms of any respiratory virus. We encourage you to receive your seasonal influenza vaccine if you have not yet done so.



THE HEART

OF PEMBROKE REGIONAL HOSPITAL

Volunteers enhance the quality of life for patients, clients, family members, visitors and staff each and every day.

In the late fall and early new year, Pembroke Regional Hospital volunteers and Auxiliary members participated in a variety of training sessions on the following important topics:

- Health and Safety
- Emergency Preparedness
- Infection Prevention and Control
- Accessibility
- Privacy and Confidentiality

The health, safety and wellbeing of those on our health care team, including our volunteers, is extremely important in order to ensure that we are providing the safest and highest quality of care to every person, every encounter, every day.

We are incredibly proud of our volunteer programs, with over 85 PRH volunteers who dedicate their time, skills and talents in a variety of ways, and approximately 140 Auxiliary members who assist in raising funds for the hospital while providing a variety of amenities for patients, visitors and staff such as the Sunshine Gift Shop, the Mural Café and more.

Thank you to all volunteers who participated in the training modules and attended on-site courses.

Your dedication and commitment truly have an impact on our hospital and the community.



Occupational Safety Manager David Bromley speaks to volunteers as part of their training.

If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about volunteer opportunities at Pembroke Regional Hospital, please contact:

Janna DesRoches

(613) 732-2811, extension 6755

janna.desroches@prh.email

www.pembrokeregionalhospital.ca/volunteer



Auxiliary President Diana Gagne promoted her volunteers at the recent Radio-Telethon.

PRH Partners With KHA To Improve Asthma Care In ED



Dr. Kate Quirt, left, is assisted in the exercise by Registered Nurses Dana Buchanan and Kharren Cusick while “mom” Larissa Smit, Interim KHA Executive Director holds “baby Ben”.

The Pembroke Regional Hospital is working closely with Kids Health Alliance (KHA) to evaluate and improve the way children with asthma are treated in the Emergency Department.

Since one in four Canadian children have asthma, standardizing the way it's treated in the ED based on best practice will mean better health outcomes and reduced stress for families.

On March 3rd, a high-tech mannequin was used as part of a mock scenario of a young child brought to the ED experiencing an asthma attack. Co-designed by teams of physicians, nurses and respiratory therapists at PRH and KHA, the simulation enabled the teams to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement.

In addition to participating in the simulation, the PRH team has developed new tools and has tracked common data in order to share learnings with other hospitals. Those who have already completed their simulations have implemented changes based on the results and PRH now intends to do the same.

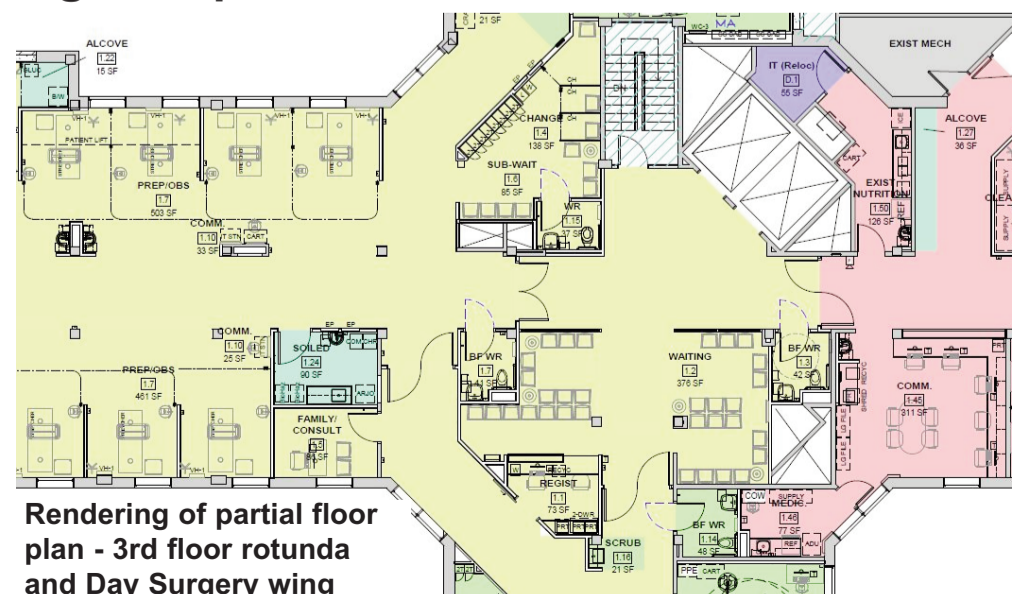
Established in 2017, KHA is a not-for-profit network of health care organizations that work together to improve care for children and youth. The network includes the three founding specialty pediatric hospitals (Hospital for Sick Children, CHEO, and Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital), as well as six community hospitals. PRH joined KHA in April 2018.

