

New hospital wing leaves patients smiling



Staff photo by Fred Loek

Patient Heather Henderson takes full advantage of her window at the new wing of the Trillium Health Centre by displaying a bouquet of spring flowers. The new wing has added 135 new in-patient beds to the hospital.

By: Julie Slack

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April 7, 2009 11:29 AM - There may only be one negative aspect to Trillium Health Centre Mississauga's new wing — patients might want to stay longer than they need.

Bright, clean and comfortable, with touches of home, the new wing, which welcomed its first patients in March, is making everyone smile.

"It's a dream come true," said Janet Davidson, president and CEO of Trillium. "I was totally blown away when I walked in. You hear about it, you read about it...to see it all come together in one building is quite something.

"I think the only problem might be that patient stays could go up," she joked.

For nine years, Patti Cochrane, Trillium vice-president of patient services and quality, led the design team on the \$100-million, 190-bed inpatient wing. To see it completed brings her a sense of satisfaction and pride.

Most of all, she's thrilled with comments from patients, who have good things to say about their hospital experience.

"A relaxing, bright environment is proven to improve patient outcomes," Cochrane said.

Staff members say they're happy with the surroundings, accessibility and the convenience of having decentralized care stations, only steps from patients' rooms. This increases the time nurses can spend at patients' bedsides.

Wireless networks allow patients to communicate directly with their nurse via phone. Not only does this cut down on walking, it eliminates the loud overhead paging system. And patients get a better night's sleep.

That's vital to Renny Wheable, an occupational therapist who works on the rehabilitation floor. Stroke and accident victims regain mobility on this floor, where a large physiotherapy room, complete with kitchen, stairs and simulated home experiences, prepares them to return home.

"I love it. I love the space, the light and I think patients are a lot happier," she said. "They are better-rested, more prepared for therapy. When you have happier patients, you have happier staff."

Orthopedic floor manager Kathy Elliott says satisfied patients keep everyone smiling. She oversees a 36-bed unit, which includes patients who've had knee or hip replacements.

"Look at their faces; the nurses are ecstatic," said Elliott. "They reflect the environment they work in. Their walking has diminished. Before, we'd go home tired. Now, it's 'my dog, my partner, my kids - they don't hide from me. When I walk in the door, I'm in a good mood.'"

The new wing has six floors, each with three, 12-bed clusters that operate through one decentralized care station. The sixth floor houses medical oncology, the fifth medical respiratory, the fourth rehabilitation, the third cardiac care, the second cardiac care surgery, and the first orthopedics. The lower floor has a gymnasium and meeting rooms for staff functions.