

Community Connection



Annual Report To The Community 2024-2025



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CEO Shares Ways Our Hospital Is Helping To Advance And Improve Local Health Care



**Sabine
Mersmann**

As you enjoy the summer months, I am so pleased to share this expanded edition of our public newsletter that highlights some of the great work that has taken place over the past year at PRH along with updates about some of our projects and partnerships.

Cybersecurity Incident

I first want to reaffirm that all patient information and hospital data remains secure following a cybersecurity incident involving our network that took place June 24th. We were very fortunate that the unauthorized access was detected quickly by online security measures which enabled us to mobilize our incident response plan, take all systems offline as a precautionary measure and deploy countermeasures to prevent any further unauthorized access to our network.

Supported by a team of cybersecurity experts, our Information Technology staff, and many from our health care team, we were able to get through this with minimal service disruptions and had all systems back online within two and a half weeks,

all while ensuring that patient safety remained the top priority.

Journey Towards Epic Implementation

In recent weeks, a couple of significant milestones have been met as part of our journey to *Epic*, the new health information system which features the *MyChart* patient portal. Specifically, we've signed off on the project's funding loan, and we've made the first payment towards this multi-million dollar investment.

This, in addition to a great deal of work that is already taking place within 26 working groups by upwards of 150-170 staff and physicians have added a great deal of realism and excitement for the project with *Epic* scheduled to go-live next fall.

Construction Updates

On June 6th, our Senior Leadership team congratulated Mulvihill Drug Mart on the opening of their bright new accessible and welcoming space in Tower C, signifying completion of that project's first phase. Phase two is now underway creating the new main entrance and expanded new space for the Auxiliary's Gift Shop, which will open this fall.

Our *Cancer Care Project* in Tower D and the last phase of our *Surgical Project* are also complete, save for the arrival of some furnishings. Having all of our major construction projects wrapped up, we are planning to have some official grand openings in the months ahead.

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From left, Vice-President of Corporate and Support Services / Chief Financial Officer Scott Coombes, Mulvihill Drug Mart Pharmacist Denise Zore, Vice-President of Clinical Services / Chief Nursing Executive Beth Brownlee, President and CEO Sabine Mersmann, former Chief of Staff Dr. Tom Hurley and Vice-President of People, Quality and Mental Health Services Brent McIntyre.

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations Now Operational At PRH

As part of a significant step towards environmental sustainability and enhanced convenience for patients, visitors, and staff, Pembroke Regional Hospital is proud to announce the installation of nine new electric vehicle (EV) charging stations located in its parking lots along Deacon Street.



Made possible due to financial support from both the federal Zero Emission Vehicle Infrastructure Program (ZEVIP) and the provincial ChargeON grant program, the hospital has installed four Level 2 chargers in the Deacon Street staff lot, two Level 2 chargers in the gated public lot on Deacon Street, and a total of three chargers (two Level 2 and one Level 3) in the parking lot behind Tower C. This represents the largest electric vehicle charger installation in Pembroke at this time.

All the chargers are available to the public 24/7 and are accessible for all users.

"By offering EV charging stations, we're making it easier for our staff, patients, and visitors, as well as those in the community at large, to choose sustainable transportation options," said PRH President and CEO Sabine Mersmann.

It is also anticipated that having onsite charging stations will make the hospital more desirable from a recruitment perspective for those health care professionals who need to commute, while also serving to attract electric vehicle users who are seeking a convenient charging stop along the Highway 17 corridor.

The EV charging stations and parking spots are clearly marked with signage and green paint.

Users can initiate a charging session by scanning the QR code on the station and following the prompts in the app.

The charging fee per hour is \$2.50 on the Level 2 units and \$25 on the Level 3.

Auxiliary's Fundraising Efforts Are Paying Off

As part of the PRH Auxiliary's May 7th *Spring Fashion Show & Luncheon* held at Our Lady of Lourdes Church Hall, a cheque in the amount of \$50,000 was presented to PRH President and CEO Sabine Mersmann towards the purchase of Bone Density Test equipment for the hospital valued at \$150,000.

The \$50,000 was comprised of \$25,000 from Delta Bingo & Gaming Pembroke, \$22,000 from the Auxiliary's General Account which represents funds raised through the Gift Shop, the Mural Cafe, TV rentals, and the ATM machine and \$3,000 from the sale of HELPP lottery tickets.

This was the Auxiliary's second installment of \$50,000 paid towards their \$150,000 commitment to purchase a Bone Density Scanner for the hospital.



Pictured from left are Sabine Mersmann, Auxiliary Treasurer Kathy Green, Gift Shop Manager Brenda Long and Auxiliary Vice-President Debbie Wegner.

Mission

We are a regional community hospital committed to delivering a wide range of quality health services. Following Catholic tradition, we will meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of all.

