

South Muskoka Hospital Foundation

The South Muskoka Memorial Hospital Emergency Department saw more than 22,900 patients seeking medical attention during a recent one-year period.

Seasonality challenges at local emergency department

Summer in Muskoka means bustling communities, roads and stores - all filled with exuberant cottagers and tourists rushing around to the next event or locale to complete their Muskoka experience. Equally as bustling is the Emergency Department waiting room, filled with the ill and injured, and anxious family members hovering close by. In a South Muskoka summer, those emergency visits, just like the seasonal population, can double in number.

Annual emergency visits for 2012 - 2013 totalled more than 20,000. Typically, the Emergency Department sees around 50-60 patients per day, and in the summer that number blossoms to 70-90, and well over that on long weekends. It's a challenge to staff a department with such variability in play. Often what happens is that wait times increase.

"We will have an extra Physician working in the Emergency Depart-

ment Friday, Saturday and Sunday during the summer months," says Diane Veitch, Manager of Emergency & Surgical Services. "This will help to improve patient wait times. A physician assistant also works in the Emergency Department and that person will help out with the lower acuity patients such as those who have lacerations and simple fractures." The nurse-practitioner position in Emergency is currently being recruited and both positions (the nurse-practitioner and the physician assistant) are year-round.

Part of the problem of seasonal demands is that nurses and other medical practitioners favour year-round positions and it is extremely difficult to hire qualified seasonal staff. In actuality, Muskoka is fortunate to have some seasonal practitioners who come to their cottages and take on a summer position at the hospital.

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We have lower emergency room wait times for complex and minor emergency conditions. For complex conditions, we have 3.5 hours versus the provincial average of 5.3 hours and for minor conditions, we have 2.0 hours versus the provincial average of 2.1 hours.

New face in family medicine at South Muskoka



Dr. Carl Seaton moved from Timmins and is now working from the Bracebridge Medical Arts Centre.

There is a new face in the hallways at the hospital and in the community at the Bracebridge Medical Arts Centre on James Street. Dr. Carl Seaton is a family physician who enjoys the variety that comes with being a general practitioner.

"I enjoy the body of knowledge that you need to be in command of as a family physician," says Seaton. "You need to be quite well rounded and this forces you to keep up with changes in all the different areas."

Dr. Seaton was a fully qualified M.D. in Jamaica and started the process to obtain Canadian equivalency prior to his arrival to Canada in 2008. He started writing the Medical Council of Canada exams and once he moved to Canada, he settled in Ottawa and continued his efforts toward equivalency. Then it was off to Timmins where he worked as a physician's assistant and then, in 2011, he was matched through Northern Ontario School of Medicine for his medical residency in Timmins. Dr. Seaton and his family enjoyed the community, but missed friends and attending functions located in Southern Ontario.

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Interesting info tidbits about Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare (MAHC):

Did you know...?

MAHC has had four consecutive balanced budgets since 2010-11.

Significant boost to women's health through Auxiliary pledge



The Muskoka Mocha coffee kiosk and the gift shop are two of the ways the Auxiliary raises revenues for hospital equipment.

The Foundation approached the Auxiliary, asking if they would support the purchase of a new mammography machine as a multi-year pledge. The Auxiliary approved the request for \$250,000 and has already fulfilled this year's portion of \$50,000 of the pledge. The Foundation will fund the balance of the cost through other donors.

The Auxiliary fundraises through three retail operations (Muskoka Mocha coffee kiosk, the hospital gift shop and a craft bazaar) as well as events such as a house tour, fashion show and tag days. "We raise money for hospital equipment and last year we purchased 11 pieces of equipment for \$96,900," says Boehm. In addition, the Auxiliary provides funding for small items under their "Little Things Mean A Lot" program to support the needs of various hospital departments.

Thanks to the efforts of more than 200 volunteers of the South Muskoka Memorial Hospital Auxiliary, the hospital will be well on its way to purchasing a new digital mammography machine. Given that the hospital is a registered site for the Ontario Breast Screening Program, up-to-date technology for this program was considered a high priority for the hospital.

The current 25-year-old scanner operates using film technology and replacement parts are getting increasingly difficult to secure. "We became aware that the hospital has been concerned that the current mammography machine might break down while there are so many women relying on this important service," says Brigitte Boehm, Auxiliary president.



Did you know...?

More than half of Emergency visits are lower acuity - the most common of these being fractures, sprains, strains, dislocations, contusions, abrasions, and open wounds.

Seasonality challenges at local emergency department...continued from cover

The type of injuries seen during the summer months tend to be those incurred while working and playing at the cottage - including fractures, sprains, dislocations, infections from open cuts, fishhooks, lacerations and then, of course, there are the traumas from auto and boating accidents.

