

The Health Beat

A newsletter for employees of Health PEI

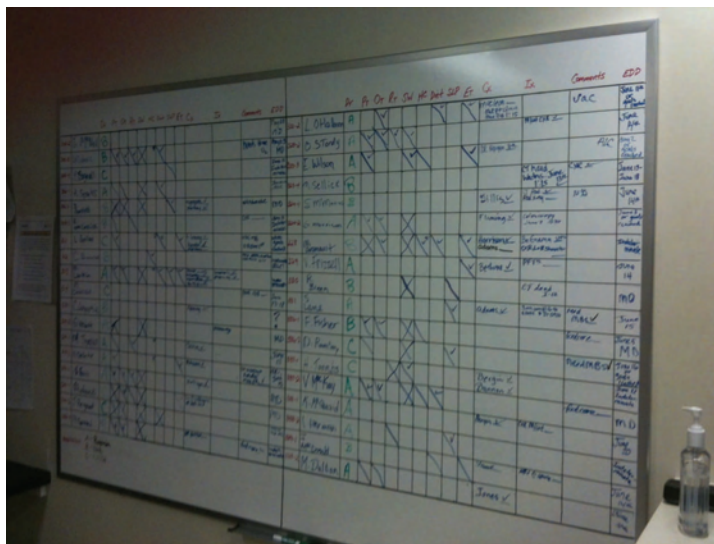


Whiteboards improving communication, collaboration

Dry-erase whiteboards that are being placed on units and in patient rooms are improving communication between caregivers, patients and their families.

The whiteboards in patient rooms list information such as the patient's name, his or her nurse and doctor, a family contact, and the expected date of discharge. Uptake has increased thanks to a staff-driven improvement project using the principles of Lean Six Sigma.

"The 'Room and Board' project has helped standardize and significantly increase the use of bedside boards," says



A whiteboard in Unit 3 at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

Karen Dunn, nurse manager of Unit 3 at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. The project

team also designed and erected unit boards to improve communication be-

tween nursing and allied health staff.

So far the boards have been placed in Unit 3 of the QEH and at Kings County Memorial Hospital.

The Room and Board project team has realized all of its goals; for example, expected date of discharge was posted on 80 per cent of bedside boards on Unit 3 and 63 per cent of boards at the KCMH. In addition, "calls and interruptions" at the desk were reduced by over 1,000 in Unit 3 and by 300 at KCMH over a two-week period.

Long-serving employees offer more than years of experience

Long-term Health PEI employees bring other attributes to their care of Islanders besides their actual years of experience in the health-care field, Minister of Health and Wellness Doug Currie said.

"Having reached the milestones you are celebrating in your careers today means you have applied yourselves to your work with commitment and passion," Currie told those gathered June 13 for Health PEI's Long-Term Service Awards, one of three such ceremonies during the month. "You are skilled, enthusiastic health care professionals and each of you has made a difference in the lives of many."



Leslie MacKendrick (right), one of 117 Health PEI staff to receive a long-term service award, is congratulated for 25 years of service by Pam Trainor, Health PEI's executive director of Corporate Development and Innovation.

A total of 117 employees were recognized for 20, 25, 30, 35 and 40 years of health-system experience at the cere-

mony and dinner at the Holland College Culinary Center. The group's combined experienced totaled 3,035 years.

Currie cited a recent poll, which found that Islanders have the highest satisfaction rates nationally with their walk-in clinics and hospitals, as further evidence of the skill and dedication of Health PEI's front-line staff.

Long-term service award receptions also were held in June at the Queen Elizabeth and Prince County hospitals, which saw 79 staff and physicians from the QEH and 35 staff and physicians at the PCH receive pins marking 20, 25, 30, 35 and 40 years of service.



UPDATES FROM THE FIVE PRIMARY CARE NETWORKS

West Prince: COPD session rewarding for patients, staff

A year of successful COPD group and individual education sessions has resulted in positive response from the West Prince patients who have received them and the staff who offer them.

Begun in May 2011, the program is organized by primary care nurses at the O'Leary Health Centre and Alberton Health Services. It includes three weekly group sessions of two to three hours: the first class educates about COPD and teaches exercises to help improve shortness of breath; the second involves medications and proper inhaler techniques; and the third focuses on developing individual action plans for each client. There are also