Vision

Together, we care for our patients, our community and each other.

Values

Compassion
We believe everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.

Collaboration
We believe in the strength of working together as one team.

Commitment
We always strive to do better.

Courage
We believe that being brave will unlock new opportunities and innovations.

Together,
we care.

CEO Shares Ways Our Hospital Is Improving Local Health Care..Continued From Front

Physician Coverage Stabilized In Our ICU

Over the past couple of years, we've been challenged to secure full time intensivist coverage within our Intensive Care Unit. However, we've recently been successful in recruiting new physicians to our core coverage group in order to stabilize the scheduling, including two who have permanently relocated to Pembroke.

This group now includes ICU Lead Dr. Natalie Needham-Nethercott, ICU Chief Dr. Krishna Pulchan and newly onboarded ICU/Emergency Department specialist Dr. Cameron Leafloor. The three will be joined by Dr. Lanny Truong this fall, and will continue to be supported by a group of dedicated locum physicians who are able to provide temporary coverage when needed.

Project SEARCH

In early fall, we'll be embarking on an innovative initiative in collaboration with the Renfrew County District School Board, the Petawawa Military Family Resource Centre and Community Living Upper Ottawa Valley. Project SEARCH aims to create on-the-job internships for students with developmental or intellectual delays by combining

on-the-job training with classroom instruction

This initiative will highlight our commitment to addressing unmet needs in our community, particularly by supporting a group that, despite their many talents and capabilities, often faces underemployment.

Part Of Renfrew County's Mesa HART Hub

In perfect alignment with our mission and Strategic Plan, and in partnership with the County of Renfrew, our hospital is co-leading the Renfrew County HART Hub project along with local health care partners.

The collaborative phased work being done aims to address the root causes of homelessness, substance use and addictions and mental health while fostering a resilient and healthier community for all residents of the County of Renfrew.

Most recently, the decision was made to continue use of the warming centre which also now serves as an intake location for those in need. The team is now focused on the creation of 12 supportive housing beds at Carefor Mackay as part of a specialized 24/7 wellness centre offering

immediate access to intensive supports such as life skills development, psychosocial support, and other aspects of onsite care for individuals with complex needs.

Renfrew County and District Drug Strategy

Earlier this spring, Steering Committee partners released the *Renfrew County and District Drug Strategy* which outlines how the more than 30 partnering organizations, including our hospital, are committed to reducing substance use related harms across Renfrew County and District.

The strategy identifies 25 priorities for action and associated recommendations in the areas of prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and community safety. All share the common goals of reducing drug-related harms and overdoses, enhancing community safety, providing a coordinated response to drug addiction, and ensuring individuals receive the help they need.

We are proud to be part of so many community-based initiatives and look forward improving the health and welfare of the communities we serve.



Our Hospital's Board Of Directors

From left: Past Chair David Unrau, Vice-President of People, Quality and Mental Health Services Brent McIntyre, Community Representative Shelley Sheedy, Director Matthew Neadow, Chief of Staff Dr. Tom Hurley, Auxiliary President Diana Gagne, Community Representative Dr. Colin Macpherson, Director Suli Adams, Vice-President of Clinical Services and Chief Nursing Executive Beth Brownlee, President and CEO Sabine Mersmann, Vice-President of Corporate and Support Services and Chief Financial Officer Scott Coombes, Foundation Board Chair Lisa Edmonds, Director Daniel Burke, Director Les Scott and Director Clay Deighton.

Missing from photo: Board Chair Dean Sauriol, Vice-Chair Neil Nicholson, Director and Catholic Health Sponsors of Ontario Designate Amy Sicoli, Director Richard Wilson, Professional Staff President Dr. Amanda Williamson and Board Committee Community Representatives David Noble, Sheldon Reiche and Roger Clarke.

Fast Facts 2024/2025

Total # of Staff **943** (220 job classifications) Nurses (RNs/RPNs) **378**
Support Staff **390** Allied Health Professionals **175** Volunteers **202**

Professional Staff with privileges **190**
(Physicians, Midwives, Nurse Practitioners)

Medical learners **64** Nursing and Allied Health learners **278**
Admitted patients **5,390** Emergency Department visits **29,228**
Ambulatory Clinic visits **22,964** including those for orthopedics, pain management, neurology, psychiatry, respiratory, urology and more
Births **614** Lab tests **479,933**
Community Mental Health visits (virtual and in-person) **61,732**
Surgical procedures (Inpatient and Day Surgery) **6,976**
including **471** joint replacements (hip and knee)
Diagnostic tests **87,470** including **38,486** Xrays, **16,619** MRIs, **15,869** CTs, **12,245** Ultrasounds, **3,498** Ontario Breast Screening Program appointments and **2,624** echocardiograms
Cancer Care: **79** breast cancer surgeries, **17** gynecological cancer surgeries, **39** colorectal cancer surgeries and **1,188** chemotherapy visits
Our Food Services team prepares over **300** patient meals per day while also serving two meals daily in the cafeteria for 100-150 staff and visitors.

