

## NEW VIHA HEART & RESPIRATORY SERVICES SET TO OPEN AT ROYAL JUBILEE

**S**pecific patients with heart failure or respiratory disease in need of rehabilitation will soon have access to three new services in VIHA.

The services are offered through a new specialized heart failure/heart function clinic, an expanded cardiac rehabilitation program and a new respiratory rehabilitation program. Housed at the Royal Jubilee Hospital (RJH) site in Victoria, these services feature an onsite supervised exercise facility to help those in weakened states get stronger with the safety of health professionals nearby. VIHA's new trio of services opened this month and is already accepting referrals from cardiologists, respirologists, specialists and family doctors across the Island.

The heart function clinic will provide careful surveillance and intervention at an early stage to help maintain patients in the community setting, to reduce hospital admissions and to support family care. The exercise centre will provide comprehensive exercise programming and monitoring for people with complex chronic health impairments where cardio-vascular or respiratory disease is a major contributing factor to exercise limitations and where hospital health professionals' supervision is needed during exercise.

"The services will help serve the needs of the VIHA population and each service has its own entry process," said **Sonya Rinzema**, manager of the three new programs.

Previously, people on Vancouver Island with heart failure (HF) who needed specialized heart function treatments would have to travel to St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver.

"Heart failure is the only form of heart disease whose incidence is steadily increasing. There is a need for specialized services within VIHA with an expectation to serve about 200 HF patients in our first year," said **Dr. Elizabeth Swiggum, Cardiologist**, who has been newly hired for the program.

HF usually develops slowly and is a condition where the heart is no longer pumping as effectively due to many causes, such as damage from a heart attack, high blood pressure, heart valve disease, or an infection of the heart. The heart function clinic will help HF patients learn how to better assess, manage and control their symptoms and use their medication to improve their quality of life and prevent crises that send them into

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We hope you are enjoying the summer. Coming this September Connections<sup>VI</sup> will outline what's next in the process of Organizational Renewal and what's to come this fall for VIHA.

Connections<sup>VI</sup> is the Vancouver Island Health Authority's monthly electronic newsletter for staff, physicians, health partners and community members.

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## NEW HEART & RESPIRATORY SERVICES CONT' ...

hospital repeatedly. Although HF is not curable, symptoms can be improved by medications, attention to diet (particularly low salt and low fluid intake) and exercise.

The specialized, supervised exercise program for HF and respiratory patients will be available through the Multi-Site Cardiac Rehabilitation Risk Reduction Program and the Respiratory Rehabilitation Program at the RJH Exercise Centre. These two programs focus on risk reduction and self-management through education, dietary advice, medical therapy and exercise.

“Exercise can improve functional capacity, improve symptoms and even lower mortality, enabling patients to improve quality of life” said Rinzema.

The cardiac rehabilitation “Take Heart” hospital exercise program will be offered in the new exercise room beside the heart function clinic. Only patients requiring physician presence to exercise would attend at the hospital site, other patients would continue to attend at community Take Heart program sites.

The new Respiratory Rehabilitation Program, which includes an exercise program called Take a Breath, will help people with respiratory diseases, such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and cystic fibrosis, improve their functional capacity, exercise tolerance, self management skills, and their quality of life.

“A COPD patient who has limited endurance and tolerance will improve their strength and ability to do their activities of daily living,” said **Dr. Ellen Gough, Respirologist**.

The new VIHA RJH Cardiac and Respiratory Exercise Wellness (**CREW**) Centre, which will initially be able to take five patients following individualized programs at one

time, will include a specialized “NuStep” recumbent cross trainer machine designed to help rehabilitate a wide range of users, such as people who are not able to do more strenuous exercise. Staff delivering the Take Heart and Take a Breath exercise programs have special qualifications from the American College of Sports Medicine.



These new cardiac services will complement the existing Multi-Site Cardiac Rehabilitation Risk Reduction Program in Victoria and Nanaimo. These current programs support heart patients and their families,

living in the South and Central Island to rehabilitate after a cardiac event and to adopt behaviours and skills to lower their risk factors for future events.

