

GRAND ROUNDS

Patients “speak up” at focus group

A recent focus group provided a forum for discussion about patient safety and care at RVH from the patients’ perspective.

“We have many mechanisms for feedback in place, but it is good to hear about opportunities to improve directly from our patients,” notes RVH CEO and President Randy Penney.

Patients receiving care from different and in some cases multiple departments of the hospital (e.g., dialysis, emergency, surgical, oncology/chemotherapy, active care unit, complex continuing care) were invited to participate in the session.

Key managers and department leads also attended to provide information and ask for suggestions to improve the patient experience in their specific departments.

“The insights provided by patients and their family members helps us to plan changes and develop new initiatives for improvement,” says Jessica Gilbert, Clinical Nurse Manager, Active Care.

Communications was a key theme of the discussions and patients gave RVH overall high marks in the areas of providing both written and verbal information. Handouts and information packages on admittance and discharge are considered good resources, as well as the “8-steps to a safer hospital visit” posters, digital screens and information boards in patients’ rooms.

Participants noted that staff readily provides explanations of who they are and their roles, and are very responsive. “When you speak to someone about an issue, it gets looked after” stated one patient.

However, they’re not always sure who to speak to if they have questions or concerns and would like that information to be provided consistently in all communications.

When it comes to the information shared with the public, participants felt that it is important to know about the full range of services and programs that are available at our community hospital, and would like to

see these topics revisited regularly, because “people only notice when it is relevant to them or someone they know.” In addition, participants said they would like to read more “good news” patient stories.

In response to discussion around some physical aspects of the hospital facilities, Chris Ferguson, RVH Vice President of Patient Care Services, pointed out that:

- current second floor renovations include larger washrooms to improve access
- plans for the new nephrology centre incorporate more space/privacy for patients
- planned changes to the parking system address challenges experienced related to patient drop-off, parking space, and parking meters.

Working collaboratively with patients and the community to identify quality improvement and ensure high levels of patient satisfaction are strategic goals of RVH and standards of Accreditation Canada’s Qmentum Program.

“The focus group provided a way for us to engage the community, and the input we received helps us to set priorities for quality improvement,” says Ferguson, who led the discussions. “We appreciate the patients from the various units and family members who took the time to attend and voice their opinions,” she concludes.

We welcome your comments or feedback anytime. Contact Chris Ferguson, RVH Vice President of Patient Care Services at 613-432-4851 ext. 225.



RVH patient and focus group participant Peter Mulder demonstrates some of the information brochures provided to patients.