Pembroke Regional Hospital: Building a More Accessible Future for All

Our hospital continues to make meaningful strides in our commitment to accessibility, ensuring that every person - whether a patient, visitor, staff member, or volunteer - can experience a barrier-free environment that supports compassionate care, inclusive service, and a welcoming workplace.

While accessibility in public buildings is a legal requirement under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* requiring submission of an annual compliance report, PRH sees it as much more than a mandate and instead, as a reflection of the hospital's values and a vital part of its mission to meet the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of all.

"Accessibility is not just about compliance, it's about compassion," said PRH President and CEO Sabine Mersmann. "We are committed to removing barriers, listening to our patients and staff, and ensuring that everyone who comes through our doors feels respected, supported, and empowered."

Over the past year, PRH has implemented a wide range of accessibility improvements. These include the relocation and improved accessibility of Mulvihill Drug Mart and the addition of accessible seating in outdoor spaces as well as benches in areas where those with mobility issues may need to take a break. For those using

alternate means of transportation, an area of our property has been designated for horse and buggy parking. Automatic door openers have been installed at all entrances and wayfinding signage continues to be enhanced to help patients and visitors navigate the hospital more easily.



Benches have been strategically installed on the ramp that leads up to Tower D.

But accessibility at PRH goes far beyond physical infrastructure. The adoption of the *Voyce* translation service ensures that every patient receives care in their language of choice and a lot of work has been done on the policies around the use of service animals. Assistive devices such as speech and hearing amplifiers, communication boards, walkers and specialized wheelchairs are provided to patients with disabilities so they may communicate, mobilize, and perform activities of daily living independently.

The hospital has also launched a dedicated accessibility email address and a feedback form encouraging patients, visitors and staff to share their ideas and suggestions. These are reviewed by the Accessibility Planning Committee, which includes Patient and Family Advisors as regular members.

Wendy Lewis, Co-Chair of the hospital's Patient and Family Advisory Council explained that the advisors also participate on behalf of patients and families in activities such as walk arounds where they identify accessibility and inclusion

opportunities. "As stated, accessibility is so much more than just the physical aspects of a facility, it's a culture within PRH that supports the goals of all who come to the hospital for care and services so that their experience reflects and supports their needs," Mrs. Lewis said.

The 2023-2025 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines the hospital's comprehensive strategy to identify, remove, and prevent barriers in four key areas. Among the plan's priorities are ensuring that the hospital's website meets Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, improving the clarity of public communications, and ensuring that all new construction projects are designed with accessibility in mind. The hospital is also enhancing its recruitment practices to attract and support employees with disabilities.

"As part of our ongoing efforts to foster a diverse and inclusive workplace, we adapt our measures to ensure that all candidates have equitable access to employment opportunities. Whether it is providing the applicant with a written version of the interview questions, ensuring the space is accessible, or offering more time than customary, we want every candidate to have a fair shot at succeeding," said Ralph Hatem, Human Resources Director.

To learn more about PRH's accessibility initiatives or to share your feedback, visit www.pembrokeregionalhospital.ca or contact the Accessibility Planning Committee by email at accessibility@prh.ca.

Harvey's Pembroke Celebrated For Six-Year Sponsorship Of Staff Appreciation BBQ



From left, Owner/Franchisee Stephen Sudermann, PRH Foundation Community Fundraising Specialist Leigh Costello and Harvey's Pembroke General Manager Lynn Thomas

We're proud to recognize Harvey's Pembroke for their unwavering support of our local health care team through their generous sponsorship of entrees for the our annual Canada Day themed Staff Appreciation BBQ.

Since 2020, Harvey's has partnered with PRH to provide a delicious BBQ meal for staff, a gesture that began during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and has continued for six consecutive years. This year marks the sixth annual

event sponsored by Harvey's, with their cumulative in-kind donations now totaling \$27,600.

"We are incredibly grateful to Harvey's Pembroke for their continued generosity and community spirit," said Sabine Mersmann, PRH President and CEO. "This annual BBQ has become a cherished tradition that boosts morale and brings our team together in celebration. The support Harvey's brings to this is a shining example of how local businesses can make a meaningful impact."

The event, which serves hundreds of hospital staff members, is made possible through the work of the hospital's Food Services department and the dedication of the local Harvey's team, led by General Manager Lynn Thomas. "It's always a highlight of our year," Mrs. Thomas said. "Our team loves being part of this event. Seeing the smiles and knowing we're giving back to those who give so much to our community is incredibly rewarding."