The three new programs have hired three new staff to help run the services:

- **Mona Menu**, Program Clerk, formerly of the RJH Echo department
- **Susan Kerr**, RN, Coordinator / Case Manager Heart Function Clinic, formerly with the RJH Cardiac Care Unit
- **Sarah Neil**, PT, ACSM Exercise Specialist, Cardiac & Respiratory Rehabilitation, formerly from the Respiratory Services Units

The referrals to the programs can all be reached through one central phone number 250-519-1601 (fax number: 250-370-8267). For more information or any questions, please contact Sonya Rinzema at 370-8667. ▲

## WHERE EDUCATION & COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE MEET

**C**ooperation is essentially what's at the heart of a new, innovative health care initiative to be launched across B.C. this fall.

While the underlying concept is simple, the name is more of a mouthful. Under the banner of Interprofessional Education for Collaborative Patient-Centered Practice (IECPCP), Health Canada is providing two-year funding for a variety of collaborative projects in B.C. and across the country.

VIHA and the province's five other health authorities will form a B.C. Network for the initiative, each pursuing individual projects but sharing knowledge and experience as they go. VIHA is partnering with the B.C. Cancer Agency, the University of Victoria and Vancouver Island colleges, as well as linking to the University of British Columbia, to set up a number of Interprofessional Community Health Centres throughout the authority.

Basically, these sites will provide opportunities for students from different health disciplines to work with each other and with an existing interprofessional team. The goal is for students to encounter the roles of other health care providers, experience how to function well as a team member and learn more about their own profession through collaborative work with other health care professionals.

"Of course, collaboration and patient-centered care are not new concepts to our health care professionals," said **Arlene Galloway Ford**, VIHA project lead. "What's innovative about this project is the way it intentionally brings students from different professions together at a single practice site. The direct link across professional and educational programs will create a unique practice-based learning environment for everyone involved."

The only VIHA site currently identified is Port McNeill, based on previous experience there with the Interprofessional Rural Placement Program. Participating teams must include physicians, nurses and at least one other profession. Other teams at VIHA sites interested in participating are encouraged to contact Arlene Galloway Ford at [arlene.galloway@viha.ca](mailto:arlene.galloway@viha.ca).

Two half-time positions, one at VIHA and one at the University of Victoria, will coordinate the student placements and support the teams at the chosen sites. Hiring for these positions will take place in late September. Then work will start to match interested students with the selected initial sites.

The initiative's long-term aim is to include collaborative interprofessional experience increasingly as part of health professional education in Canada. This approach will, in turn, encourage collaborative teams to find patient-focused, cost-effective solutions in their practice settings, helping to build capacity and foster change throughout the health care system.

A coordinating committee for the Island initiative includes representatives from all the schools involved, as well as the BC Cancer Agency and VIHA. Current VIHA representatives include Arlene Galloway Ford from the Professional Practice Office, **Gillian Hobbs** from Home and Community Care and **Jeannie Wheeler** from Port McNeill.

Representation from VIHA will expand as other key stakeholders and sites are identified. ▲

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<http://intranet.viha.ca/>



## VIHA SET TO INTRODUCE PROGRESSIVE AUTOMATED PHARMACY

The first automated hospital pharmacy system of its type in Western Canada is being launched in VIHA this fall and is set to improve patient safety, reduce medication errors, free-up staff from mundane routines (such as routine pill counting), and greatly improve the efficiency of medication dispensing.

“It is a big change, but it is one that will lead to tremendous improvements, especially for safety, efficiency and inventory management,” said **Bob Clark, Executive Director, Diagnostic and Surgical Services.**

More than three years in planning, the automated, computerized system of storing, tracking, and dispensing hospital medication is first being introduced at the Royal Jubilee Hospital this October. It will act as a model for pharmacy systems automation and over time it is expected that more automated dispensing systems will eventually roll out in other VIHA sites.

