Project Newsletter

SOUTH NIAGARA HOSPITAL

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Issue 12



In This Issue

Improving the patient experience

Construction update

Department spotlight: Kidney Care

and more!

Photo: Furniture Specialists Gillian Gregory (left) and Mariana Cuartas from Niagara Health's Redevelopment Team.

Building a Better Patient Experience

The South Niagara Hospital's patient-centred design will enhance comfort, accessibility and the overall hospital care experience for patients and families.

With bright, modern spaces, advanced technology and intuitive wayfinding, the South Niagara Hospital was designed with patients and families in mind, creating a more accessible and welcoming care experience.

"There are many positive features in the new hospital that are going to completely change the patient experience," says Dan Whipple, a member of the South Niagara Hospital Patient and Indigenous Partners Committee. Whipple took part in accessibility consultations and provided feedback from a patient partner and accessibility lens.

"What stood out to me the most was the patient rooms. There are so many universal design and accessibility concepts incorporated, such as the sliding washroom door and the patient lifts," says Whipple. "It's not easy being lifted and moved around, and having a patient lift in every room is really going to help staff and provide a better experience for patients."

From arrival through to discharge, the patient experience has guided the planning and design process, with a particular emphasis on accessibility and inclusiveness. The hospital is being built using universal design principles, creating spaces that can be used by all people without the need for adaptation or specialized features.

> "It's not easy being lifted and moved around, and having a patient lift in every room is really going to help staff and provide a better experience for patients."

Whipple is a passionate advocate for accessibility and inclusiveness in the region. He is chair of the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee, serving Lincoln, West Lincoln, Pelham, Thorold, Niagara-on-the Lake, Grimsby and Port Colborne. The committee advises partner municipalities on accessibility and facilitating barrier-free communities.



Dan Whipple is a passionate advocate for accessibility, and believes the South Niagara Hospital will greatly improve the patient experience.

It was just over two years ago when Whipple and a group of patient partners toured the mock-up space. Located in a Welland warehouse, eight future South Niagara Hospital rooms were built to scale with real furniture, fixtures and equipment, allowing Niagara Health team members and partners to provide feedback before the design was finalized.

"There are a lot of things that you don't think about until you're in a wheelchair," says Whipple. "It was nice to see that staff and patient partner input gathered early enough that we could provide meaningful feedback and see some of our suggestions reflected in the final design."

Privacy, comfort and wellness are at the heart of the patient experience. Every inpatient room will be private, providing a quieter and more supportive environment for healing, additional space for family involvement, and a reduced risk of infection transmission. Beyond medical care, the hospital is designed to support overall wellbeing, with accessible gardens, spiritual care spaces and a dedicated Indigenous



Patient Partners toured the mock-up site to provide feedback and learn about hospital features.

> When your surroundings are positive and they help you feel better, you're going to heal better too."

Healing Room and Garden offering places for reflection, connection and support for patients, families and caregivers throughout their visit.

"I have spent a lot of time looking at ceilings and it's not a fun way to live. Being in a new hospital with a better atmosphere goes a long way towards providing a more positive experience for patients. When your surroundings are positive and they help you feel better, you're going to heal better too," Whipple says.

The South Niagara Hospital was designed to put patients and families first. Universal design features help reduce barriers and make visits easier. The result is a hospital that supports both high-quality care and a positive experience for patients and families. ■

Five ways the South Niagara Hospital will improve the patient experience

Faster, more connected care

The South Niagara Hospital is designed to improve patient flow, reduce wait times and bring a wide range of specialized services together in one location.

Advanced technology for safer care

Modern equipment, digital tools and integration with Niagara Health's Hospital Information System will support more effective treatment, enhanced patient safety and a more seamless care experience.

Increased privacy and comfort

With 100-per-cent private patient rooms, patients will benefit from a quieter, more personal healing environment. Private rooms also provide more space for family involvement and help reduce the risk of infection transmission.

Universally accessible design

Designed to be fully accessible and meet the needs of Niagara's growing and aging population, the hospital will feature accessible spaces, improved parking and drop-off areas, and thoughtful design elements that create a more welcoming and user-friendly experience from arrival through discharge.

