

Cultivating quality care that is patient centred, timely, efficient, effective, equitable and safe.

Emergency Room Services

Hospitals within the South West continue to work together on emergency department strategies. The work has been broken down into the following elements with lead hospitals noted:

- Virtual care – London Health Sciences Centre and Grey Bruce Health Services
- Crisis response and seniors mental health – St. Joseph's Health Care
- Urgent Care/ED Rationalization – South Bruce Grey Health Centre, Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance
- Bed Use and Reallocation – All/Ontario Health
- Transportation – Grey Bruce Health Services
- Health Human Resources Models & Training of Staff and Leaders – Chief Nursing Executive and Human Resources

While we have had staffing challenges that resulted in episodic emergency department closures, the vast majority of our vacancies were a result of maternity leaves rather than permanent vacancies. Our decision to not engage agency nurses is also proving sound. There are local issues and challenges that we must address, however, at this stage, I do not foresee this work having a negative impact on either Listowel or Wingham emergency departments.

Ontario Health

Several months ago Ontario Health required hospitals to establish a standardized protocol when closing emergency departments. We created a protocol and have made refinements following each of our closures. Ontario Health is now requiring a similar protocol be in place for obstetrics closures.

Laboratory

Severe staffing challenges have resulted in the full closure of the hospital laboratory in Wingham on two separate occasions. A laboratory closure has an impact on inpatient, outpatient, ED service, transportation and the laboratory at the other site. A debrief following a recent closure determined that there are too many variables to create a standard process to address lab staffing shortages and closures. If we are faced with a similar circumstance, a huddle will be necessary between laboratory, nursing, physician and leadership to determine if emergency services can be safely provided given the specific circumstances.

COVID Activity

In September, a COVID outbreak was declared in the Listowel Complex Continuing Care (CCC) Department. We had both positive patients and staff. The outbreak was caught quickly and was declared over in 10 days.

In October, we found ourselves managing and working through two additional outbreaks, one in Listowel and one in Wingham. On October 13, 2022 a COVID outbreak was declared in the Listowel Medical/Surgical Department. This outbreak had 4 positive patients and no positive staff. On October 17, 2022 a COVID outbreak was declared in the Wingham Inpatient Unit and was cleared on October 26th.

One very similar thread to all of our outbreaks is that they were caught very quickly due to the diligence of our teams. Outbreak response teams, one at each site, worked very closely with the Huron Perth Public Health Unit and met regularly to ensure that we were doing everything we could to stop any further spread in our patient care areas.

Electronic Health Record – Document Auditing

Professional Practice and Clinical Informatics are working together to audit the nursing documentation in our electronic health record. A monthly schedule has been developed and areas that are considered to be high risk are being audited to ensure that documentation is occurring where and when it should be. This initiative supports continuous quality improvement and results are being used to support nursing education and support.

Testing Centre

The Testing Centre has become extremely difficult to staff and we unfortunately do not have capacity to move our nursing staff to the testing centre to cover vacancies. We are also seeing an overall decline in need from the community. With all of this considered, we will be closing the Testing Centre effective October 28th. We will continue to provide our staff and physicians with PCR testing internally either through our Emergency Departments or Occupational Health.

Cultivating a workplace that nurtures individual and collective potential.

Corporate Financial Officer (CFO)

A job posting was issued recently for a CFO position at LWHA. A limited number of reasonable applicants have been received to date. The market for financial expertise is currently highly competitive.

Nursing Health Human Resources (HHR) Update

One very important piece of work that is underway at both sites is the cross-training of our new RN staff. When our RNs can work in multiple areas throughout the hospital it provides us with additional flexibility to cover vacancies or provide additional support in times of high census or patient acuity. The Clinical Managers are working on a plan to ensure that we can cross-train our staff while we support RN student placements. This strategy requires a significant amount of work both from the Clinical Managers as well as from the Nurses providing orientation and mentorship. The hard work of all of the individuals supporting this very important work is recognized, acknowledged and appreciated.

Our nursing workforce strategy has quickly shown promising results. Listowel has seen a significant decrease in the numbers of times per week RNs and RPNs are called in to cover a last-minute vacancy. In Wingham, due to a number of long-term leaves, the Emergency Department schedule was very concerning starting November 1st. With the planned scheduling changes, including upstaffing, we were able to cover the majority of these vacancies by making minor changes within the schedule. Without this strategy, we would not have been able to staff the Wingham Emergency Department consistently this fall.