Harvey's Pembroke Owner/Franchisee Stephen Sudermann echoed the sentiment. "Supporting our frontline healthcare workers is something we take great pride in. We're honoured to partner with Pembroke Regional Hospital and to contribute to an event that celebrates the dedication and hard work of their incredible staff," Mr. Suderman said.

The Pembroke Regional Hospital Foundation is also recognizing Harvey's for their outstanding contributions with a special acknowledgment of their in-kind donations through their BUILDER level on their donor wall.

This year's BBQ took place June 25th with Harvey's once again stepping up to the grill to serve 396 burgers and 139 grilled chicken sandwiches.

Kudos Corner

We are grateful to receive positive feedback from our patients and their families. Here is a recent compliment we would like to share.

I was rushed to Pembroke Regional Hospital with chest pain, and as it turned out, I was having a heart attack. I was blown away by Dr. Svetlana Cakarevic's exceptional professionalism and compassion, which made me feel incredibly calm and safe amidst the chaos.

Her reassuring words, "Don't worry, you're going to be fine," were a balm to my soul. Today, after receiving two stents, I'm grateful to be alive, thanks to her outstanding care and the incredible team, including two female paramedics and one nurse. You all are truly Angels!



As part of our Mental Health Services program, S.H.A.R.E. (Self Help through Awareness, Recreation and Education) is a peer-led support group in which members living with mental illness share and provide emotional and social support to each other.

During the pandemic, the group's coordinator, Helen McLeod, created a memory garden at the corner of Lake and Albert in downtown Pembroke where members can visit and grieve together. This summer, members collected and painted rocks to place in the garden representing a friend, member of S.H.A.R.E. or a family member.

Thanks to Home Depot for the plant donations and to Dave Bimm for taking special care to weed and water the plants regularly.

Mental Health Services Of Renfrew County Launching New Program For Women, Youth And LGBTQIA2S+ Individuals Experiencing Gender-Based & Intimate Partner Violence

Pembroke Regional Hospital is excited to share that its Mental Health Services team will be launching a new program aimed at supporting individuals who have experienced gender-based violence or intimate partner violence, with a focus on employment and financial empowerment.

Made possible through the investment of over one million dollars in special funding from the Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, this program will be delivered in partnership with the Phoenix Centre for Children and Families, Bernadette McCann House, the Youth Wellness Hub of Renfrew County, and the Robbie Dean Centre.

"We are deeply grateful for the Ontario government's support in the amount of \$1,116,655, which enables us to expand our services and provide critical resources to those affected by gender-based and intimate partner violence," said PRH President and CEO Sabine Mersmann. "This program is well aligned with our commitment to providing a safe and supportive environment for all Renfrew County residents and our belief that, with the right support, people can heal and rebuild their lives."

The province's investment is part of Ontario's \$162 million agreement with the federal government to end gender-based violence and support victims through initiatives that educate and promote awareness, build safer, healthier communities and enhance well-being and economic opportunities for people and families.

The new program will be grounded in the recognition that addressing gender-based violence and intimate partner violence requires a multi-faceted approach that considers both the immediate need for safety and long-term solutions for empowerment. The project aims to break the cycle of violence by empowering individuals through financial autonomy, therapeutic support, and the development of skills necessary for achieving meaningful, healthy, and independent lives.

Key features of the program will include, but are not limited to:

- Supported training and work placements: Participants will have access to specialized training and supported work placement opportunities aimed at building skills and promoting long-term financial independence.
- Support/psycho-educational groups: Targeted group programming will address the specific needs of individuals impacted by gender-based violence and intimate partner violence.

- Capacity and knowledge building for Service Providers: Frontline workers will receive targeted education, including trauma-informed training, to enhance their ability to effectively support this population.

- Educational Workshops: Community workshops will focus on increasing awareness and understanding of gender-based and intimate partner violence, with an emphasis on prevention and early intervention.

Mrs. Mersmann explained that, often in rural settings like Renfrew County, geographical isolation, limited access to services, and a potential lack of anonymity can further complicate the situation for those experiencing these situations, leaving them feeling trapped and without recourse.

Through its use of Dialectical Behaviour Therapy, peer support, and targeted work placements, the program will equip individuals with the tools they need to build resilience, gainful employment, and independence. Dialectical Behavior Therapy is a specialized form of talk therapy that teaches skills like mindfulness, emotional regulation, and effective communication, all of which help to empower individuals to build a more balanced and fulfilling life.

By collaborating with community partners, this initiative will help create a pathway to healing and self-sufficiency for women, youth, and those in the LGBTQIA2S+ community in Renfrew County.