A provincial directive has improved communication and transfer for life and limb threatening injuries: instead of the admitting hospital calling around to other hospitals and specialists for a referral, there is one

central number to call, again, saving patient wait times, staff time, increasing overall efficiency and saving lives.

The Emergency treatment time for an off-season emergency is approximately two hours, says Veitch, so a patient will often be triaged (assessed), treated and discharged within two hours - remarkably fast when compared with other hospitals. Summer-time demands mean that number will creep up by one or two hours.

"Even our summer season treatment times are reasonably fast in comparison with many of the larger centres," says Veitch. But the volumes still provide a challenge for a small community hospital, albeit one that is well-prepared.



Thriving in adversity

Colin Miller, Executive Director, South Muskoka Hospital Foundation

We are so fortunate here in South Muskoka. Despite all the changes in health care funding, our hospital has still managed to shine and excel. We have lower wait times than provincial averages for our emergency department despite all our challenges with seasonal demands. Our lower wait times for many diagnostic imaging exams (including CT) are again, significantly lower than at other health care centres. And although we are a small community hospital, we have gained international recognition for our practices. We were recently recognized by the Ontario Hospital Association for having one of the best infection control practices in Ontario - in fact, we've been asked to present our hygiene model at an upcoming international conference in Anaheim, California.



"It gives me such pleasure to be able to report to you that we have managed to thrive in a challenging funding environment."

Although this may not sound like a significant achievement, our balanced budget for the last four consecutive years puts us in an enviable position. Approximately half of Ontario hospitals did not achieve a balanced budget last year - and our plan for this year is to balance the budget once again.

We continue to attract new programs. For example, we're expanding our gynaecology surgical services and we are also bringing in an ear, nose and throat specialist. The Foundation has made a commitment to the hospital to bring in new equipment and technology through an upcoming capital campaign of \$6.5 million. This significant investment will include four areas of focus: \$2.5 million for an electronic health records system that will increase our ability to

care more effectively and safely for our patients; \$2.5 million for new diagnostic imaging equipment (including the digital mammography machine that the Hospital

Auxiliary has committed to contribute toward); \$1 million to automate our pharmacy systems and increase patient safety; and \$500,000 to

upgrade our telehealth video conferencing to coordinate our emergency treatment with trauma centres and for patient appointments with faraway specialists.

It gives me such pleasure to be able to report to you that we have managed to thrive in a challenging funding environment. Your support combined with the excellence of our leaders and our staff is what continues to make our hospital here in South Muskoka great.

SOUTH MUSKOKA HOSPITAL FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2013/2014

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South Muskoka Hospital Foundation

MAHC earns bronze in Green Hospital Scorecard

Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare has received a Bronze Seal award through the Ontario Hospital Association's inaugural Green Hospital Scorecard. The Scorecard is a benchmarking and recognition program that evaluates environmental performance in five areas: energy, waste, water, pollution prevention, and corporate leadership, planning and management.

"I am delighted the organization has been recognized with a Bronze seal," says Natalie Bubela, Chief Executive Officer at MAHC. "We are among 47 hospitals receiving that distinction, while only 24 hospitals earned silver. In the first year of the scorecard, no organization was successful in achieving gold status."



Clean & safe

The 2013-2014 hand hygiene compliance rates have exceeded provincial averages. Awareness campaigns, education and a focus on patient safety have all contributed to the improved results.

The rates, determined from audit results between April 1, 2013 and March 31, 2014, revealed hand washing compliance of 95.08% "before patient/environment contact" and 94.51% "after patient/environment contact". The provincial averages for the same annual period are 86.25% "before patient/environment contact" and 91.20% "after patient/environment contact".

"It's the single most important thing each of us can do to keep patients, families and ourselves safe and prevent the spread of disease and illness," says Natalie Bubela, Chief Executive Officer.

On-line giving on the rise

Donor preferences are always a priority and lately, the Foundation has been hearing from stakeholders about how they would prefer to make donations on-line. Earlier this year, Forbes magazine reported that in the U.S., "...online giving revenue which, at 13.5% growth overall, had its second consecutive year of double-digit gains."

Two years ago, the Foundation picked up on this trend and had the website (www.healthmuskoka.ca) enabled for on-line giving.

"Not only do our donors find it convenient to give on-line," says Colin Miller, Executive Director of the South Muskoka Hospital Foundation (SMHF), "but also they are quite fond of the instantly available tax receipt. They can either save it or print it right away." From 2012, on-line donations to the Foundation increased by 55 percent. Miller says the Foundation will follow donor preferences: "Whether you prefer to call, mail in or donate on-line, rest assured that donations will be appropriately used to benefit the hospital in terms of new equipment and capital renovations."

