



## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **A New Way of Nursing at the CPDMH**

**October 18, 2004** – A new model of nursing care has changed the way in which patients receive their care at the Carleton Place & District Memorial Hospital (CPDMH)—and the change has been embraced by both nurses and patients.

Previously, the CPDMH utilized a model of nursing referred to as team nursing. Team nursing meant that some nurses were responsible for such duties as dressing changes or blood pressure checks, some other nurses delivered medications for all 22 patients, and still other nurses worked at the nursing desk.

The new nursing model introduced in June of this year—referred to as total patient care—allows nurses a broader understanding of a patient’s condition. Each nurse is assigned four to six patients and is responsible for administering medications, checking blood pressure and seeing to patient care and comfort throughout his or her nursing shift. With this approach to nursing, a patient admitted to the CPDMH for a three or four day period can expect to have just a few different nurses administering care over the course of his or her stay.

Laurie Lewis, a registered nurse at the CPDMH for 26 years, appreciates the continuity of care that the new model provides and she notes that patients like it too.

“I like the fact that I can get a broad understanding of each patient’s condition and I have found that patients like to know who their nurses are—it means a lot to them that they can get to recognize your face and call you by name,” Laurie explains.

Other health care professionals have also been very positive about the new nursing model, says Laurie.

“The physicians and the other disciplines have welcomed the change. They can now discuss *all* aspects of the patient’s care with the assigned nurse instead of having to speak with a number of different nurses.”

Debbie Wark, a registered practical nurse (RPN) at the hospital for 29 years, is also enjoying the new model of care and the responsibilities it brings to her work.

“I really feel that the RPNs are better utilized with this new nursing model. We can now administer medications—something we couldn’t do under the team approach—and use a greater range of skills.”

Debbie also notes that her patients have noticed the change. There is more relationship building between patients and nurses and that results in even better care.

“Many of our nurses now introduce themselves to their patients when they first meet them. When a patient knows a nurse’s first name—and receives care from him or her on a consistent basis—the patient is often more comfortable in communicating his or her needs or concerns.”

This ability to communicate—along with the continuity of care provided by a small group of assigned nurses—can help nurses to better assess a patient’s condition. A better assessment results in better care—and that is what total patient care is all about.

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