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GRAND ROUNDS

Oncology Unit keeps pace with treatment advances

Patients who are diagnosed with cancer have more options than ever before when it comes to battling the disease. Advances in drug regimens require some patients' chemotherapy time to be longer compared to a few years ago.

"Depending on the type and complexity of the cancer, treatments can be anywhere from 15 minutes up to six hours," notes Oncology RN Erin Prentice.

This makes the expanded Oncology Unit a very welcome aspect of the construction and renovation project underway at RVH.

Currently, the cozy corner Oncology Unit on the second floor has four treatment chairs.

Privacy and infection control can be a challenge, says the unit Nurse Manager, Rhonda Normandeau.

Redevelopment plans will move oncology services into the current Dialysis Unit located on the main level of the hospital.

Normandeau says that along with improving the comfort level for patients, the larger unit will feature important oncology support services like a wig and hat room plus a separate space for patient teaching and counselling.

The expansion of the unit will allow up to eight treatment chairs, a window view for each patient and ample space for a family member or friend to sit next to the patient during their stay.

"The opportunity to expand the oncology unit will have enormous benefits for cancer patients. In addition to excellent care and support, and the latest treatments, patients will experience a more pleasant environment where they can focus on getting better," concludes Prentice.

"The extra space will provide patients with more comfortable surroundings in which to complete their treatment. It will also provide space for more treatments, including transfusions."

— Dr. Stephanie Langlois, one of four specially trained local physicians who care for the complex needs of RVH's oncology patients.



Chris Ferguson, RVH Vice President of Patient Care Services leads a tour of the current oncology unit.

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