Food service delivery sees improvement

New Heat-on-Demand systems will help ensure patients receive a hot meal in a timely manner. The new systems have been implemented at both hospital sites with funding from the South Muskoka Hospital Foundation (SMHF) and the Huntsville Hospital Auxiliary. The new system replaces outdated equipment and uses less electricity, making it a greener option.

"With more than 50,000 meals prepared and served from the kitchen annually, this is an important investment that we are excited to support," says Colin Miller, SMHF Executive Director.



From left, Food and Nutrition Services staff Sharon Weese, Jean Dempsey and Karen Fisher with Colin Miller.

Spring 2014

South Muskoka Hospital Foundation

75 Ann Street, Bracebridge ON P1L 2E4

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A Message from Natalie Bubela

Chief Executive Officer

Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare

Attracting new doctors one stethoscope at a time

"...Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare is doing its part to attract new doctors to support high-quality patient care at our hospitals and in the community."

When it comes to accessing medical care in our community, Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare is doing its part to attract new doctors to support high-quality patient care at our hospitals and in the community. As doctors retire and our community grows, we are looking ahead and at ways to bring in new physicians, close gaps in service, and retain the services of our existing physicians.

We have a dedicated Recruitment and Retention committee,

which includes elected municipal representatives, physicians and hospital administrators, working toward this pursuit. MAHC is also fortunate to have a strong affiliation with the Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM). Every year, we see upwards of 60 different medical students and residents in our hospitals and in physician offices, learning from our own medical professionals. Our relationship with the school affords us the chance to show these young learners all of the great things the Muskoka region and MAHC have to offer.

NOSM began accepting medical learners almost a decade ago, and already we are beginning to see the rewards of this partnership and community-engaged medical education. Since the school was created, nearly a dozen NOSM graduates have chosen to make their home and their medical practice with us, here in Muskoka. We only expect that number to grow and to see more and more of these learners join our ranks as family physicians and specialists. I couldn't agree more with the concept of living where you learn and MAHC is one piece of that puzzle.



Did you know...?

Only 57% of MAHC's Emergency visits are from residents of Huntsville, Bracebridge or Gravenhurst.

New face in family medicine at South Muskoka *...continued from cover*

A vacancy in Bracebridge came up when Dr. Harmon left to return to Australia, and the Seatons arrived in Muskoka in early April. "I'm the fourth wheel," he jokes, joining Drs. Hotson, Cross and Martin at the Centre.

"In family medicine, you are treating the whole life cycle - babies, children, pregnant women, the elderly - seeing

families through the whole spectrum of their lives," says Seaton. Family medicine also offers the opportunity to explore special interests such as surgery, he explains.

With his hospital privileges, Dr. Seaton will be not only attending to his patients when they've been admitted, he will also be "adopting" hospital patients who don't have a

family physician. Once he and his family have settled in, as time permits, he may be looking at doing some on-call emergency shifts at the hospital.

Dr. Seaton enjoys spending time with family, reading, travelling, following soccer and cricket matches. He and his wife Marlene have two children.



South Muskoka Hospital Foundation Mission Statement

To provide charitable financial support to South Muskoka Memorial Hospital Site for capital projects, equipment and new technology as well as staff education to enhance patient care.

To support the improvement of healthcare in South Muskoka for permanent and seasonal residents.

Check out our website at
www.healthmuskoka.ca

Our Privacy Statement

South Muskoka Hospital Foundation appreciates your generous financial support. We recognize your right to privacy and we pledge to protect it. The information you have provided to us will be used to process your donation(s) and to provide you with acknowledgement and an appropriate receipt.

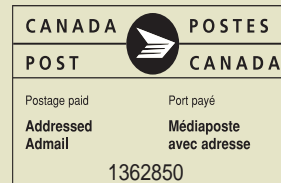
From time to time, we may use your contact information to keep you informed of other activities, events and/or fundraising opportunities in support of the Foundation.

We are also pleased to send you our biannual newsletter.

The South Muskoka Hospital Foundation does not trade or sell donor lists. If at anytime you do not wish to be listed in our recognition programs or to receive our newsletter, please contact us at (705) 645-4404 ext 3193 or smh.foundation@mahc.ca.

For more information about your privacy, please visit our website at www.healthmuskoka.ca and click on 'About Us' then 'Accountable To You.'


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75 Ann Street, Bracebridge ON P1L 2E4



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