"This initiative is a testament to the power of collaboration," said Mrs. Mersmann. "By working closely with our community partners, we are able to offer a more comprehensive and coordinated response - one that addresses not only the immediate safety needs of individuals, but also supports their long-term healing and independence."

Partner involvement will ensure that participants receive wraparound care that is trauma-informed, culturally sensitive, and tailored to their unique experiences. This collaborative model both strengthens the local support network and enhances the program's ability to create lasting, positive change in the lives of those it serves.

"I'm grateful to those on our Mental Health team who had the vision and foresight to apply for this funding which will bring great benefit to some of our community's more vulnerable residents," Mrs. Mersmann said, adding that more details about program eligibility and access will be shared publicly as they become available.



Quality Improvement Work At Pembroke Regional Hospital 2024/2025

A Quality Improvement Culture is alive and well at Pembroke Regional Hospital.

Using our Lean Management System, our staff and physicians have identified and implemented over 320 improvements over the past year! In the spirit of *Caring for our People*, many of our improvements have direct impact on the experience of patients and families visiting our hospital.

Here's just a sample of some of the improvements from the past year.

Acute Mental Health

- A beautiful wall mural depicting a calming outdoor landscape was installed in the patient lounge with the intent of transforming clinical space into a more welcoming environment.



Chemotherapy

- In January, we treated our first patient living with blood cancer. Supported by Dr. Kevin Imrie, hematologist and Jen Newton, nurse educator, both from The Ottawa Hospital, this expanded service helps bring care closer to home.

Comfort Care Cart Introduced

- Housed in the Chapel for easy access, the cart features donated items designed to provide comfort for our palliative patients and their families. Items which can be borrowed include potted plants, artwork, a guitar, a radio/CD player, books, a salt lamp, games and more.

Diagnostic Imaging

- In February, the team celebrated a successful launch of Ontario's *Lung Screening Program* for people at high risk of getting lung cancer. Referred participants must meet specific criteria.
- In the past year we have expanded our heart imaging services to include Echocardiograms with contrast and Bubble Studies. The added contrast helps cardiologists to accurately assess the cardiac function in patients with suboptimal images while the Bubble Studies, used primarily for stroke patients, allow health care providers to rule out a possible contributing cardiac cause for the stroke.

Emergency Department

- In response to patient feedback, the electronic check-in process at Triage was revised making it more accessible and easier to use.
- In collaboration with local long term care facilities and retirement homes, we've improved the process for sharing patient information at arrival and discharge when their residents receive

care in the department; improving the quality of care.

Food Services

- New food and beverage vending machines were installed in the Emergency Department waiting area.

French Language Service

- Our bilingual staff are now wearing buttons and stickers to let our patients and visitors know that they are French speaking.

Information Technology

- Additional Wi-Fi access points have been installed where gaps in service were identified improving connectivity for those in our buildings in addition to improvements that will ensure faster and more reliable network performance.

Intensive Care Unit (ICU)

- Recently our critical cardiac care capabilities were expanded to include Transvenous Pacing as part of a short-term method used to control a patient's heart rhythm when the heart beats too slowly or irregularly. Transvenous pacing involves access of the heart through a central vein. This update ensures that patients requiring advanced pacing support can now receive timely and appropriate care closer to home within our ICU setting, improving outcomes and continuity of care.

Mental Health Services of Renfrew County

- The team partnered with CLEAResult and Enbridge to provide clients who are part of their rent supplement program with energy-saving kits free of charge. This initiative aims to help reduce energy costs and make homes more efficient.
- As part of a pilot project to better support clients over the age of 62, a Geriatric Case Worker was introduced for clients in the Pembroke area.
- Our Recovery Outreach Program launched The Young Adult Group, a referral-based initiative that provides existing clients aged 25 to 40 with socialization, life skills, and the chance to connect to their community.
- We partnered with the County of Renfrew to assist in their management of high-content homes. Significant progress has been made in the area of training and education enabling their staff

to recognize the difference between squalor and hoarding situations, know when to refer for hoarding, recognize when there are underlying mental health issues, learn how to partner with our services in order to address hoarding amongst their tenants.

Obstetrics

- Our unit introduced a collection of items to promote non-medicinal pain reduction and relaxation that can be used as part of the birthing process and align with our mothers' birthing plans.

Operating Room

- A very successful go-live of a new PRH-CHEO partnership took place March 27th which enables pediatric patients to have surgery closer to home while also helping to reduce wait times. To facilitate this, CHEO surgeons have been granted privileges to operate at our hospital with the support of PRH nursing and anesthesia teams. Going forward, we will be scheduling standard days in the OR block calendar for the CHEO partnership, focusing on ENT cases but also looking towards the provision of other services in the future, such as pediatric ophthalmology and general surgery.