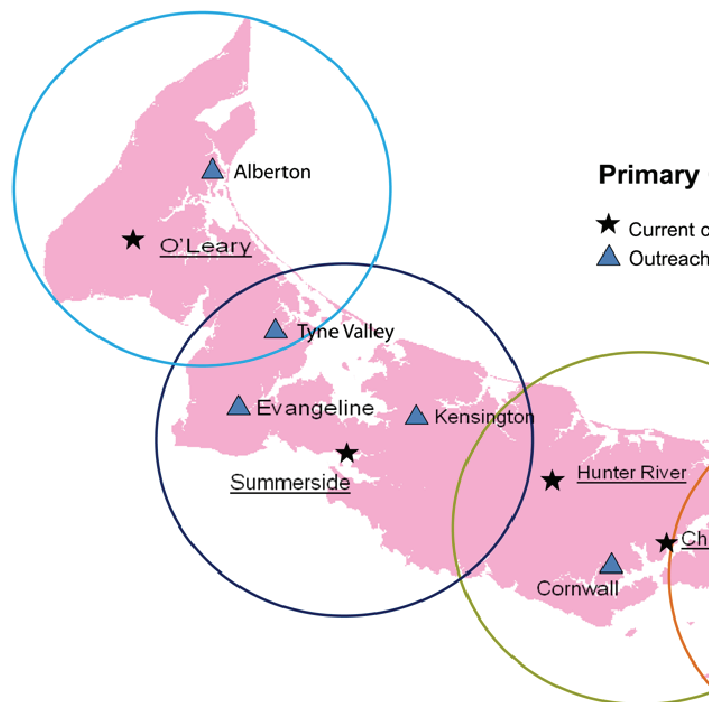
individual sessions available for patients who prefer that option.

Patients have shown an improvement in their symptoms after just one class and have expressed how supported they felt in a group setting and how relieved they are to identify with others with similar symptoms. Staff have given equally positive feedback to the program, said Tammy Smith, RN at O'Leary Health Centre.

"This is such a rewarding program to work with as a primary care nurse," she said. "To witness a patient with a chronic illness improve with simple education is amazing."

The program is based on one developed in Quebec called "Living Well with COPD" that

has proven to decrease hospital admissions and shorten hospital stays.



East Prince: Workshops are teaching mental health first aid

Three times a year, East Prince primary care employees – as well as mental health and addictions staff – have had the opportunity to participate in a two-day work shop in mental health first aid. This program is now being offered to primary care staff throughout Health PEI.

The workshop provides explanations of mental health, illness and related problems, signs and symptoms, information about effective interventions and treatment; and discusses how to access professional help. It covers sections on substance use disorders, crisis intervention for suicide, mood disorders, anxiety disorders, and mental health first aid for psychosis.

"This course leaves us with a great list of

resources, both in print and online, that we can use in our everyday practice" said Heather Mills, an RN at Harbourside Health Centre in Summerside.

A total of 18 countries have adopted mental health first aid as part of their mental health strategy and in 2010, it was implemented under the umbrella of the Mental Health Commission of Canada. For more information, and for listings of upcoming sessions in your area, please visit www.mentalhealthfirstaid.ca.

Also at Harbourside Health Center, well-child clinics are being conducted based on national pediatric guidelines. Children are assessed by an LPN, RN, and

family physician with the goal of identifying health concerns and ensuring children are reaching their developmental milestones. Appropriate referrals are also made at these appointments. There has been positive feedback in evaluation, and parents felt their needs were addressed.

www.mentalhealthfirstaid.ca

UPDATES FROM THE FIVE PRIMARY CARE NETWORKS

Queens West: Optimizing seniors' osteoporosis care

Everyone over age 65 should have bone mineral density (BMD) testing according to Osteoporosis Canada. Island seniors

currently need a physician referral for BMD tests, but the Queens West network is exploring the option of patients self-referring for the testing and for their fracture-risk assessments.

"We wanted to find out if a self-referral program would increase the number of people and men getting screened, and if it could identify more people at moderate or high risk for fracture," said Janet Loo, nurse practitioner. Invitations were mailed to 454 patients of the Central Queens/Gulf Shore family health centres identified as age 65 and above who did not have BMD testing in the

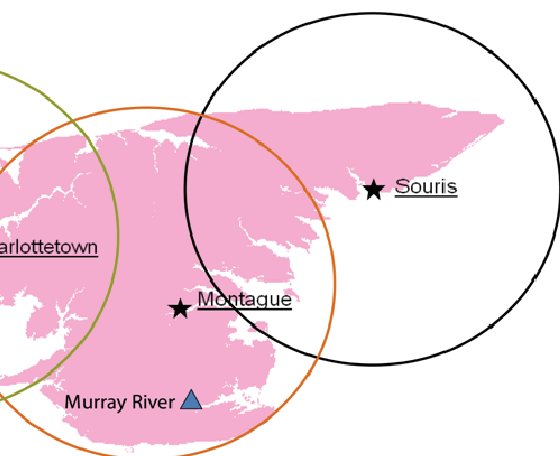
past five years, and 19 percent (86 patients, or 56 male and 30 female) replied that they wanted to participate and testing was ordered.

