



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 28, 2011

337 PEOPLE RESPOND TO HOSPITAL'S ONLINE SURVEY

Number-one issue is timely access to care

Peterborough, ON – As an important component of our current strategic planning cycle, PRHC held public input sessions and issued an online survey for the community last month. Both initiatives were intended to collect and categorize the public's ideas and priorities for health care and hospital services in the region.

A total of 15 people attended two evening input sessions held earlier this month. An additional 337 individuals responded to the online survey before it closed on March 14.

"We are very happy with the thoughtfulness of the responses received, and will use them to guide our strategic planning," said Ken Tremblay, President and CEO.

Survey Results: Top Line Summary

According to the survey, the most important issues for health care in the community, and specifically for PRHC to address, are:

- Shorter waits for emergency care
- A local walk-in clinic for after-hours primary care, and health services as alternatives to going to the hospital's emergency department
- Caring doctors and nurses who listen to patients and family members

One of the survey questions was, "If you had a million dollars for improving health care at PRHC, what would you spend it on?" The favourite investment was "after-hours walk-in clinics" followed by "Emergency Department" and then "cancer services."

PRHC: Applying the Results and Taking Action

By way of response to the results, Tremblay offered the following observations:

"Concerns about Emergency Department waits and a desire for access through after-hours clinics are two sides of the same coin," said Tremblay. "Getting timely access to medical care when people need it seems to be the single most important message we heard from the public."

"While [we have been lowering our ED wait times over the past year](#) due to process improvements and financial incentives, we plan to continue to lower wait times for ED patients over time," said Tremblay.

"After-hours or walk-in clinics are not within a hospital's mandate," said Dr. Peter McLaughlin, Chief of Staff. "We will do whatever we can to assist our partners in primary care to address any gaps."

“Currently, patients needing non-urgent care must resort to the default option of the Emergency Department if they are unable to access primary care,” said McLaughlin. “Everyone in health care in this community has a role to play in reducing this number.”

“The recent announcement of cancer care expanding, with radiation facilities coming to PRHC, demonstrates that regional health services planning and PRHC’s strategic focus are in line with the community’s needs and requirements,” added Tremblay.

“It’s our hope,” added McLaughlin, “that this strategic planning cycle will strengthen our partnerships by working on broad issues such as improved access on the one hand, and lower our wait times in the emergency department and deliver on cancer expansion initiatives, on the other.”

Other Recommendations

The other main recommendations for PRHC were:

- Regional priorities should focus on services for elderly patients and services that are not provided by other hospitals within a one-hour drive
- Make the [public report card](#) more user-friendly
- Ensure that patients, family and visitors can provide feedback easily through discharge surveys, email, and signs that explain how to contact the Patient Relations office

“We have provided our strategic planning working groups with the results from the community survey along with any comments that are relevant to their areas,” said Tremblay. “We are also newly considering how to improve the feedback processes for our patients and their families.”

PRHC is grateful to Peterborough’s news media for encouraging local residents to contribute their input to our strategic planning process.

Survey Details and Demographics

- The survey was launched on February 23 and was open for three weeks.
- Not every respondent provided information about themselves, but of those who did:
 - ⇒ 73% were female and 27% male
 - ⇒ 12% were 35 or under; 43% were between 51 and 65 years old; 29% between 36 and 50; 11% from 66 to 75; 3% over 75 years
 - ⇒ 78% lived or worked in the City of Peterborough, 27% in Peterborough County, 10% in Kawartha Lakes, and 5% in either Northumberland or Hastings (people could choose more than one)
 - ⇒ 35% said they were patients or former patients of PRHC; 27% said they were family members of patients; and 13% said they were current staff of PRHC. Again, people could choose more than one category

For further information on PRHC’s strategic planning process, data, presentations and an online video, please visit our [strategic planning site online](#).

Please note: Ken Tremblay will be available to speak to media following this evening’s provincial budget delivery.

-30-

For more information:

Micheline Ough, Communications Advisor
 (705) 743-2121 x. 3659
mough@prhc.on.ca