Spaces that support wellness

The hospital's design recognizes that healing extends beyond medical care. Patients, families and caregivers will have access to outdoor spaces and gardens, spiritual care and reflection areas, and a dedicated Indigenous Healing Room and Garden co-designed with Indigenous community partners to support cultural, emotional and spiritual well-being.

Department spotlight
Kidney Care and Hemodialysis

For people living with kidney disease, dialysis can be a significant part of their everyday life. The new specialized hemodialysis clinical space at the South Niagara Hospital will make that experience more comfortable and accessible, while giving patients more options as their care needs change.

When the new hospital opens in 2028, the Kidney Care Program will operate across all three sites - Marotta Family, Welland and South Niagara hospitals. The new unit will feature 42 dialysis stations, adding 12 more spaces to the region. The expanded space will support both inpatients and outpatients, while creating opportunities for patients to explore different ways of receiving their care.

The patient's experience begins before treatment does. Patients receiving dialysis at the South Niagara Hospital will have a dedicated entrance on the east side of the building, with parking available in the adjacent parking lot. They will also be able to access the unit through an entrance within the hospital.

Inside, the purpose-built environment is designed to support patients throughout their treatment while also giving the care team greater flexibility. The unit will include dedicated patient amenities, spaces for education and training and innovative technology to support care.

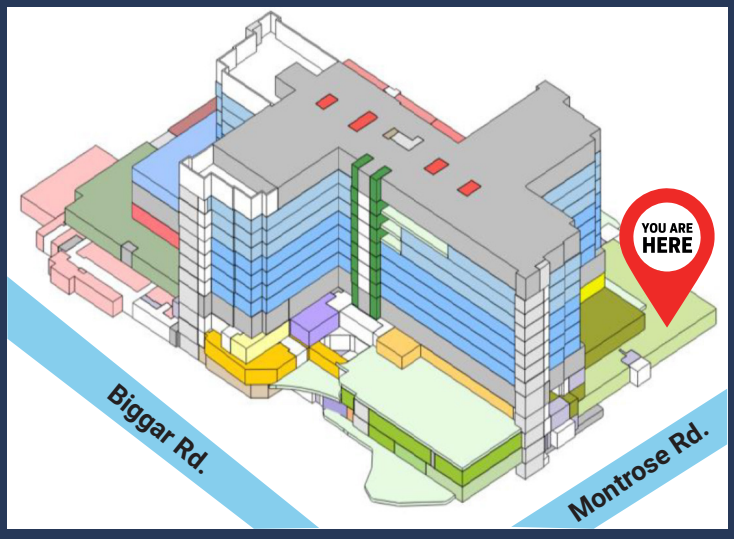
"The space has been thoughtfully designed with both patient experience and accessibility in mind," says Jennifer Law, Director of Kidney Care and Ambulatory Programs. "Patients will also benefit from views of the surrounding natural landscape, helping to create a more welcoming and therapeutic experience while receiving dialysis."

The new unit will also give patients more opportunities to learn about their treatment options. The six-station Transitional Care Unit will provide

"Patients will also benefit from views of the surrounding natural landscape, helping to create a more welcoming and therapeutic experience while receiving dialysis."

By the numbers

Care for more than 400 patients requiring dialysis three to five times per week.
42 dialysis stations
3 home dialysis training rooms
6 exam consult rooms
1 procedure room
3 consult/quiet rooms
40 seats for waiting, including
7 wheelchair locations
30,875 square-feet







Photos from the Kidney Care and Hemodialysis spaces



> Most importantly, while the physical space may be new, patients will continue to receive the same level of compassionate, expert care they know and trust from the Kidney Care team."

education and one-on-one support for patients beginning their dialysis journey, including information about hemodialysis, peritoneal dialysis, home hemodialysis, kidney transplant and comfort-focused care.

The Kidney Care team says the opportunity to collaborate with the multidisciplinary team in the Transitional Care Unit will deepen their understanding of kidney health options and strengthen the support they provide to patients.