Rehabilitation

- The dining room has been upgraded to promote expanded use beyond meal times while the Rehab patio has also been refurbished to encourage outdoor activity in nice weather.



Visual Improvements

- A lot of work has been done to improve the aesthetics of our facility through painting, decluttering and taking a minimalist approach to signage and items on our walls in order to provide a calming space for our patients and visitors.
- Electronic way finding signage has been introduced to assist with Tower B navigation from the Emergency Department to Zone B and also to direct patients to various modalities in Diagnostic Imaging.

Patient And Family Advisory Council And Patient Advisors Support PRH Improvements



Pictured from left are Council members Patricia Proctor, Leanne Rautio, Co-Chair Wendy Lewis, Justine Mutlow and Tracy Gagne. Missing from photo: Judy Ellis and the PRH representatives.

In support of a patient and family-centred approach to care, our Patient and Family Advisory Council acts in an advisory capacity to ensure the patient and families' voice is integrated into the planning, delivery and evaluation of services offered at PRH and makes recommendations on the matters that impact their experiences here.

The Council is comprised of former patients, caregivers, family members and PRH representatives.

Quality Improvement - Council members participated in a planning session that assisted in the development of the hospital's 2025 priorities, with a focus on improving inter-hospital communication.

True North Metrics - Regular updates on hospital data allow PFAC members to offer feedback on hospital performance and patient experience.

Patient Safety - One member attended a Patient Safety conference in Ottawa and was able to share with the group patient stories and information that was presented.

Emergency Department Engagement - In a presentation to PFAC by the ED leadership team, Dr. Tom Hurley was able to provide great insight into the processes and challenges associated with ED care and members were able to ask questions and also provide ideas and feedback to this team.

Strategic Involvement - PFAC members are now part of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee and the Board Nominating Committee, helping shape the future of leadership for the hospital.

Areas where PFAC members provided feedback and input:

- Hospital signage (internal and external)
- Discharge communication processes
- French language policy
- Surgical floor renovation plans

To apply, or learn more about our Patient and Family Advisory Council and Patient Advisor roles, please call (613) 732-2811, extension 6161 or email laurie.tomasini@prh.ca.

We also welcome Patient Advisors who work with specific programs or on specific projects in order to share feedback and ideas that will help us improve the quality and safety of the care we provide.

Key activities and contributions of the past year:

Committee Participation - PFAC members are active on hospital committees, including those focused on discharge communication, accessibility and emergency services.

Accessibility Walk Throughs - Members provided feedback on accessibility in a variety of areas including those under construction and renovation.

PRH Recognizes And Celebrates The Contributions Of Its Volunteers

Pembroke Regional Hospital is proud to recognize and celebrate the nearly 200 volunteers who are an invaluable part of its health care team.

"Our volunteers are the backbone of our hospital community," said PRH President and CEO Sabine Mersmann. They enhance many aspects of our hospital through their contributions to the PRH Auxiliary, Board of Directors, PRH Foundation, Patient and Family Advisory Council, Spiritual Care Program, and Volunteer Services. Their dedication and generosity are truly inspiring."

Volunteers at PRH are often the first point of contact for patients and visitors, providing a warm welcome and essential support. Their contributions extend far beyond initial greetings; they assist in fundraising for equipment and capital needs, support patients and programs, offer valuable feedback for improvements, and help in governance and resource management. Their efforts ensure that PRH can offer a full range of amenities for patients, staff, visitors, and their families.

While many humbly say, 'I'm just a volunteer', their impact is profound and far-reaching. Thanks to their countless hours of service, our hospital can provide exceptional care and support to our community.

To honor these dedicated individuals, PRH hosted a volunteer appreciation dinner on May 13th at the Clarion Hotel in Pembroke. This event celebrated the remarkable contributions of our volunteers and recognized those who



Above, Diana Gagne, left, accepts her awards from PRH President and CEO Sabine Mersmann.

Below, Claire Cotnam, right, is celebrated for 30 years of service and presented a Life Membership by Auxiliary Gift Shop Manager Brenda Long.



have achieved long service milestones.

"We invite everyone to join us in expressing our gratitude to our volunteers," Mrs. Mersmann said. "We recognize that there are many worthy volunteer opportunities in our region and we are truly thankful that they have committed some of their time, skills and commitment to PRH."

