

Busy Emergency Department Scores High for Patient Satisfaction

The Emergency Department (ED) is the busiest clinical service and the most public area at King Edward VII Memorial Hospital (KEMH). It is staffed by board-certified Emergency Physicians, Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and Registered Nurses who have specialised training in Emergency, Pediatric and Trauma care. KEMH EMTs handle almost 5000 ambulance runs each year and ED team members log nearly 34,000 patient visits annually, providing services to both local residents and visitors.

The hospital's Patient Satisfaction Survey, generated by an independent company assessing responses from 3,600 people per year, indicates a current year-to-date Emergency Department physician satisfaction score of 96%. In addition, nursing care for this area scored 92% in July, while the overall satisfaction rate for the ER has remained above 90% throughout 2013.

Dr. Edward Schultz, Chief of Emergency Services and Hyperbaric Medicine, says his team works together to assure patients are seen in a timely manner and receive the best care possible. "With the introduction of a "Fast Track" service which is staffed by a designated ED nurse and physician caring for patients with minor medical complaints, wait times for all patients have gone down significantly over the past three years, leading to an improved patient experience."

In addition, the ED works closely with other hospital departments to reduce the time it takes to admit patients. "With advances in medicine, patients are living much longer and when elderly patients come to the ED they are often quite sick, which necessitates additional time and resources for their care. In many instances they require admission to the hospital as well," Dr. Schultz adds.

Marian Hummel was visiting from Pennsylvania last year when she became seriously ill. After being rushed to the ED, Mrs. Hummel says she knew she was in good hands.

"Naturally, this was a frightening experience, yet the kind, prompt and attentive care I received was truly impressive. Emergency Room physician, Dr. Christine Dilullo, took time to explain what was happening to me and what was being done to improve my condition. Although I did not feel well, I felt completely safe. The nurses were helpful, responsive, kind, caring and friendly. The Hospital is fortunate to have such wonderful staff. I have been treated in emergency rooms in other countries and the care I received at KEMH was clearly superior."

Keeping Patients Safe, Comfortable and Pain Free on the Wards

According to our surveys, patients admitted to hospital for treatment have indicated an overall 90% satisfaction rate with their care. In particular, our patients confirm we are doing a good job when it comes to managing their pain levels.

Regular rounding, a process that requires checking on patients routinely in order to anticipate their needs, has been introduced on hospital wards over the past two years. This practice has reduced the frequency of patients using their call-light button and has increased patient safety and comfort.

Karen Raynor, Clinical Manager for Curtis Ward, says, "We monitor positioning, personal needs and pain, which has a positive impact on the patient experience and helps us achieve the best possible outcomes for those in our care. Our team includes physicians, nurses, aides, orderlies, physical, occupational and speech therapists, pharmacists, dietitians and nutritionists, social workers, housekeepers and patient and staff educators. Together we ensure the appropriate level of care is provided at all times to our patients."

Ms. W. Fubler certainly agrees and has praised hospital staff for their genuine concern. A recent patient on Curtis, Ms. Fubler shared her experience with us.

"It was clear the health and safety of patients were priorities and staff members went out of their way to assure we were comfortable. Not only did the doctors and nurses do an excellent job, but all the staff, including nursing aides, orderlies, dietary staff, housekeepers and lab technicians, made me feel like they were truly concerned about me and the other patients. A big 'Thank You' to everyone- I commend you for the excellent care I received."



DRS. EDWARD SCHULTZ AND CHRISTINE DILULLO

When should you go to the EMERGENCY ROOM?

The following are important examples of conditions that warrant a trip to the Emergency Department:

- Severe chest pain in adults
- Difficulty breathing
- Loss of consciousness
- Acute onset of confusion
- "Worst headache ever"
- Possible stroke
- New onset, recurrent, or prolonged seizures
- Serious allergic reaction
- Multiple injuries from a traffic collision, assault, fall, or work-related injury
- Possible fracture or dislocation
- Severe laceration
- Significant thermal or chemical burns
- Severe abdominal pain
- Gastrointestinal bleeding
- Protracted vomiting, especially if associated with abdominal pain
- Fever associated with violent shaking chills ("rigors")
- Heavy vaginal bleeding or abdominal pain during pregnancy
- Sudden loss of vision



KAREN RAYNOR WITH A PATIENT

ENHANCED RECOVERY PROGRAMME Reduces Discomfort and Shortens Hospital Stay following Knee Replacement Procedures

With about 100 knee replacement surgeries performed annually in Bermuda, this procedure ranks as the most common surgery carried out at the hospital. People often undergo knee replacement (TKR) as the result of age, an injury or a medical condition, such as arthritis or obesity, which has led to pain and impaired function.

