

NURSING IN THE

Ahead of the curve

Renovating and upgrading the endoscopy unit at The Credit Valley Hospital and Trillium Health Centre is a matter of great importance to **Vicky Sharma** and **Kiran Dhillon**. That is why the two RNs, who are members of Trillium's *Diwali 2012* fundraising committee, organized and hosted an August fundraising event dubbed *Giving 110 per cent On the Curve*. "We set it up as a networking night for young professionals," Sharma says. The pair's efforts paid off. They were able to raise over \$4,000 in donations and \$24,000 in raffle prizes, products and services. The fundraising committee's goal was \$2 million. This and several other initiatives have raised \$1.2 million towards a new endoscopy suite. The existing unit is 50 years old, cramped, and needs to be renovated to increase capacity, accelerate treatment and reduce wait times. The renovated suite will include a pre-procedure area, a waiting area that provides privacy, and new equipment. (*Mississauga News*, Aug. 17)



RNs Vicky Sharma (front, right) and Kiran Dhillon (front, second from left) raised \$4,000 in August for a new endoscopy unit in Mississauga.



NPs Jennifer Tiberio (left) and Clea Lang (second from left) celebrate the opening of the Colorectal Cancer Survivorship Program with Health Minister Deb Matthews and MPP Michael Coteau.

Caring for survivors

You've beaten cancer. You're a survivor. Now what do you do? A unique, NP-led primary care clinic for colorectal cancer survivors in north Toronto now offers follow-up care for five years after patients are given the all-clear. NP **Clea Lang** is one of two nurses who are driving the clinic's Colorectal Cancer Survivorship Program. "The NP role is not just the physical part of monitoring cancer, it's also about assessing their emotional and functional needs," says Lang. As part of post-cancer care, Lang and her colleagues interpret blood tests, CAT scans, and conduct physical assessments, all the while screening

patients for anxiety and depression. Funded by Cancer Care Ontario, the clinic has been operating out of the North York Family Health Team offices since the spring. It is unique because it combines nursing care with community based survivorship care. (*Canadian-HealthcareNetwork.ca*, Aug. 13)

Embracing telemedicine

Helen Brenner, chief nursing executive and vice-president of patient services at Northumberland Hills Hospital (NHH), says she's "grateful" for new funding dedicated to telemedicine nursing support at the hospital. "Local patients can access health-care services that they may not

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BY CLAIRE O'KEEFFE

have previously been able to connect with here at home, including consultations with specialists," she says. The Ontario Telemedicine Network uses two-way computer videoconferencing to give patients access to care. The videoconferencing also permits educational programs and meetings for health-care professionals. "Telemedicine is also adding to our ability to enhance training and development opportunities for our staff, giving us an inexpensive and timely way to tap our health-care team into the expertise of professionals at other centres." Across the Central East LHIN, where NHH is situated, 20 telemedicine nurses have been recruited, and the service is available at more than 80 sites. (*Northumberland Today*, July 23)

Nurse sues police after G20 arrest

Alicia Ridge volunteers as a nurse at a sexual assault centre. She is studying to also become a midwife. But her political rather than academic pursuits are what made news in August. Ridge is one of seven residents from the Hamilton area who are suing Toronto police for alleged false arrest, battery and malicious prosecution during the G20 summit in 2010. The five women and two men who have launched a \$1.4 million lawsuit say police officers targeted them for arrest using "unreasonable criteria" and made "profane, sexist and homophobic" comments. "The police officer encouraged the crowds to call

us names and take pictures," Ridge said at a press conference on Aug. 1. "Despite the presence of female officers, I was searched by a male officer and it was a fairly pathetic rendition of a search...a quick hand up a leg followed by a swift ass grab, and there were lots of sexualized comments that went along with it." Investigators substantiated Ridge's claim that her arresting officer called her a "dyke," made obscene insults, and told her to shave her legs. (*thestar.com*, Aug. 1)