5 years of service: Margaret Krueger (Auxiliary), Suzanne Mohns (Auxiliary), Neil Nicholson (PRH Board), Les Scott (Spiritual Care), Juliana Wong (Auxiliary), Susan Hanniman (Auxiliary) and Terry Lussier (Foundation)

10 years of service: Beth Brownlee (Foundation), Kathy Buske (Auxiliary), Corey Moss (Auxiliary), May Seto (Foundation), Pat Bennett (Auxiliary), Lisa Bradley (Foundation), Kathy Dittburner (Auxiliary), Jane Kielman (Auxiliary), Sally Leslie (Foundation), Samantha Moreau (Foundation), Sarah Selle (Foundation), Sonya Silver (Foundation) and Larry TerMarsch (Auxiliary)

15 years of service: Judy Gilchrist (Auxiliary) and Helene Giroux (Auxiliary)

20 years of service: Laetitia Tardiff-Peacock (Spiritual Care), Geraldine Wilcox (Auxiliary) and Eleanor Boire (Auxiliary)

25 years of service and Life Membership Award: Diana Gagne (Auxiliary)

30 years of service and Life Membership Award: Claire Cotnam (Auxiliary)

If you are interested in volunteering in some capacity at the Pembroke Regional Hospital, please consider calling:

PRH Auxiliary (613) 732-3675, extension 6169 / PRH Foundation (613) 732-3675, extension 7408 / Volunteer Services (613) 732-3675, extension 7103



AccessMHA.ca facilitates non-urgent referrals to appropriate mental health and addictions partner agencies and organizations within the region.

AccessMHA.ca



Regional
Coordinated
Access



1-833-527-8207

NAMI FAMILY-TO- FAMILY

FOR CAREGIVERS

A FREE 8-WEEK COURSE FOR
FAMILY CAREGIVERS OF
ADULTS WITH A MENTAL
HEALTH CONDITION

Described by past participants as life changing, NAMI Family-to-Family is an 8-week education program for family, friends and significant others of adults with mental health conditions. There is no fee to attend and all course materials are furnished at no cost to you.

The course is designed to help all family members understand and support their loved one with a mental health condition while maintaining their own well-being. The course topics are described on the right.

The **NAMI Family-to-Family** course is taught by trained family members who have a loved one with a mental health condition. NAMI Family-to-Family is an evidence-based program (EB). For information on the research base for the program, visit nami.org/research.

Course topics include:

- Understanding mental health conditions and preparing for crisis.
- Getting a diagnosis.
- An overview of depressive disorders, schizophrenia and schizoaffective disorders, bipolar disorder, anxiety and other mental health conditions.
- Treatment options for mental health conditions.
- The biology of the brain, medications and side effects.
- Listening and communications techniques.
- Problem solving and limit setting.
- Understanding what it's like to have a mental health condition.
- Recovery and rehabilitation as they relate to mental health conditions.
- Moving forward and self-care.

Register now for the Renfrew County course.
Only 18 spaces available!

WHEN: Sept. 18th - Nov. 6th 2025
Every Thursday 5:30 to 8:30pm

WHERE: Pembroke, ON.

COST: Free - Dinner provided

FOR MORE INFO OR
TO REGISTER,
CONTACT:



f2fprogramsontario@gmail.com - Please write PEMBROKE as the subject line



613-732-8770 ext. 8004

Family-to-Family Education Programs, Ontario
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New Peer Support Program Brings Hope To Patients And Caregivers

In partnership with March of Dimes Canada, we're pleased to announce the recent launch of *Hospital Peer Connections*, a compassionate and empowering peer support program for stroke patients and their caregivers.

Hospital Peer Connections is a unique in-hospital program developed by March of Dimes Canada that connects stroke survivors and caregivers with trained peer volunteers who have lived experience with stroke. These volunteers offer one-on-one visits to patients and caregivers, providing emotional support, encouragement, and a sense of hope during what can be an overwhelming and uncertain time.

"Peer support is a powerful tool in the recovery journey," said Michelle Foster, Volunteer Engagement Coordinator at March of Dimes Canada. "When someone who has been through a stroke walks into a hospital room and shares their story, it creates an instant connection. It helps patients and families feel seen, understood, and less alone. Our volunteers are trained, compassionate, and deeply committed to helping others navigate the path to recovery."

Among the program's first volunteers is Gary McKay, a stroke and heart attack survivor who experienced a mild stroke in 2019 and spent four days on the hospital's Rehabilitation unit.

New to the hospital environment and this type of volunteer work, Gary said he provides encouragement to others and the message that there is life after stroke. While acknowledging that everyone's stroke experience and recovery is different, he says that "Having a positive attitude is good for any type of recovery and you have to be willing to put in the work to have a positive outcome."



Gary McKay

The visits themselves take place in patient rooms or private spaces within the hospital, and patients can receive multiple visits during their stay. Caregivers can also be referred independently for support.

Currently, PRH has three dedicated peer volunteers. With plans to expand the program, the hospital is actively seeking more volunteers to increase the reach and frequency of visits.

"This program fills a critical gap in care," said PRH President and CEO Sabine Mersmann who added that patient feedback since the program launched on June 17th has been very positive.

