



# connections

A newsletter for the staff, physicians, volunteers, residents and students of St. Joseph's Health Centre

MAY 3, 2010

## Inspiring Our People

### St. Joseph's Mental Health & Addictions program celebrates Mental Health Week and Children's Mental Health Week

by Dan Land, Administrative Director, Mental Health and Addiction Program

St Joseph's Mental Health and Addictions program is pleased to be celebrating the annual National Mental Health week and Children's Mental Health week which takes place May 3 - 9, 2010. This year theme is "Building your mental health... one support at a time." The reason we celebrate Mental Health week is that it provides individuals with opportunities to find out more about the importance of mental health with earlier recognition and treatment of mental health problems, decrease stigma and how to achieve overall mental health in our daily lives.

One in five children and adults in Ontario struggle with mental health problems that can affect people of all ages, backgrounds and at all stages of life. Mental health problems are real and common - it is important to understand that recovery is possible and with treatment many individuals with mental health problems can lead full and productive lives.

The history of treating mental health problems over the centuries include such things as managing thousands of

patients in what was know as "asylum management", bloodletting, scarring, leeching, insulin coma therapy and lobotomies. Restraint and physical punishment were common forms of treatment. Early treatments with medications often had severe side effects. The 1990s were called the "decade of the brain" and most research funding in psychiatry went to research in biological psychiatry with the advancement of antidepressant medication. Today there is extensive evidence which demonstrates that a combination of medication and psychotherapy provides the best and the most stable long-term outcomes. The treatment of mental disorders usually requires more than medication alone. Individuals with severe and persistent forms of mental illness generally benefit from taking medications when they are provided in combination with a balanced program of supervised living, guidance and support. The ongoing support in the community has helped clients focus on recovery.

St Joseph's Mental Health and Addiction program is one of the busiest

in the city and provides a full range of services which includes Crisis Services in the Emergency Department for adults, children and adolescents as well as working with the Police through the Mobile Crisis Intervention Team. We have three mental health units which include a Short Stay Unit, inpatient unit, and a Child and Adolescent Unit. We provide consultation liaison services throughout the hospital. Our outpatient services include Child and Adolescent, Assertive Community Treatment Team, Day Hospital, Case Management, Shared Care, Mental Health Clinic, Geriatric Mental Health Outreach and Recovery Support program.

*continued on page 4...*

Celebrating Mental Health and Children's Mental Health Week	1
Surgical Safety Checklist	2
Mental Health Week Events	3
Value's Integration Survey	3
Thank you Nurses!	4
National Nursing Week Events	4

# Putting Patients First by Providing the Safest Care

## St. Joseph's Enhances Patient Safety through use of the Surgical Safety Checklist

by Michelle Tadique, Communications Associate, Corporate Communications & Public Affairs

St. Joseph's Health Centre began using a Surgical Safety Checklist in all of our operating rooms as part of our corporate commitment to patient safety and quality. The checklist provides a list of the most common tasks and items that operating room teams carry out in the perioperative period.

Data collected from the Surgical Safety Check list will be publically reported on our website as one of our patient safety indicators as well as on the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's website starting in July.

"The premise for the check list is that it will not only be used as a safety precaution, but also as a communication tool to allow discussions to take place in three different phases during surgery," said Kara Digenis, Project Manager, Perioperative Services at St. Joseph's. "The checklist is designed to have three phases, and we refer to these phases in our safety checklist as Planning, Time Out and Debriefing."

The checklist provides the opportunity for everyone to stop and discuss important information regarding the patient and procedure. It guides the surgical team members – nursing, surgery and anaesthesia - in verifying all information to ensure they are performing the right procedure on the right patient. "It is there to start a conversation, to encourage communication between the team members that are involved in that patient's care. Research has shown that lack of communication is one of the highest forms of errors and that most errors would be preventable if the (proper) communication had occurred,"

explains Digenis.

