

connections update

Quality and Safety at St. Joseph's Health Centre

Providing the safest care possible to our patients is very important to us. We have a saying at St. Joseph's Health Centre that "patient safety is everybody's responsibility." So why is this important to us? As a community teaching hospital serving the diverse communities of south west Toronto, our patients and their families rely on us each and every day to provide safe, quality care. There are many initiatives and strategies in place that go into helping us achieve our strategic commitment of Putting Patients First by providing the safest care.

Over the next year, our newsletter, *Connections*, will provide our patients and their families as well as our staff, physicians and volunteers, with information on these initiatives to report on how we're doing on delivering on our commitment to provide safe, quality care.

Read on to learn more about what our Surgery and Oncology Program is doing to support quality care and patient safety at St. Joseph's Health Centre. The Centre for Clinical Ethics in partnership with Spiritual and Religious Care have teamed up on their Quality Strategy and you can read that story along with information from the Women's Children's and Family Health Program's plan in the *Connections*, June 7th issue or by [clicking here](#).

Quality and Safety in the Surgery and Oncology Program

Team work and patient engagement are at the heart of the Surgery and Oncology Department's work to support our corporate Quality Strategy, according to Shelley DeHay-Turner, Administrative Program Director, Surgery and Oncology Program.

"Our challenge is always about how to make our corporate commitment to safety and quality meaningful to our patients and their families. It is rewarding to be a part of a team that is truly committed to doing what's right for our patients," said DeHay-Turner. "Many of the Program's plans to support the Big Aim include our patients and their families to be true partners in their care and this is so critical to ensure positive outcomes for our patients as well as our own success in delivering high quality and safe care."

To support the Health Centre's Quality Strategy, the Program is working on a mix of newly implemented initiatives as well as refocusing efforts to support existing projects to deliver on our commitment to Put Patients First.

The newest initiative implemented by the Program is the Surgical Safety Checklist, which provides common tasks and items that operating room teams carry out in the perioperative period. The use of the checklist ensures that all of the necessary information to safely move ahead with surgery has been reviewed and "checked off" by the team. The checklist also allows for patient involvement in the verification process prior to surgery, engaging them to ask any questions they may have before surgery is started.

The Program will also be looking to standardize the care we deliver to our hip and knee surgical patients through the development of care pathways. "The care for patients who undergo these surgeries is fairly standard so the creation of care pathways for this patient

population will help us to ensure our quality metrics are met, that our staff are meeting the necessary care requirements for these patients and will also help guide patients through their care, so that they know and understand what to expect,” said DeHay-Turner. “The biggest value to having care pathways is the patient and family involvement, so that if the patient isn’t meeting those objectives our staff can address that sooner rather than later, to not only ensure the patient’s discharge isn’t delayed, but most importantly, to ensure that their road to recovery isn’t delayed.” Key to the implementation of the care pathways will be communicating this to the patients in the pre-admission phase of their care, so they are familiar with what the care pathway will look like.

The Program is also developing additional patient satisfaction strategies and looking for ways to obtain more real time feedback from patients from all our surgical inpatient units. “With our surgical patients, there is a real flow and continuity of care component – from the pre-admission process, to the surgery, to the inpatient stay, and the discharge piece. We have an opportunity to leave a lasting impression on our patients during their recovery and stay with us because that is the final step in their care before they are discharged,” explains DeHay-Turner. “Having the data to tell us what we are doing well and where we can improve will provide us with the direction we need to make necessary and sustainable changes that will hopefully exceed our patient’s expectations.”

Partnerships and synergies with internal groups are just as key to the Surgery and Program’s Big Aim projects, leveraging on what other programs are doing well. Taking the success and lessons learned from the Medicine, Ambulatory and Seniors’ Health Program on pressure ulcer prevention and falls management are also areas that Surgery and Oncology will use. “If we can learn from one another, and strategies are working, why reinvent the wheel? This way, we know what works and we can truly measure the impact because we have a standard approach to addressing these issues and a consolidated approach to quality.”

The Program also has two inpatient units starting the Releasing Time to Care© initiative - another opportunity for the teams to Put Patients First. This program works by enabling staff to see their work processes and their environment with fresh eyes, so

that that they can identify and implement improvement ideas in their work area. It allows for staff to have the time to really concentrate on identifying issues, develop potential solutions and work with other departments in order to make things happen to create a more efficient work environment – and ultimately free up more time to be with patients.

“Our quality agenda for the department was created with a grassroots approach, taking this on as team, to provide input and direction on how we feel we can do our best for our patients,” explains DeHay-Turner. “While many of the initiatives are just starting out, the biggest success to date in launching these strategies is really the support and team engagement I’ve seen throughout the Program. We look forward to sharing and celebrating our successes along the way in achieving all of our quality objectives.”

The Quality conversation continues on Chatter!

Remember to visit the home page of SJNet and start chatting about the great work that is being done with your quality team or across the Health Centre!

Some of the recent posts:

“Congratulations to the staff of 3M and 3E for their ongoing commitment to the hand hygiene program!”

~ Posted by: Shelley DeHay-Turner
(Surgery/Oncology)

“Thank you to Lisa O’Drowsky, Manager, Patient Safety, for her support and collaboration to the CAMH team.”

~ Posted by: Jamie Amaral (Mental Health)

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