

## Caring for Seniors: new training raises the bar

As our population ages, the percentage of people over the age of 65 receiving care in our hospitals is also increasing. Currently, about 62% of patients cared for at King Edward VII Memorial Hospital are 65 years of age and older.

In recognizing the need to enhance care for our seniors, BHB recently introduced Nurses Improving Care for Health-system Elders or NICHE, a leading nurse-driven programme designed to help hospitals provide sensitive and exemplary care for seniors. Developed at the New York University College of Nursing, NICHE is currently practiced in over 450 hospitals and healthcare facilities throughout North America.

"We understand the additional stress some senior patients may experience in hospital and wanted to provide training for our clinicians that addressed the special needs of older patients," says Judy Richardson, BHB's Chief of Nursing, Quality and Risk Management. "Implementing NICHE principles is expected to improve clinical outcomes, shorten lengths of stay, generate positive fiscal results, develop nursing competencies and provide greater patient, family, and staff satisfaction."

There have been impressive results from medical centres in the USA adhering to NICHE principles. In one facility, hospital-acquired infections decreased from 8% to less than 1%. Another hospital reduced the incidence of falls per day by nearly 50%, while the use of restraints was cut in half.



"NICHE is the only geriatric nursing programme that addresses the needs of hospitalized, older adults," Judy concludes. "In the next 30 years, patients 85 years and older will double in number. BHB is being proactive in meeting this challenge by assuring our clinical staff members are trained to provide the best care for this targeted population."

## PATIENT SURVEY: Patient satisfaction trends upward

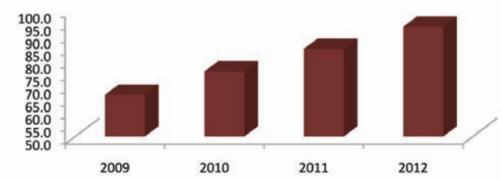
An independent research company has been carrying out a patient satisfaction survey on behalf of BHB since 2009 in order to impartially assess the patient experience. Results indicate a continued rising trend in patient satisfaction when it comes to acute care services at the hospital. Every month, surveyors randomly telephone over 300 people, who have used hospital services or been discharged from hospital within the last 30 days. Last year's results, compiled from 3,600 surveys, indicate between 93% and 97% of patients were satisfied with the care they received in the Emergency Department, on the wards, at outpatient services and on the surgical outpatient unit. This was a significant improvement from results in 2009 which ranged from 66% to 95% for the same services.

"These results reflect a workforce that continues to care for patients with professionalism and heart," said Venetta Symonds, CEO and President for Bermuda Hospitals Board. "The stories behind these results confirm hospital staff are communicating better and responding to the healthcare needs of our community. In particular, the Emergency Department, by far our busiest and most challenging area, improved satisfaction by 50% over the past four years. Despite cramped conditions and dealing with everything from ear aches to gunshot wounds, our dedicated staff have vastly improved the patient experience."



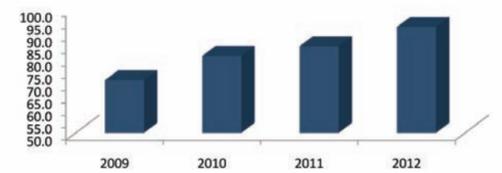
% Satisfied With ER Units Overall Service			
2009	2010	2011	2012
66.4	75.6	84.5	93.2

% Satisfied With Emergency Unit's Overall Service



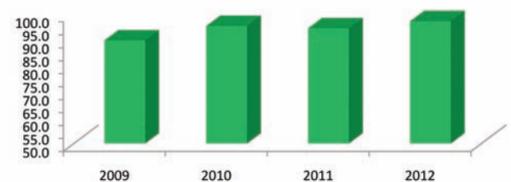
% Satisfied With IP Units Overall Service			
2009	2010	2011	2012
71.2	81.0	84.9	92.7

% Satisfied With Inpatient Unit's Overall Service



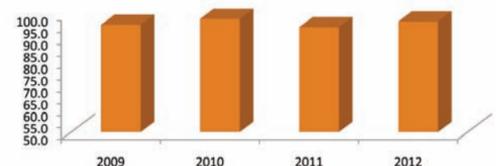
% Satisfied With OP Units Overall Service			
2009	2010	2011	2012
89.8	95.4	94.5	97.2

% Satisfied With Outpatient Unit's Overall Service



% Satisfied With SOP Units Overall Service			
2009	2010	2011	2012
95.0	97.5	94.0	96.4

% Satisfied With Surgical Outpatient Unit's Overall Service





## Cardiac Rehabilitation Services: Comprehensive Approach for Cardiac Patients

Bermuda Hospitals Board's former cardiac education classes and exercise programmes were recently combined to form Cardiac Rehabilitation Services (CRS), a comprehensive approach for patients experiencing a cardiac event. With the addition of input from a multidisciplinary team, this new care and treatment strategy consists of exercise, education and access to staff members from a range of Allied Health services.

