



# GRAND ROUNDS

Through a new partnership with Durham College, RVH is both helping to deliver a unique educational opportunity and strengthening pre-hospital health care in Renfrew County.

It's all part of the college's new on-line advanced care paramedics program, which includes practising skills in a hospital setting.

Durham College's Dean DiMonte says the program is "new in delivery and veteran in its curriculum," and has been developed specifically for paramedics from far-reaching areas such as Renfrew County.

Currently, there are only six advanced care paramedics (ACPs) working in the county. DiMonte, an ACP from Renfrew County himself, expects that number to climb considerably in the next few years, thanks to having this program in place.

The one-year course is designed to allow students to work full-time while pursuing their studies.

Three of the six local paramedics who enrolled in the introductory year of the course have been placed for their practicum at RVH, where they are supervised and mentored through a number of required components.

In the emergency room, they complete patient assessments and intravenous starts, in the operating room they are guided by Dr. Greg Caza and Dr. Dave Johnson in advanced airway management, and they assist in deliveries in the obstetrics unit.

"It averages to about 180 hours of hospital time," says DiMonte.

Once they are finished their requirements in hospital, the students are paired up with an ACP in the field to spend 400 hours in an ambulance putting everything into practice.

Catherine du Puy is one of the students at RVH. With more than 20 years of experience, the Stittsville resident works as a paramedic for the City of Ottawa and in Renfrew County. Her placement at RVH began in February.

She says gaining the extra qualifications is essential for her to be able to do as much as she can on scene to care for patients.

"First and foremost, it's always about patient care," she states.

She reports that her experience working alongside RVH's medical staff has been "awesome", with plenty of time to do proper clinicals and gain confidence in her abilities.

"The wealth of knowledge here is amazing," she says. "You can get lost in a big city, and it means something to really connect with a person."

Kim Dick is the emergency room nurse manager at RVH.

"I know it's been really good for the ER," she says, explaining that hospital staff appreciate the level of care provided by local paramedics and are pleased to have this opportunity to build on that professional relationship.

Cheryl White, nurse manager of the operating room, oncology and cen-

tral sterile supply, adds that the health care professionals at RVH love to teach.

"It's a good learning environment," she notes. "It does take a collaboration from everyone—the paramedics, the doctors, the nurses and the rest of our staff."

DiMonte says that RVH staff have been excellent in accepting the trio of paramedics.

"It shows their level of leadership and cooperation and their commitment to strengthening the level of health care in the County of Renfrew," he concludes.



**Dr. Greg Caza goes over the airway management equipment with Paramedic Catherine du Puy.**