Orthopaedic Surgeon, Dr. William Peckett, who has performed about 600 TKRs in Bermuda, points out that total knee replacement can result in dramatic improvements in quality of life and health. "More than 90 percent of people who undergo total knee replacement surgery experience a significant reduction of knee pain and return to their normal daily activities."

Dr. Peckett says surgeons are always looking for ways of improving their performance. In 2012, the average length of stay in the hospital following TKR was 5.1 days. In collaboration with the anaesthetic department, Dr. Peckett has recently introduced an 'Enhanced Recovery Programme' which starts even before the patient comes to hospital. "It is specifically designed to reduce discomfort, speed up recovery, reduce length of stay in hospital and decrease complications associated with the procedure. Patients are now frequently staying in the hospital for only three or four days, and sometimes for as little as two nights following the operation."

As part of the Enhanced Recovery Programme, physiotherapy following surgery often begins the same day the procedure is performed or on the first day after surgery. Patients usually undergo two or three days of inpatient physiotherapy prior to discharge and are taught which exercises will hasten recovery and produce the best outcomes.

Angela Gilbert, Clinical Manager of Allied Health Services, says the goal of physiotherapy following knee replacement surgery is restoring function, improving safety and enhancing quality of life. "Our physiotherapists teach patients exercises to regain full knee strength and movement. During a patient's hospital stay, they will typically receive physiotherapy two times a day. An occupational therapist will also help patients prepare for their return home. Doctors may recommend intermittent compression boots and special elastic stockings that reduce swelling and blood clots. Most patients are surprised by how quickly they are out of bed, walking and starting an exercise regime. The sooner we can assist someone in getting moving, the better his or her recovery time usually is."

Parliamentarian Kenneth L. Bascome underwent knee replacement in June and says the care he received went over and above his expectations.

"Physiotherapists began working with me on the day of my surgery and did an A+ job getting me up, out of bed and walking. My hospital experience left me feeling confident and enthusiastic about undertaking the physical activities I love, like swimming. I congratulate hospital staff for doing an exceptional job following my procedure and helping with my recovery."



DR. WILLIAM PECKETT, ANGELA GILBERT AND KENNETH BASCOME

Meeting the Needs of our Youngest Patients

While having blood drawn may sometimes be a concern for adults, it can present special challenges for young children with small veins.

"We understand children and families may feel anxious or frightened when a child needs to have a blood test," says phlebotomist Andre Joseph. "Although parents may feel uncomfortable talking to their child about having blood drawn, being honest with children will help to foster a sense of trust between you, your child and your healthcare team."

Andre suggests children be told in advance what to expect so they can be prepared for the experience and ask questions. "This will also give you time to reassure your child the blood test is necessary and to develop a plan for coping that will work for both of you. You and your child can decide if he or she would like to sit up or lie down, sit on your lap or by themselves or hold your hand. We appreciate when parents tell us about the best position for their child. We always have a staff member available to help support your child's hand or arm. This means you can concentrate on comforting your child."

Kristen Chow, a former neonatal intensive care nurse, says she has extremely high standards and was very grateful for the way staff dealt with her son on several occasions when he needed blood tests.

"Care in the phlebotomy department has repeatedly exceeded my expectations and I was very pleased by how staff dealt with my son. I would especially like to commend Andre for his professional demeanour. He was caring, reassuring and extremely proficient in his duties. I know how hard it is to stick a little one and I was most impressed with his skill and ability to work closely with the nurse- they were an effective team."



KRISTEN CHOW AND HER SON



ANDRE JOSEPH WITH A YOUNG PATIENT

Parents Praise the Maternity Ward

Sommer and Spencer Conway became the proud parents of Ella Quinn Conway, a healthy, happy baby girl, born at the hospital in April of this year. The Conway's wrote to tell us about their experience.



SPENCER, SOMMER AND ELLA QUINN CONWAY

"We would like to thank everyone on the maternity ward for their excellent, tireless and meticulous assistance during the birth of our daughter. We honestly experienced true human spirit and generosity whilst we were at the hospital. We have received care overseas and there is nothing like the experience we had at KEMH. You and your team could not have been any friendlier, more hospitable or caring. It was truly a magical and uplifting time for us."

Christine Virgil, Clinical Director for Maternal/Child Services says her team strives to meet and exceed patients' expectations. "In addition to being registered nurses, our team members are all certified midwives. Providing a positive, comfortable and safe birth experience is our top priority."



RN JACQUELINE DALEY WITH LOREN CANN AND HER NEWBORN BABY