"Prior to the new formal surgical safety checklist in place now, we certainly had a verification process on the identity of the patient and check in process all along the way (throughout the surgery). We also had the surgical pause (time-out) where the team could ask a multitude of questions," said Sue Bell, Patient Care Manager. "The biggest changes now are that we've added in the other two phases – Planning and Debriefing phases, there is involvement from the patient (in the Planning phase) and all three disciplines are involved in the checks, all at the same time. Each person brings their own perspective and information that they have about the patient, and through the checklist, it gives everyone the opportunity to bring any questions or concerns forward," she said.

From the nursing side, they feel that they have learned more about their patients than they ever had before, through using the list. "They really feel informed about their patient, from the perspective of what anaesthesia is looking at, what surgery is looking at - so it has given them an overall picture of things that they might not have initially known," said Digenis.

A key highlight to the implementation of the checklist is having the patients involved in the process, explains Digenis. "We've talked to patients about it because the first part of the process, the Planning phase, is done when the patient is awake and the whole team is around the patient, talking with them. When it's explained to them what we

are doing, as a safety precaution, many have said that they appreciate the process and the fact that everyone knows "what side it is (they are operating on)", and that everyone has verified and validated the procedure. It is important for patients to know that they can expect this process and to be involved when they come here for surgery."

"The operating room environment can be quite hectic. The checklist ensures that everyone can take a pause in time to gain a clear understanding of what the overall plan is for any given patient. As an anesthetist, I gain reassurance from knowing that we're all on the same page," said Dr. Peter Menikefs, Chief of Anaesthesia.

Bell also notes that the implementation of the list can have a tremendous impact on our Corporate Quality Strategy, because it incorporates best practices we need to adhere to with regards to surgical site infections and ensuring that we can provide safe and efficient surgical care to our patients. "This is a great initiative that helps build the patient's confidence in our systems and processes, so that they know their safety and care is our priority."

"Since we have implemented the checklist, I am amazed how it seems like such common sense and helps to create a sense of teamwork in our operating rooms. Definitely the best patient safety initiative I have seen in a long time," said Dr. Lloyd Smith, Chief of Surgery.

## TO THE MEMBERS OF ST. JOSEPH'S HEALTH CENTRE COMMUNITY

Our Vision is to be Canada's Best Community Teaching Hospital. To help us to achieve this Vision, we need to continually look for new ways to meet the needs of those we serve.

Our Mission tells us what we do:

- We are a Catholic community teaching hospital providing health care services that reflect the Gospel Values of respect, dignity, and compassion. We are committed to fostering a healthy community for all. Working in partnership with our community, we reach out with the healing ministry of Christ to the sick, the disenfranchised and the disadvantaged.

Our Values tell us how we behave:

- With human dignity, excellence, compassion, social responsibility and community of service.

It is important for us to pause every once and a while to stop and think about how well we live our Mission and Values here at St. Joe's.

To help us to do that, over the next 8 months, we will be looking at our Values and how we integrate them into everything that we do. The process that we will use will be in two phases: In phase one (April-June), you will have an opportunity to participate in an on-line Value's Integration Survey developed by the Catholic Health Alliance of Canada and the National Sponsors of Catholic Health Care. The survey is designed to seek information from our administrators, medical staff, patients, families, staff, volunteers, and community. This survey will only take you 10-15 minutes to complete. You will be asked to rank questions on topics such as holistic care, spirituality, employee relations, mission integration, ethical practice, and relationships with the community. The survey also provides an opportunity for you to write in comments about these themes as well. All responses will be anonymous and no verbatim quotes will be used in the final summary. No signatures are required. If you register to complete the survey, you will also be asked to participate in a focus group discussion that will allow you to discuss your ideas with others in more depth. In the past this survey and focus group process has been meaningful to participants.

For phase two (which will run September and October), we are seeking clinical and administrative staff volunteers to sign up for special ethics grand rounds sessions to give staff an opportunity to discuss values issues related to practice. There will be four different sessions offered each week around a unique topic related to values-based practice. Staff can register for modules separately or sign up for all four sessions. The same program of four sessions will run twice—once in September and once in October.

To participate and register for either phase, please contact Sue MacRae, RN, Clinical Ethicist, SJHC at 416 530-6038 ext. 3300 or [macras@stjoe.on.ca](mailto:macras@stjoe.on.ca)

I know that this initiative will help us to identify opportunities for improvement and that it will provide us with an opportunity to reflect on, and celebrate our Mission and Values.