A total of 30 lab reports have been received to date. Four patients with high risk were booked to discuss and start bisphosphonate treatment, seven patients identified as moderate risk were booked to discuss bone health and interventions to prevent fractures, and the remaining 19 low-risk patients were offered a group education session on bone health.

"This initial data suggests that patients are responding to the invitation to be screened and a higher percentage of males participated," Loo noted.

Care Networks

collaborative practices
sites



Kings: Staffing surveys help find best office practices

Internal staffing surveys that will examine how to improve office processes are happening at the Montague and Souris health centres.

Montague has completed the survey and participated in two follow-up activities: a planning day for staff and physicians, and an Advanced Clinical Access staff-driven improvement project based on the principles of Lean Six Sigma. Dr. Scott Campbell is the physician participating in the pilot project. Souris will complete the same internal staffing survey this fall.

In addition, the Montague and Souris health centres have initiated the COPD program as well as the International Normalized Ratio (INR) program (also see "Queens East").

Queens East: Referrals continue to grow for new clinic



Theresa Buntain, RN, poses with Brenda Edgar, the first Queens East patient to have her International Normalized Ratio (INR) done. The INR is a way to measure the time it takes for blood to clot. When Queens East network offered its first INR clinic at the Boardwalk clinic in April there were 60 referrals the first week and now the program has surpassed the 100 referrals.

Manual brings innovative approach to primary mental health care

Workshops were held recently for physicians and staff in the primary care networks, mental health and addictions, and public health nursing, to provide training in the use of a Cognitive Behavioural Interpersonal Skills Manual (CBIS).

“This tool uses a unique approach to provide enhancements in the assessment, treatment and management of depression and anxiety,” said Margaret Kennedy, director of Mental Health and Addictions. “Our colleagues in Victoria, BC have been using the manual with success and they gave training and practice sessions to Health PEI staff. “

A grant from Bell Canada “Let’s Talk Community Fund” helped cover the cost of the workshops.



Health PEI staff Kendra Biggar (left), Bobbi Jo Flynn, and Susan Chappell review CBIS manual at a training session in Charlottetown.

Hillsborough students complete first-ever classroom program

Three patients at Hillsborough Hospital, who had never before experienced a classroom learning environment, got to chance to become students for the first time thanks to the work of staff and physicians of Unit 7.

Staff and physicians created a first-ever simulated classroom environment in Unit 7, which is the dual diagnosis/behavioural unit of the hospital. The patients participated in a five-month, two hour-a-week program where they learned basic skills such as ABCs, Laubach phonetics, reading skills, how to behave respectfully in a classroom, speaking in turn, and arts and crafts.

“Ann Atkinson and her staff do great work in developing programming – such as this classroom initiative – to promote the health and well-being of these patients,” said Margaret Kennedy, Health PEI’s director of Mental Health and Addictions. Atkinson, who is patient care coordinator for Unit 7, also was this year’s recipient of the Emily Bryant Award for Excellence in Mental Health Nursing.

The Literacy Council partnered with Hillsborough Hospital on the initiative and has agreed to participate again next year. The Sisters of Notre Dame contributed to the students' learning by working with them on crafts and other learning activities at their facility in Charlottetown. Classes culminated in a graduation ceremony on June 18 planned by Holland College students.

Video of the graduation, which was shot by a retired occupational therapist, will be submitted to the national Occupational Therapy conference to highlight the initiative as a model program for this population of patients.

Readers respond to *The Health Beat* survey

Health PEI managers took a few moments to answer some questions about what they knew about *The Health Beat*, how they received it, and what they would change about it.

Most knew what it was (94 per cent), received it regularly (85 per cent) and have read it at least once (91 per cent). Nearly 88 per cent read the PDF attachment that arrived via e-mail but not as many (44 per cent) knew that it was also posted on the government Intranet (<http://iis.peigov/dept/health/index.html>) and on the Health PEI Managers Resource Center (www.healthpei.ca/mrc).

Other questions asked how many had forwarded the newsletter to others in their work group or printed the newsletter and posted it in their work area for those without e-mail.

More than 60 per cent, when asked to choose from a list of things that would cause them to read more often, chose “If it had more stories about the work of individual Health PEI staff and physicians” and 45 per cent selected “If it had more stories about the strategic direction of Health PEI.”

Thanks for your time and input, and we’ll do our best to follow your suggestions.

Send us your comments and story ideas!

If you have a story for us – or just an idea for one – e-mail us at bpchatfield@gov.pe.ca or phone us at 902-368-6135.

www.healthpei.ca