Patients will be able to meet with members of their Kidney Care team, including dietitians, social workers, transplant coordinators and renal nurse navigators to help them understand their options and decide what approach is best for them. Dedicated space for home dialysis training will also make it easier for patients who choose to explore treatment at home.

Providing care in a space designed specifically around kidney patients and the reality of their treatment means patients will receive the right level of care at the right time, while also providing them with options as their care needs change.

For patients who have been receiving dialysis for years, however, one thing won't change, says Law.

"Most importantly, while the physical space may be new, patients will continue to receive the same level of compassionate, expert care they know and trust from the Kidney Care team." ■



Patrick Topping, Director Transaction and Construction with Niagara Health's Redevelopment Team

Leading a once-in-a-generation build

When Patrick Topping walks the South Niagara Hospital construction site, he sees more than a building rising from the ground. He sees the future of healthcare in Niagara. As Director of Transaction and Construction with Niagara Health, Topping plays a pivotal role in bringing the region's long-awaited hospital project to life, guiding a complex undertaking that will shape patient care for generations.

“Opportunities like this don’t come along often,” says Topping of the South Niagara Hospital Project. “We’re building a hospital that will serve our community for the next 100 years, and it’s incredibly meaningful to play a role in something with that kind of lasting impact.”

Born and raised in Niagara Falls, Topping has spent his entire career working in the region, beginning as an electrician and steadily progressing from the trades to project leadership roles on some of Niagara's most significant redevelopment projects. Over five and a half years at Niagara Parks, he helped oversee major capital redevelopments projects, including the Niagara Parks Power Station and the Table Rock Centre redevelopment. While those projects were exciting and impactful, he notes that the scale of the South Niagara Hospital project and its community impact are what attracted him to the opportunity.

> This is the community where I live, where my parents live and where my children are growing up. To have the chance to contribute to something that will directly improve hospital care for my family, and for families across Niagara, was incredibly exciting."

"This is the community where I live, where my parents live and where my children are growing up. To have the chance to contribute to something that will directly improve hospital care for my family, and for families across Niagara, was incredibly exciting,” he says.

Topping joined the South Niagara Hospital project team more than five years ago as a Senior Project Specialist. Within a year, he advanced to Senior Project Manager before moving into his current role as Director of Transaction and Construction.

> Communication is everything on a project this size. Strong relationships build trust, and trust helps teams solve problems together."

Supported by a team of project managers who provide oversight across many aspects of the project including construction progress, contract management, scheduling and commissioning activities, Topping's role requires a broad understanding of the project and its progress to help keep things moving forward.

"Every part of the project is connected," he explains. "If one piece falls behind, everything that follows can be affected. My job is to maintain visibility across the project, support the team and make sure everything is staying on schedule."

As construction progresses, with the exterior of the building nearly complete and the interior work progressing, Topping says the focus is increasingly shifting to commissioning, the process of ensuring the hospital's systems and equipment are tested, integrated and functioning as intended.

"Building the structure is the part of the journey that most people can see, but the real challenge is making sure every system works together seamlessly," he says. "Commissioning requires everyone to be aligned and working toward the same outcome, and that's what will ultimately ensure a safe and fully operational hospital is delivered."

Topping credits collaboration and the positive partnership with EllisDon as one of the reasons the project has advanced with such success. He and his team work closely with all project partners to navigate the challenges and complexities that come with delivering a hospital of this magnitude.

"Communication is everything on a project this size. Strong relationships build trust, and trust helps teams solve problems together. We've developed a great partnership with EllisDon because everyone wants to see the successful completion of the project, and that keeps us moving forward."

While the work is demanding, Topping remains mindful of the unique opportunity the project represents.

"I feel privileged to be part of something this impactful," he says. "On the challenging days, I remember that not everyone gets the opportunity to help build something that will make such a lasting difference in the community." ■

Three construction milestones to watch for

Permanent power on
November 2026



Permanent power will be connected to the building, marking a major project milestone. This transition from temporary construction power to permanent utility power will enable the progression of commissioning activities across the facility. It is a critical step toward building readiness.