Surgical Services

Over the summer, a small group comprised of clinical leaders, physicians, and nurses met to discuss our surgical services program. A number of ideas were generated, focusing on a strong Alliance partnership, shared equipment and growing the WDH program. Justine Leslie expects to have further updates on this work over the winter months.

Financial Overview

Incremental COVID expenses will be reimbursed for Q1 (April 1 June 30, 2022) Listowel (\$131,978) and Wingham (\$98,686). Ministry guidance for funding of COVID expenses beyond June 30th is expected to be released in the near future.

Ontario Health confirmed up to \$62,000 in CT one-time funding to reduce wait time. As with all the revenue and expenses associated with the CT Program these funds will be split 50% to Listowel and 50% to Wingham.

The Screeners at the front entrance will be discontinued at the end of October. Currently a team is working through the change management process to ensure the task of screening does occur, as required, and that the hospital security is maintained.

Cultivating a sustainable and resilient environment that is here for future generations.

Strategic Planning – Listowel Wingham Hospitals Alliance

Some preliminary discussions have taken place as part of the work to create a new strategic plan for LWHA. Early topics that require consideration include:

- Physician recruitment and community access to primary care
- North Perth population growth
- Patient access to their electronic health record
- Health human resources recruitment and retention
- Master Plan for hospital buildings
- Best use of technology to improve care
- Engaging patients and their care partners as members of the team
- Focused partnerships that benefit our patients and providers

Staff, physicians, patients, partners and community are all encouraged to provide input to this plan as it is developed.

Listowel Memorial Hospital Redevelopment Proposal

Preliminary feedback was received October 17th on the capital redevelopment proposal for Listowel. The original submission was made to Ontario Health in December 2021. The Ministry now has our response and we await notification that the project remains on the Ministry list for a capital development grant this fiscal year. A capital grant is necessary prior to starting the detailed planning work.

Hospital Services Accountability Agreement

For the first time in 3 years, we expect to have to negotiate a new Hospital Services Accountability Agreement with Ontario Health. Budget submissions are due by December 2, 2022 with final submissions in place by January 31st, 2023. The new agreements will be effective April 1, 2023.

Wingham CT

Investigative work continues to determine how to best implement a CT service at Wingham. Objectives of this work include:

- Locating the CT close to Emergency and the existing diagnostic imaging department
- Maintaining suitable adjacencies for any displaced functions or departments
- Ensuring the ground floor in Wingham remains the primary location for ambulatory services
- Preserving reasonable patient flow and traffic patterns

Draft sketches are currently being shared with impacted departments and staff.

Finance

The YTD September 22/23 Operating results has Listowel with a surplus of \$44,093 which is \$16,379 under the expected budgeted surplus of \$60,471. Wingham has a YTD deficit of \$49,089 which is \$116,653 under the budgeted deficit of \$165,742.

Wingham is currently owed \$1,125,558 from Cancer Care Ontario (CCO) for drugs.

Cultivating partnerships to offer a seamless patient experience.

Huron Perth and Area Ontario Health Team (HP & A OHT) – Joint Accreditation

Negotiations continue with Accreditation Canada regarding the proposed Joint Accreditation for 14 of the members of the HP&A OHT. We are resolved in our position that LWHA receive a “light” survey given we completed a full survey a year ago resulting in Accreditation with Exemplary Standing. Accreditation Canada does not currently have a process in place for a light survey.

Huron Perth and Area Ontario Health Team – Strategic Planning

The HP&A OHT continues work to create their inaugural strategic plan. Progress remains slow.

Quality Teams – The Patient Voice

Due to workload and human resource challenges our Quality Teams took a break from meetings over the summer. These meetings have resumed and while each team is working on department specific priorities, everyone is focused on creating more opportunities to hear from our patients. This work is being driven by our Patient Partner Council and will start with a refresh of our patient satisfaction surveys. Each Quality Team will be considering department specific questions as well setting a target for monthly survey responses.

Let’s Go Home Initiative

The Huron Perth Community Support Services Network is offering a new transitional support program for patients post-discharge. This program does not offer personal care but will support patients with home help (cleaning, cooking) and transportation. Home and Community Care will be working closely with our staff to offer this service to eligible patients who could benefit from this support.

R-SOC Update (R-SOC – Regional Security Office Center)

As part of the R-SOC – Regional Security Office Centre LWHA participate in a phishing simulation exercise along with the Regional Hospitals. We did recognize that this e-mail caused emotional strain for staff and extra work for our Human Resources department. Thanks to all who participated.