CRS has been well received by patients who start off by taking Heartline, a four-week education course covering nutrition, medication use, stress management and the importance of exercise and life-style changes.

Clients who have approval from a cardiologist may move on to the Cardiac Exercise programme, overseen by a physiotherapist. Participants generally attend for eight to ten weeks and may go on to integrate their exercise routines at home or at a private health club.

"CRS incorporates physiotherapy and nursing," explains Taiwo George, Clinical Manager, Home Care Nursing & Rehabilitation Services. "Patients may also take advantage of care offered by our physiatrist, dietitian, clinical psychologist, speech therapist and medical social worker. This multidisciplinary approach ensures patients have access to a range of services all at the same time and in one location."

Peter Adhemar enrolled in CRS last year after undergoing a five-way cardiac bypass procedure. He found the experiences extremely valuable in re-focusing his life. "Cardiac surgery is a life changing event which

requires changes to protect your future. The guidance and encouragement given at CRS was the catalyst for positive, major shifts in my fitness, eating and drinking habits. Without their support, it would have been easy for me to revert into victim mode."

With heart disease remaining the number one cause of death for both men and women in Bermuda, cardiac rehabilitation remains a vital tool for patients adapting to a healthy lifestyle that includes physical activity, education, stress management and nutrition counseling. For more information on Heartline and the Cardiac Exercise Programme contact 239-2114.

## Ward Initiative: Enhancing Patient-Centred Care

Beginning in April, inpatients at King Edward VII Memorial Hospital are being assigned to wards according to the nature of their condition. Patients on the wards will receive care from clinical staff who will focus on their individual needs and diagnoses. This transition is part of the hospital's preparation for transferring patients to the new Acute Care Wing in 2014.

"We are adopting a more patient-centred care model," said Norma Smith, Clinical Director for Medical/Surgical Services. "This effectively makes each ward a specialty area in a particular type of care, in much the same way that ICU and the Emergency Room have always existed."

Patients requiring care for acute medical illness, such as heart disease, asthma or cancer, will be cared for on Curtis, the Acute Medical Ward. Patients with acute surgical needs will be admitted to Cooper, the Acute Surgical Ward. Perry Ward will accommodate acute and sub-acute patients, including those needing rehabilitation.

Patients who have had their acute needs met but who cannot be discharged, will be placed on Gordon Ward for ongoing care, including assistance with activities of daily living.

Shifting to this more patient-centred model streamlines hospital operations and makes the delivery of care more efficient. Currently, inpatients comprise a broad mix of conditions and acuity levels, requiring a wide variety of expertise to facilitate appropriate care.

"No matter where our patients will be cared for," Norma adds, "they will remain at the centre of all we do and will receive timely, safe, effective, equitable and quality care from our clinical staff members."



## MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AIDE:

### Supporting people facing mental health challenges



Psychologists Shawnee Basden and Cherita Raynor from the Mid Atlantic Wellness Institute launched a new training programme recently designed to teach members of the public how to identify when someone is experiencing a mental health crisis and how to provide them with assistance until professional help is available.

"Mental Health First Aide does not teach therapy skills," Dr. Raynor explains. "It is intended to educate the public, especially those without a mental health background, about mental health issues. The course aims to increase skills among community members who may interact with people facing mental health challenges and provides participants with tools to support someone going through a crisis in a timely manner. In addition, this kind of education will help ameliorate the negative stigma often associated with mental health problems."

The courses have proven to be extremely successful and to date, 37 people have completed the programme. Tiffany Cooper signed up in December and although she does not have family members or close friends dealing with mental illness, she says the course proved very valuable. "Just like people in Bermuda suffer from cancer, diabetes or cardiac disease, I know there are others dealing with mental illness. The course helped me understand that when someone is having a mental health crisis, it needs to be taken as seriously as a cardiac arrest. Appropriate intervention during a crisis can have a positive impact on the outcome and can influence the

success of treatment. In addition to feeling comfortable assisting someone during a mental health crisis, I now have a much better understanding of how vulnerable people dealing with mental illness are. The course helped me view someone experiencing mental illness as a person, rather than as the condition they suffer with. I appreciate that people with mental health issues are just like everyone else."

**The course runs from 9:30am to 5:00pm over a two-day period and costs \$75. There are still spaces available for the June course, scheduled for Thursday and Friday, 13/14 June and for the August course, scheduled for Thursday and Friday, 8/9 August. Contact [mhfa@bhb.bm](mailto:mhfa@bhb.bm) or phone 236-3770 ext 3400 for registration information.**



**Bermuda Hospitals Board**