

Putting Patients First while Inspiring Our People

SJHC's Women's Health Centre Celebrating 20 Years of Transforming Care in Women's Mental Health

by Michelle Tadique, Communications Associate

On June 16th, the Women's Health Centre (WHC) at St. Joseph's Health Centre celebrated 20 years of service to the many women and families living in our community.

Since 1990, the Women's Health Centre has provided non-medical services that address the broad determinants of health, with a particular focus on trauma issues that reside at the core of many women's presenting concerns.

"We provide individual and group counseling, provide education and support (for our clients) and really work to instill in them a sense of community and belonging," said Alejandra Priego, Patient Care Manager of the Women's Health Centre. "Since trauma (such as abuse, violence and persecution) is really at the core of their issues (for so many of our clients) helping them means that they can become ambassadors for themselves and others. The women learn that change is possible and that they don't have to live under a cloud of fear from past negative experiences."

The WHC enables clients to improve their overall sense of well-being, whether they are parenting, starting a new job or establishing new relationships in their lives. Staff members in the Centre also play a leadership role in providing education and training to learners and service providers in areas of health, mental health, social services and legal areas within and outside St Joe's.

The 20th anniversary celebration brought together many of the agencies and community services that the WHC has collaborated with over the last two decades to support the complex needs of clients. The celebration was also about acknowledging those partnerships, knowledge and skills we rely on to compliment our expertise and what we have to offer so that our clients can be connected to all of the right services, explains Priego.



Trish Crawford, Program Director, Alejandra Priego, PCM and Mark Vimr, EVP Clinical Programs and Services cut the cake in celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Women's Health Centre at SJHC.

Guests at the June 16th event had the opportunity to hear from speakers including WHC staff members Grażyna Mancewicz and Sherry Thompson, sharing their knowledge and providing a multicultural perspective on post partum mood disorders. We also welcomed Dr. Clare Pain, Director of the Psychological Trauma Program at Mount Sinai Hospital who spoke on the affects of trauma on women and their incredible resiliency in overcoming multiple complex issues. The sessions were followed by a reception and cake cutting ceremony.

"Through this celebration, we are acknowledging our commitment to Enhance the Health of the Communities we Serve and our role in transforming the lives of women, their children and their families, to see them overcome their issues to grow and blossom. We are extremely proud to be a part of that," said Priego.

Enhancing the Health of the Communities we Service

Mock Code Orange Exercise Prepares SJHC Staff

by Gillian Brunning, Junior Associate, Corporate Communications & Public Affairs
and Sandy Foster, Clinical Care Leader, Emergency Department



The team in the hazmat suits practice running patients through the decontamination tent which was set up outside the Emergency Department

On Thursday, June 10th 30 staff from various areas in the Health Centre took part in an emergency training exercise in preparation for the upcoming G20 Summit.

The training, involving mostly staff from the Emergency Department and Security who will be working over the weekend of June 26th and 27th, played out the scenario of an unknown substance being released into a crowd of protestors. In this situation, patients who arrive at SJHC for treatment due to

exposure may not have been decontaminated and therefore the CBRNE tent was set up.

Staff split into two groups so that they could experience the triage portion of the exercise and the donning and doffing of the hazardous materials suit that would be necessary if this was an actual incident. Procedures to don and doff the gear are very specific so that no cross contamination happens among the staff and/or patients.

While wearing the suits, staff must work together in teams to assist each other in the process and also use the “buddy” system while outside. Once boots and gloves are on the suit must be taped shut to prevent any leaks into the suit. A tab is left on the tape so that once it is time for doffing, the tape and suit are more easily removed. Because most become unrecognizable in the suits, names are written on a piece of tape that is stuck to the front of the suit. On the back of the suit, the name of the person as well as the time ‘in’ the suit is marked so that staff can monitor

the duration inside the suit. The maximum time spent in the suit is based on the temperature outside.

The mock code orange culminated late morning once everyone had their turn in the suits and processing the patients on arrival to the hospital. Although the procedure that would be rolled out for a Code Orange spreads across the hospital, for the purposes of this exercise, the training was capped at the emergency department. Following the exercise a debriefing session took place for those who participated allowing the staff to make changes to CBRNE procedures as per the actual exercise. The changes that they suggested have since been implemented into the role descriptions for CBRNE.



Following the training exercise, everyone got together for a group picture to celebrate a successful mock code, before taking part in a debriefing session to discuss their learnings.

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