Big Changes Coming To Hospital's Surgical Space...Continued From Front

Also in the coming months, Mr. Noel said the PRH Foundation's *Cutting Edge Campaign* is expected to come to a close as it reaches its fundraising goal of \$2.5 million. This amount will cover the hospital's portion of this renovation project, he said, noting that there is approximately \$100,000 left to be raised in the campaign.

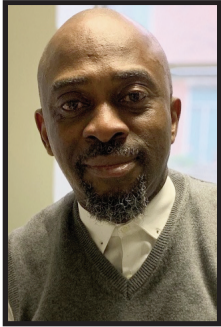
"We are fortunate that 90% of approved construction costs of the project will be funded by the Ministry of Health. The remaining 10%, or \$1 million in construction costs, and \$1.5 million for new furnishings and equipment for our orthopaedic program, for which there is no provincial funding, needs to be covered by the hospital through fundraising efforts."

"We are very grateful to our community for their generosity in supporting this project just as they have done in the past in bringing state-of-the-art diagnostic equipment such as CT and MRI to our region. Not only do these kinds of enhancements make for a better patient experience and work environment for our staff but they also make our facility more attractive to medical professionals looking to relocate to our area," Mr. Noel said.



Rendering of partial floor plan - 3rd floor rotunda and Day Surgery wing

PRH Welcomes Third Psychiatrist



Dr. Valentine Okechukwu

Our hospital has welcomed Dr. Valentine Okechukwu, a psychiatrist whose recent arrival has enabled an increase in assessment and followup psychiatric services for outpatients in Renfrew County and the Pontiac.

“Dr. Okechukwu is a hard-working, collegial, much-welcomed addition to the team whose experience in both outpatient and inpatient psychiatry settings has allowed him to integrate easily into our mental health program in Pembroke,” said Dr. Michael Ferri, Chief of Psychiatry at Pembroke Regional Hospital.

“Dr. Okechukwu has established a robust outpatient program with much-needed psychiatric follow-up appointments now being offered. He also works on the Acute Mental Health inpatient unit providing more help with day-to-day patient care and on-call availability,” he said.

Dr. Ferri added that, with Dr. Okechukwu’s help, a rapid access clinic has been established to facilitate earlier psychiatric assessments through the hospital’s Emergency Department and in the community.

Dr. Okechukwu chose to pursue psychiatry as a speciality after losing his great uncle to suicide, with the hope of finding ways to help others.

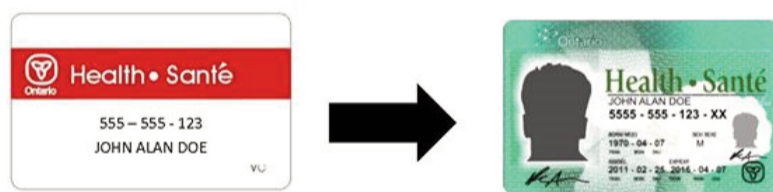
He received his training in Ireland where he worked as a consultant psychiatrist for five years before exploring practice opportunities in Canada. He completed his Fellowship in Psychiatry with Canada’s Royal College of Physicians in 2018.

“I’m happy to be here. I see that I’m making a difference and people in the community, and my colleagues have been very supportive and have gone out of their way to welcome me so it has been easy to settle in,” Dr. Okechukwu said. Dr. Okechukwu has joined Dr. Ferri and Dr. Nishka Vijay in the hospital’s Psychiatry department.

PLEASE UPDATE YOUR



As of July 1, 2020, red-and-white health cards will no longer be accepted as proof of Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) coverage for insured health services. Please make sure to update your Ontario Health Card to continue using our services!



**For more information, visit www.ontario.ca or visit your Service Ontario centre at:
400 Pembroke Street East, Pembroke, Ontario
Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Phone: 1-800-267-8097**

Did You Know...

