



News Release
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Renfrew Victoria Hospital receives international recognition for pain management

Renfrew Victoria Hospital has received special recognition at an American conference for its use of nurse champions to control patients' pain.

"It was a very significant achievement," Advance Practice/Resource Nurse Sheila Havey says of receiving the award from the Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing.

She and RVH Vice-President of Patient Care Services Nancy Kelly-Moore attended the society's biennial conference in Baltimore, Maryland during the first week of November. The award presented to RVH recognizes projects that integrate current best evidence with clinical expertise to guide nursing practice. Five other awards were presented in the same category recognizing innovations in clinical excellence, all of them to large American health care providers or universities.

The conference itself attracted 2,000 delegates from throughout the United States and other parts of the world, including Europe and Israel. Approximately 60 Canadians attended.

Havey and Kelly-Moore had the honour of leading three sessions at the conference, on three different topics that had been submitted by hospital staff and accepted for presentation at the international symposium. In addition to the award-winning presentation on "Implementing Pain Best Practice through Empowerment", RVH also had the opportunity to highlight the "rapid cycle" program it developed three years ago to identify and support seniors at risk for extended hospitalization or re-admission to hospital. That program monitors the patients aggressively with a focus on getting them home with the appropriate supports as quickly as possible. The third paper focused on the change in the model of nursing care used on the second floor active care unit.

Havey says there was a high level of interest in all of the presentations.

"People have the same experiences wherever they go," she says, noting that the American nurses at the conference were especially interested in the Canadian health care model and the high level of care offered to all patients.

RVH's pain management model was introduced over the past year. The nurse champions are a select group of senior nurses who act as a resource for other caregivers. They attended special training sessions and have shared their knowledge and experience with their peers.

The presentation to the academic audience at the conference focused on how the change was implemented, and the research that has been done on how it has affected care at RVH.

"It was a great chance for us to show how evidence-based practice works in a small hospital setting," says Havey. "It was a good experience, and quite a feather in our cap at RVH, first of all to be accepted for three presentations, and then to be an award-winner."