Thank you for helping in this important endeavour.

Yours Sincerely,  
Carolyn Baker, President and CEO

## Mental Health Week & Children's Mental Health Week

In celebration of Mental Health Week and Children's Mental Health Week, you are invited to participate in one or all of the following activities:

### Monday, May 3

*Social Networks and Information Resources - Music, Art and Poetry from the Community*

**Time - 11:00 a.m - 1:00 p.m.**

**Location - Education Centre B**

### Tuesday, May 4

*Stress Reduction & Relaxation - Acupuncture*

**Time - 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.**

**Location - Education Centre B**

### Wednesday, May 5

*Humour and Laughter*

Guest Speaker: Kate Davis  
"Humour in the Workplace and Worklife Balance"

Speaker, writer, comedian and actress, bringing a sense of humour into the home, the workplace and ultimately the balance of both.

**Location - Education Centre A & B**

**Time - 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.**

Light Refreshments

### Thursday, May 6

*Stress Reduction & Relaxation - Visualization and Guided Imagery Session*

**Location - Education Centre B**

**Time - 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.**

## Celebrating Mental Health Week

*continued from page 1...*

Our Addiction Program includes Residential Withdrawal Management (Glendale House), Day and Community Withdrawal Management services, Addiction Medicine program, Shared Care, Rapid Access clinic, Stop Smoking Clinic and Addiction Inpatient consults. We are well connected to the community.

Our Mental Health & Addictions Population Panel is helping to educate the hospital/community by displaying community information and information sharing. We will be displaying client art, poetry and providing some music therapy over the lunch breaks in the cafeteria and providing information about stress reduction, acupuncture and relaxation. We are also inviting a guest speaker Kate Davies who is a speaker, writer, comedian, actress and mother of three who has the unique ability to find humour in any situation. She is a five-time nominee at the Canadian Comedy Awards and star of her own hour-long comedy special on CTV and the Comedy Network. Kate has appeared on Breakfast Television, Star TV, Toronto1, Prime, WTN, CBC Radio One "The Debaters" and The Mom Show.

We hope you enjoy this year's Mental Health week events by increasing awareness, touching your heart, relaxation and a little humour.

## SJHC Celebrates National Nursing Week May 10 - 16, 2010

In recognition of Nursing Week 2010, I would just like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of our nurses here at St. Joseph's for the dedication, compassion, excellence and kindness that you show to the many patients and families you care for everyday. Your commitment to our Mission and Values is an inspiration to us all.

Nursing Week at St. Joseph's is about celebrating the contributions of all our nurses as vital members of our interprofessional team and recognizing your achievements in Putting our Patients First and Enhancing the Health of the Communities we Serve.

Thank to you to all of our amazing nurses!

Mark Vimr  
Executive Vice President, Clinical and Professional Programs & Services, Chief Nursing Executive and Chief of Interprofessional Practice

### National Nursing Week - Schedule of Events

**Tuesday, May 11 ~ 2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. Education Centre A & B**  
Join us for our inaugural **Nursing Grand Rounds**

**Wednesday, May 12 ~ 2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. Education Centre A & B**  
**Nursing Awards Ceremony**  
*Come out and help celebrate excellence in nursing*

**Thursday, May 13 ~ 2:00 p.m - 3:00 p.m. Education Centre A**  
**Guest Speaker: Stéphanie Verge**  
*The Story of Stéphanie Verge: A battle with hospital acquired MRSA*

Stéphanie Verge is an associate editor at Toronto Life and has been writing regularly for the magazine since 2005. "Superbugged," a feature article about her battle with MRSA published in March 2009, is her first memoir. She holds a BA in theatre from York University and a graduate diploma in journalism from Concordia University.



*Connections* is the official newsletter for the staff, physicians, volunteers, students and residents of St. Joseph's Health Centre. This is your newsletter and we'd like your feedback. For comments or questions about this issue, or if you would like to contribute to a future issue, please contact the editor, Gillian Brunning, Junior Associate, Corporate Communication & Public Affairs, via e-mail at [brunning@stjoe.on.ca](mailto:brunning@stjoe.on.ca)

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