"It brings a human connection that clinical care alone can't always provide. Our patients benefit immensely from hearing first-hand what recovery can look like. It's inspiring, it's hopeful, and it's a testament to the strength of community."

For more information or to become a volunteer, please contact Michelle Foster at March of Dimes Canada at (705) 627-7831 or by email at mfoster@marchofdimes.ca



Wow! What a year it has been for all of us.

First off, may I start by saying a HUGE "THANK YOU" to everyone in our health care community. Thank you for all you do - you do it in your own special, quiet way and I admire your dedication to the wellbeing of others.

Thank you to everyone in our community who found a way to donate both time and money to our local Hospital Foundation. I am humbled by how our region gives back. I rest easy knowing that my family and yours are in good hands at the Pembroke Regional Hospital. I thank you, sincerely, for helping us keep health care closer to home.

L. Edmonds

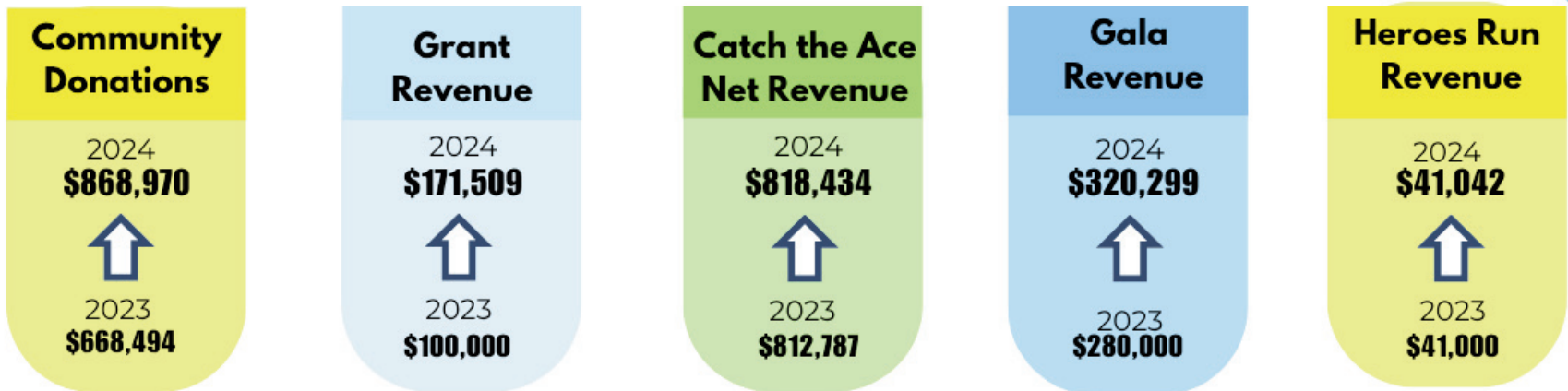
Lisa Edmonds, PRH Foundation Board Chair

New Equipment Purchased
Through Community Donations

in our 2024 Annual Budget

- New Born Resuscitaire
- Maternal Fetal Monitor
- 2 Ultrasound Machines
- NeoProbe for Cancer Surgery
- 10 New hospital Beds
- Video Laryngoscope
- Surgical Operating Room Light
- and more

Thank You



2025/26

Events


October 18, 2025


Ongoing


March 2026


May 2026


Ongoing



On behalf of the Foundation Team, thank you to our donors, volunteers, sponsors, Board of Directors and many others, who have made a difference in our mission, to provide much-needed funds to the hospital to purchase new and replacement equipment to better serve our family and friends. I would like to highlight all those who work at PRH, especially our frontline staff and physicians, since they are a pivotal reason our donors continue to give! The Foundation team and our many volunteers, know that our donors give due to the many positive experiences they have had while visiting PRH, resulting in our fundraising success. Thank you all for all that you do!

During 2024-2025, the Foundation has been focusing on collaborating with the PRH team and our donors, to promote our many fundraisers and programs in order to purchase our highest priority equipment needs. We look forward to working with our community and the hospital in 2025/2026 as we continue to identify and fund the highest priority needs of your Pembroke Regional Hospital. It is truly a Team effort! Thank you so much for your continued support.

Roger K. Martin, Executive Director, PRH Foundation



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PRHfoundation.com

Help us build the future of care,

close to home.

YES, I will help my Pembroke Regional Hospital

- ☐ Here is a one-time gift to help my PRH when it needs me the most.
- ☐ I want to make a monthly gift to ensure the continued health and well being of Renfrew County families for the foreseeable future.
- ☐ I wish to make a pledge gift of \$_____ per year for 3 years to act as a transformation gift towards the greatest equipment needs at the Pembroke Regional Hospital.

Gift Amount: ☐\$30 ☐\$50 ☐\$100 ☐Other: _____

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