

Building Health Care in PEC

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Minister's visit reflects positively on the future of the PECMH redevelopment project



Mayor Robert Quaiff hosted a visit by Minister Dr. Eric Hoskins on August 2nd.
Photo by: Adam Bramburger, Picton Gazette

Ontario Minister of Health and Long Term Care Dr. Eric Hoskins recently accepted an invitation to visit Prince Edward County. In the following interview, Mayor Robert Quaiff reflects on the visit and the need for the redevelopment project to move forward.

What was your impression of the Minister's visit?

I was very happy to see Minister Hoskins take an interest in our community. We saw this visit as an opportunity to lobby the provincial government and make sure that they recognize the challenges our community is facing in terms of healthcare services. I think our team of health care professionals and municipal planners did a fine job of showcasing our hospital. They highlighted the areas that need additional resources, while demonstrating the amazing job that staff do to make the best of what they have. I think his visit is a good indication that our region will be seeing a new hospital in the not too distant future. We are working tirelessly to make that happen, and it seems that Minister Hoskins took notice of those efforts.

Why do you believe in the need for a new hospital?

The state of the PECM Hospital should speak for itself. While the staff do a fantastic job keeping it maintained and running smoothly, the building is already 60 years old and really isn't suited to handle the present-day healthcare needs of our community. We need a hospital that is fully capable of meeting the needs of our population—many of whom are retirees that, as they age, will present an even greater demand on our healthcare system. It's also important to recognize that Prince Edward County is a growing community. A big part of this growth is in retirees and young families. We need to make sure that we have the necessary infrastructure and services to attract new residents.

The process for approval through the ministry is long. What is your message to the community in terms of remaining supportive of the PECMH redevelopment project?

The process is very long and some patience is required, but I want to make it clear to our community that their municipal leaders are not going to let up. We are going to keep pushing for a new hospital and we're going to get one!

QHC's master program has been submitted to the South East Local Health Integration Network. The program will be submitted to the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care for approval. Once the Ministry approves, the project moves to phase two of the five step process — the business case. The business case is expected to take approximately six months to complete. Visit www.qhc.on.ca for more information on the redevelopment project and the approval process.

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Interprofessional Patient Care Team (IPCT) approach and Senior Strategy helps reduce overcapacity at QHC

Hospitals are deemed to be at “overcapacity” when they have more patients than available beds on a specific unit. It restricts patient movement from one care department to another (patient flow) and can result in an increased length of stay for patients in the Emergency Department. Quinte Health Care, like many other hospitals at some point, has had its struggles with overcapacity. However, a recent reduction in overcapacity is being attributed to QHC’s new team approach to patient care and staff taking ownership to make improvements.

Tracy Jordan, Manager of Patient Flow said that we’ve taken a step in a positive direction in reducing

overcapacity by implementing the new Interprofessional Patient Care Team (IPCT) approach. “We’re seeing a decrease in functional decline. With hourly rounding, patients are being checked on more frequently than before and the staff are working as a team to ensure the patient’s needs are being met,” she said.

As part of QHC’s Senior Strategy, patients are encouraged to normalize their routine which includes getting out of bed more frequently, sitting up with visitors and doing exercises while in bed whenever possible. “Staff are taking ownership of our Senior Strategy and with less functional decline, patients are able to be discharged as planned.”

What are we doing at QHC to continue to reduce overcapacity?

- ⇒ Mobilizing patients - Encouraging patients to move as much as possible, to get out of bed, to sit up with visitors, to dress themselves and exercise as often as possible in order to prevent functional decline. When patients have functional decline, they remain in hospital longer which can lead to overcapacity.
- ⇒ Encouraging patients to maintain their functional and cognitive status – Normalizing their routines as much as possible. Ensuring patients are drinking plenty of fluids and encouraging toileting over the use of a bedpan. Encouraging patients to perform activities of daily living as they did prior to being admitted to hospital.
- ⇒ Planning for discharge on admission – Attempting to address any concerns that family members have when patients are first admitted.
- ⇒ Notifying the patient and family 24 hours in advance of discharge whenever possible – Notifying patients and their family members of the planned time of discharge so that the person picking them can ensure they’re on time.
- ⇒ Admitting appropriately – A greater consideration on determining if it’s necessary for a patient to be admitted to hospital or if they could receive the care they require from a service within the community.
- ⇒ Educating patients on why it’s important to tell the Unit Care Clerk (UCC) before they leave the unit to go home – so we can have the room cleaned and get it ready for the next patient.