When To Visit The Emergency Department

The Pembroke Regional Hospital’s Emergency Department (ED) provides urgent medical care for adults and children with acute injuries or illness. Last year alone, our Emergency Department had 36,153 visits. Many visits to the ED are due to minor illnesses that can be easily managed in a doctor’s office, or at home.

Some of the symptoms or conditions better suited for your family physician include:

- Minor burns or injuries
- Coughs, colds and sore throats
- Fever or flu-like symptoms
- Mild asthma
- Investigation of chronic problems
- Sprains and strains
- Ear infections
- Skin irritations (rashes)
- Prescription renewals

While not a complete list, the following is a guideline of symptoms best handled in the Emergency Department:

- Chest pain
- Loss of consciousness
- Major sprains
- Broken bones
- Sudden onset of weakness, dizziness
- Acute anxiety, depression, suicidal thoughts, psychosis
- Difficulty breathing, unexpected heavy breathing or shortness of breath
- Severe bleeding or head trauma
- Severe abdominal pain
- Sudden change in speech or vision
- Injuries to eyes, hands, ears

In addition to the above, you should bring a child to the ED if the child experiences:

- Persistent fever (>38.5C/100.4F)
- Persistent vomiting/diarrhea
- Will not eat or drink – particularly young children

Telehealth Ontario:

If individuals are unsure if they should visit their family physician or the Emergency Department they can call Telehealth Ontario, a free, confidential telephone service where they can get health advice or general health information from a Registered Nurse.

The RN can assess an individual’s symptoms and help them decide whether to care for themselves, make an appointment with their doctor, contact a community service or go to a hospital’s emergency department. The number to call is 1-866-797-0000.

An ambulance or 9-1-1 should be called:

- If you or someone you know has symptoms of a serious or life-threatening condition like a stroke, a heart attack or serious trauma.
- If your condition makes walking or driving too dangerous and you cannot have someone take you to the hospital.



Patient And Family Advisors Make Important Contributions To Patient Experience

Since its formation in 2015, the Pembroke Regional Hospital’s Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC) has made great strides in partnering with staff to provide direct input into programs and practices which improve the patient experience.

A total of 14 patient advisors have made contributions over the past five years, either as members of the Council or as representatives working with program-specific Leadership Teams.

“Often it’s the small things, the small changes or improvements that can make a huge difference in someone’s overall perspective or hospital experience,” said Sabine Mersmann, PFAC Co-Chair and the hospital’s Vice-President of Clinical and Support Services – Partnerships and Integration.

“Having the patient and family advisors involved enables us to see things that have been developed and view things that we do, from a different perspective which can yield tangible results and improvements in things like communication tools, signage and accessibility,” Ms. Mersmann said.

The tremendous contributions have been recognized by staff, and now staff across the organization actively and regularly seek out patient and family feedback on items such as new policies, pamphlets, and a variety of patient-centred publications.

In fact, Ms. Mersmann said the experience of having such unique feedback has even led to the expansion of the concept in terms of who is an

advisor – with staff, on occasion, polling patients regarding development of information tools such as a new pamphlet on breastfeeding rather than wait for the item to go through the PFAC or an advisor on a Leadership Team.

Patient and Family Advisory Council Co-Chair Richard Sheppard said he saw this role as an opportunity to provide a patient’s perspective on the health care system and a way to help improve the system for those who have to use it.

What is the Patient and Family Advisory Council?



As a volunteer, Mr. Sheppard said it has been an eye-opening experience to learn the hospital works and to see how much is being done to improve the experience for patients and staff.

“The most rewarding aspect so far has been seeing the work we do through to fruition. We are able to identify areas for improvement, provide feedback on what can be done and then watch as changes are made and our ideas are put into action.”

With so much demand for input and feedback, Ms. Mersmann said recruitment efforts are underway to gain additional advisors, noting that there are lots of opportunities for people who may have special interest in particular areas of care. The recruitment process includes a brief interview in order to ensure the right fit.

If you would like to join the Patient and Family Advisory Council or serve as a patient or family advisor on one of our Leadership Teams, please contact Sabine Mersmann at (613) 732-2811, extension 6162 or contact her by email at sabine.mersmann@prh.email.