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MEDIA RELEASE

New system tracks emergency patients in real time

The implementation of a new emergency department information system (EDIS) from Wellsoft Corporation now allows hospital staff to track all patient activity—in real time—across the emergency program at Hotel Dieu Hospital and Kingston General Hospital.

The EDIS is designed to track patients from their first encounter with a triage nurse until the time they are either discharged from the Urgent Care Centre at Hotel Dieu or the Emergency Department at KGH or admitted to an inpatient bed. The intent is to provide frontline care providers with immediate access to the information they need to track and treat patients more safely and effectively, and to assist with patient flow.

“By tracking patients, we’re now better able to follow their movement as they navigate through the health care system and measure the time it takes us to meet their needs,” says Emergency Program Medical Director Dr. Paul Dungey.

The EDIS works like an air traffic controller by allowing clinicians to electronically access a patient’s information from any location in the Urgent Care and Emergency departments. It creates a timelier and more efficient electronic snapshot—on the spot—from work stations.

The EDIS is being implemented in three phases.

Phase One, launched in early March, focuses on the electronic patient track, which includes the reason for the visit, patient’s acuity level (how sick they are), status, consulting services, which diagnostic tests have been ordered and their subsequent results. The second phase, which will begin shortly, will allow for clinical documentation (physician and nursing notes) and the third will add computerized provider order entry.

Once all three phases come online Hotel Dieu and KGH will have one of the few fully functional emergency department information systems in Canada.

“At the end of all three phases we will provide an overall better performing emergency department that’s ready for patients when they need it,” says Dungey.

Because the Wellsoft system has been customized to suit the hospitals’ specific needs, the EDIS will also improve the efficiency of collecting data and assessing trends on wait times and other quarterly performance indicators.

It will also support the existing syndromic surveillance system that monitors changes and trends of certain illnesses such as respiratory and gastrointestinal illness to detect new or emerging infectious disease threats in the community.

"Wellsoft is proud to partner with Hotel Dieu and KGH to assist them in meeting their EDIS goals, streamlining emergency services workflow and positively impacting patient care," says Dr. John Santmann, President of Wellsoft Corporation.

The purchase and implementation of the EDIS was made possible with \$1.4 million in funding from the South East Local Health Integration Network.

"We're confident the EDIS will help significantly in providing patients with the right care when they need it most, and in improving overall emergency department efficiencies that will ultimately lead to shorter wait times," says Paul Huras, CEO of the SE LHIN.

Media contacts:

Anne Rutherford, Hotel Dieu Hospital, 613-544-3400, ext. 3380

Karen Smith, Kingston General Hospital, 613-549-6666 ext. 6345