Report finds poor are less healthy

Regent Park Community Health RN **Laura Hanson**, a former policy analyst for RNAO, spoke to CTV news about a recent Canadian Medical Association survey that found Canadians who have lower incomes report inferior health to those who are wealthier. The survey, conducted by Ipsos Reid, suggests good health goes hand-in-hand with wealth. "Many people just live day-by-day," Hanson said when asked why income plays a role. "They have multiple jobs... they're struggling." The survey also concluded that Canadians with lower incomes use health services more often than their wealthier counterparts. As well, 25 per cent of Canadians earning less than \$30,000 annually have delayed or stopped taking prescription drugs because they can't afford to pay for the treatment. (*CTV News, The Globe and Mail*, Aug. 13)

OUT AND ABOUT



WINDSOR STUDENTS SHOW THEIR PRIDE

Three nursing students from Windsor's St. Clair College show their support for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community by walking in the city's Pride parade Aug. 12. (L to R) Fourth-year nursing students Alaina Delaney and Charlene McInnis, and second-year student Amanda Levesque proudly carried an RNAO Essex chapter banner in the procession.



ALGOMA RNs HOST JOHNSTON VISIT

(Left) Sharon Johnston, wife of Governor General David Johnston, visits Algoma Family Services (AFS) in Sault Ste. Marie on Aug. 30, where staff provided an overview of the facility, its successes, and its programs. She is pictured here with AFS Executive Director and RN Pierrette Brown.

NURSING IN THE NEWS

Men of merit

Kawartha Sexual Assault Centre RN **Mary Waters** hopes a provocative poster campaign that was launched in August will generate dialogue around the subject of sexual abuse. One in two girls and one in five boys will be sexually assaulted at some point in their lives. The campaign, which focuses on alcohol-facilitated sexual assaults, is called *Don't Be That Guy*. Posters aimed at males, with taglines such as 'Just because you help her home doesn't mean you can help yourself,' have been placed throughout Peterborough's

Fleming College and Trent University. Waters says "this is our opportunity to get (this issue) out there." She adds that often, in court, a complainant's dress, her level of intoxication, even if she was flirting or not, comes into question. This takes the blame from the perpetrator and places it with the victim, she suggests. The result is an impression that it wasn't really rape. Waters says the campaign is also attempting to encourage men to stand up to their friends if they believe they're about to cross the line. (*The Peterborough Examiner*, Aug. 30)



PHOTO: QMI AGENCY

RN Mary Waters (left), with colleagues Karen Basciano and Karen Giles, hopes to get men talking about strategies to stop alcohol-facilitated sexual assaults.

OUT AND ABOUT (CONTINUED)



CONTINUING THE CALL FOR 2014 HEALTH ACCORD

At a July 18 gathering meant to bring attention to threats against Canada's health-care system, RNAO CEO Doris Grinspun (right) joins (L to R) Roy Brady, Council of Canadians/Ontario Health Coalition, Sean Meagher, Canadian Doctors for Medicare, and Ritika Goel, Students for Medicare, to call on Prime Minister Stephen Harper to engage in talks about a 2014 *Health Accord*. The event, in Toronto's Riverdale Park, also marked the 50th anniversary of Medicare (see related letter, right).

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Following a Canadian Medical Association survey that found health can be linked to wealth, RNAO urged Prime Minister Stephen Harper to get back to the negotiating table for talks on the 2014 Health Accord. In response to a Globe and Mail article in which the federal health minister reiterated the government's reluctance to sign a new Accord (Aug. 14), RNAO CEO Doris Grinspun wrote:

Nurses want serious dialogue

The federal government's failure to grasp the important role it plays in the delivery of health care in Canada is mind-boggling. We agree wholeheartedly with the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) that equity and fairness are central tenets of our health-care system. Nurses and physicians also know there are gaps in services between rural and urban areas across this country. The results of a survey released this week by the CMA offers further proof that aboriginal communities and people living in poverty aren't getting the attention they deserve when it comes to their care needs. Nurses call for Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Health Minister Leona Aglukkaq to come to the table and engage premiers, territorial leaders and the public in a serious dialogue about a new *Health Accord* so we can chart the right direction for our system.

Doris Grinspun, CEO
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