



Niagara Health System
Système De Santé De Niagara

MEDIA RELEASE

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Critical Care Response Team to enhance patient safety at NHS

The provincial government and Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Local Health Integration Network are providing Niagara Health System more than \$1 million annually to support a Critical Care Response Team (CCRT) that will improve patient safety.

A Critical Care Response Team is a group consisting of a dedicated critical care nurse, respiratory therapist and ICU physician available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to bring their critical care expertise to the patient's bedside, or wherever it is needed, with the aim of caring for patients who are seriously ill outside of the Intensive Care Unit. CCRTs have shown to increase patient safety and prevent death by identifying vulnerable and sometimes declining patients in the hospital who without intervention could end up in the ICU.

Early identification of patients in need allows the team to either stabilize them on the ward or facilitate their early admission to the ICU. In addition to improving patient safety including improved outcomes and appropriateness of resource utilization, CCRTs have been shown to increase staff engagement and satisfaction across the organization.

Planning and implementation of the team will begin at the St. Catharines Site, with a vision to extend into the other NHS sites. Leading the team will be Dr. Mike Christian, NHS Chief Safety Officer, who will act as Medical Director of the team, along with his co-lead Ms. Jill Randal, Director of Clinical Services. Dr. Christian and Ms. Randal bring with them experience working on and training CCRTs at other hospitals.

"We are grateful to the provincial government and Local Health Integration Network for supporting this important initiative that will help some of the most seriously ill patients our health system serves," says NHS President Dr. Suzanne Johnston. "We are also thankful for our leadership who participated in making a compelling case for the need for these resources in Niagara. Patients are the top priority for our team of healthcare providers. The creation of the Critical Care Response Team is another example of our commitment to patient safety."

Dr. Christian adds: "We are very thankful for the funding to support a Critical Care Response Team, which is a significant advancement for patient safety at Niagara Health System. The team will represent another safety net for our patients. CCRTs are a major innovation in patient safety."

Donna Cripps, Chief Executive Officer of the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Local Health Integration Network, applauds the creation of the CCRT for NHS: “This new team will play a big role in our commitment to advance the quality of care for all patients across the health care system. We are so pleased that this forward-thinking approach to patient safety is coming to Niagara.”

Minister Jim Bradley, the MPP for St. Catharines and Deputy Government House Leader, adds: “The Critical Care Response Teams are an important part of the Liberal government’s Critical Care Strategy. Patient safety is a priority for our government and we are very pleased to support the formation of this team that will benefit the residents of Niagara, especially those who are most ill in hospital.”

The CCRT will assist in:

- Bringing critical care expertise to the bedside in the ward;
- Meeting the urgent, critical needs of every patient by providing rapid response to a patient’s acute change in condition;
- Reducing or mitigating avoidable or inappropriate ICU admissions;
- Improving patient safety.

On the web:

More information about Ontario’s Ministry of Health’s Critical Care Strategy can be found at: <http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/criticalcare/>

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