Removal of the worker and material hoists
Early 2027



The removal the five worker and material hoists, located in two different areas of the building, represents one of the final steps in fully enclosing the building exterior. Once removed, crews can finish the installation of the remaining precast and siding panels, making the building fully weathertight and giving the building its final look.

The building lights up
Summer 2027



One of the most exciting visual milestones will be seeing the building illuminated with its permanent lighting systems for the first time. Unlike the temporary construction lighting visible today, the completed lighting design will showcase the facility's full architectural presence and create a striking nighttime landmark that will be visible for miles.

CONSTRUCTION ZONE

Construction update

Momentum continues to build at the South Niagara Hospital as crews make significant progress across multiple areas of the facility. On the lower levels, ceilings, flooring and wall finishes are transforming interior spaces from construction zones into recognizable healthcare environments. Mechanical and electrical teams are advancing rough-in work throughout the building, with major activity concentrated on Levels 4 through 12. The exterior is also taking shape, with work continuing following the achievement of the watertight milestone earlier this summer. Adding to the project's growing list of accomplishments, teams are preparing for permanent power, which is now being advanced to electrical rooms on Levels 0 through 4, marking another important step toward building readiness. ■

Photos: September 2026



3rd floor, main entrance



Multi-faith centre



Washroom





Cafeteria



Surgical recovery bays

niagarahealth foundation

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From the cover

"I feel very lucky to be part of something that will have such a lasting impact on our region. It's rewarding to look at the work we're doing today and know that it will be experienced and used by our community for so many years to come. I'm very grateful for the opportunity, the people I get to work with, and everything I've learned along the way."

Gillian Gregory, Furniture Specialist on the South Niagara Hospital Redevelopment Team and Niagara region resident.



Getting a sneak peek of the future workspace

Representatives from our union groups were given a tour of the South Niagara Hospital site to see the future hospital and learn about some of the exciting workplace features that will improve the staff experience. The tour offered a firsthand look at how thoughtfully designed spaces and modern amenities will benefit staff and support the delivery of excellent hospital care. ■

SOUTH NIAGARA HOSPITAL

Coming 2028



Located in Niagara Falls at the corner of Montrose and Biggar roads, the new South Niagara Hospital will play a vital role in improving care for patients and families across the region. The hospital will offer a full range of hospital services, including emergency, critical care, diagnostic, therapeutic and surgical services, as well as Centres of Excellence in Wellness in Aging and Stroke.

Designed with people at the centre of every decision, the hospital will create a more welcoming and connected experience for patients and families, while supporting healing, recovery and compassionate care.

We are working toward building the first WELL Certified hospital in Canada, with features that support the health and well-being of staff, physicians, volunteers, patients, families and caregivers. These innovative design elements will help create a healthier, more supportive workplace while enabling care teams to provide the best possible care.

More than a new hospital, South Niagara Hospital is an investment in our community's future, enhancing the patient and family experience while creating a better environment for those who provide care.

Hospital Highlights

- **1.3-million-square-feet** 300,000-square-feet larger than the Marotta Family Hospital
- **12-storey building** plus a basement level. Compact building footprint of 250,000-square-feet
- **475 single-patient bedrooms** increase of 156 beds for our region
- **2,400+ parking spaces** including 100+ accessible parking spaces
- **20,000 more Emergency Department visits** ED is 3x the size of the current Niagara Falls Hospital ED.
- **42,000 pieces of equipment** including 2 MRI machines and 3 CT scanners
- **8 operating suites** as well as 17 procedure rooms
- **14 gardens and terraces** a wellness feature, helping people get closer to nature
- **42 hemodialysis stations** 12 additional for the region
- **80 examination rooms** located throughout the hospital
- **7,400 more** senior wellness visits
- **Reduce** wait times

CONNECT WITH US

- For questions about the project: **southniagaraproject@niagarahealth.on.ca**
- For business opportunities and community involvement: **snh@ellisdon.com**
- Visit our website: **www.niagarahealth.on.ca/SouthNiagaraHospital**

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