“Automation is the future of medication management,” notes **Michele Babich, Director of Pharmacy Services.**

With some 6,000 doses of medications dispensed to patients each day, the RJH is a perfect place to launch the new system. With the generous support of the **Greater Victoria Hospitals Foundation** the purchase of this new-high tech equipment has become a reality. Costing \$2.0 million, Phase One of the system includes two pieces of automated equipment produced by McKesson Automation, one of the world's leading health care supply management and information technology companies.

The new equipment now being installed at level “0” of RJH’s Diagnostics and Treatment facility includes McKesson’s MedCarousel™, a medication storage and retrieval system that features vertical, rotating shelving used to store medications over a compact footprint. The storage unit can rise vertically more than five metres tall, efficiently using space. It uses bar code technology to identify and track drugs and features guided picking in which the correct medication is identified by a flashing light, eliminating any confusion caused by look-alike or sound-alike drugs. Staff no longer have to bend or reach to retrieve medications, reducing the chance of injury. The system also keeps a running inventory and identifies expiring medications. When medication is picked, the system automatically prints a bar code label identifying the medication and the date dispensed, which can then be affixed to the product.

## TD GRANTS AWARDED

There were seven TD grants awarded for nursing conferences and education related to restructuring and retraining from a list of 40 applicants. Each grants is for \$1000 and is provided to an individual nurse applicant. The recipients of this round of funding are:

- **Alyse Capron**, South Island, National Nursing Informatics Conference in Toronto
- **Barbara Metcalf**, Central Island, UBC Certificate in Practice Education
- **Tonya Mansfield**, South Island, Perinatal Nursing, BCIT
- **Jill Breker**, South Island, Canadian Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion Conference, Halifax
- **Judith Atkin**, South Island, Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association Conference, Edmonton
- **Silvia D’Arcangelo**, North Island, Psychosocial Care of the Dying and Bereaved, Victoria Hospice Society
- **Lajla Stevenson**, Central Island, Growing in the North Conference (Maternity Care), Prince George

Applications for the next round of the TD Grant are due February 1, 2006. ▲

## PROGRESSIVE AUTOMATED PHARMACY CONT'...

At RJH, MedCarousel™ will work in concert with McKesson's Robot-Rx™, a robotic picking system that uses bar code technology to dispense a 24-hour supply of medications and deposit them in specific envelopes that are printed with the patient's name and barcode identification. These envelopes can then be delivered to nursing units to dispense to the patient.

"All the pharmacy staff need to do is enter the order into the computer system and the Robotics does most of the other dispensing work," said Babich.

Together, MedCarousel™ and Robot-Rx™ fully automate the central medication process, greatly reducing the potential for medication errors and decreasing the time to fill medication orders by almost 75 per cent. The system will be so efficient it will eventually be able to do not only the pharmacy dispensing for RJH, but for Eric Martin Pavilion and the Victoria General Hospital from a centralized location.

"The shift from manual to automated dispensing will free up clinical pharmacists to actively participate in direct patient care, which includes the identification and resolution of drug related problems. Pharmacists are trained to look at the best drugs for specific situations so they can help physicians tailor the drug therapy for individual patients," said Babich.

Automated medication storage and dispensing is also planned for nursing units in the hospital that will integrate with the centralized system. Plans are to place 25 to 30 McKesson AcuDose-Rx™ medication cabinets in various locations such as the ER, operating rooms suites, intensive care units, and nursing units. The cabinets receive a complete list of ordered medications from the hospital's Pharmacy information system and allow nurses to withdraw medications

from the patient's profile using touch-screen technology. By recording all the dispensing activity for medications within these cabinets, the system will allow the hospital to track all medication administered by type, patient and caregiver. It will allow nursing staff to safely and rapidly distribute floor stock and scheduled medications to patients as well as track and control inventory, particularly narcotics.

"The technology will free nurses from constant counts and reordering of inventory because the cabinets communicate with the pharmacy department, prompting seamless restocking of items," said Babich.

This new technology will put VIHA at the forefront of automated systems in Western Canada and greatly reduces the chance of a medication error.

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced last year that bar codes would be required on most prescription and over-the-counter drugs used in hospitals by 2006 as a step to reduce potential medication errors. ▲