

Surrey Fire Fighters' Make Breathing Easier



Proud Surrey Fire Fighters' Charitable Society members pose in front of JPOCSC, where their \$150,000 donation supports the Lung Diagnostics and Rehabilitation clinic.

Donation for Lung Diagnostics a healthy fit for generous fire fighters

Since 1994, the Surrey Memorial Hospital Foundation has gratefully received significant support from the Surrey Fire Fighters' Charitable Society, a group that's been supporting the community since 1957.

The Society's most recent gift of \$150,000 supported the Lung Diagnostics and Rehabilitation Clinic at the Jim Pattison Outpatient Care and Surgery Centre (JPOCSC). "It falls under our mandate to support medical and health care research, as well as helping people who are facing trauma or injury," explains Society director Todd Schierling.

"The Surrey Memorial Hospital is one of the pillars of our community that we need to support. It helps people day to day, it reaches out to everybody in the community," adds Society president Mike McNamara.

"Health care is such an important part of strengthening our community," Mike says. "If the funding isn't there for everything they need and we can help, it means a lot to us."

The Surrey Fire Fighters' Charitable Society's members raise funds on their own time, and their executive board carefully chooses where they donate. When offered choices of JPOCSC areas to support, they jumped on the Lung Diagnostics clinic. "Lung-related health issues are not uncommon among fire fighters," Mike says. "Because of our exposure to smoke, it seemed like a good fit for us to go with that."

The Surrey Fire Fighters' Charitable Society has supported every significant expansion on the hospital site, including JPOCSC. They also donated \$1 million to the Children's Health Centre at Surrey Memorial, and pledged \$500,000 toward the new Emergency Centre that will open this fall.



Jessica Erzinger shows off some of the new pulmonary function testing equipment that has shaved waiting times from four months to a few weeks within a two-year period.

Collaboration, partnership benefit patients, make Lung Diagnostics and Rehab an exciting place to work

Jessica Erzinger beams when she talks about the work that happens in the Lung Diagnostics and Rehabilitation Clinic she supervises at Surrey's Jim Pattison Outpatient Care and Surgery Centre (JPOCSC).

"We have three areas of focus," Jess says. "Diagnostics, lung rehab, and lung health clinics. Our respiratory therapists (RTs) are trained to work in all three areas."

When the clinic moved here two years ago, it expanded from three pulmonary function testing labs to five, and from testing 3,000 people per year to almost 8,000 now. "Our wait list was 16 weeks when we moved in here; now it's three to four weeks," she says. Staff has more than doubled, from four to nine.

"We measure how well your lungs are functioning compared to normal, based on your age, weight and height," Jess explains. The Pulmonary Function Lab helps diagnose chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), asthma and restrictive lung diseases, as well as dealing with clients suffering from lung cancer.

The clinic's RTs also work in the Pediatric Pulmonary Function Lab at Surrey Memorial Hospital, where they see approximately 14 young people per week for testing and education.

"Our goal is rapid diagnosis and intervention," Jess says. People are getting diagnosed sooner, so they can go back to their doctors and get the medications they need, get referred to lung rehab, learn how to manage their disease and not be afraid of being short of breath.

"This building allows rehabilitation, diagnostics and education to be all together on a bigger scale than we could before." Respiratory therapists can take a spirometer, or portable testing device, upstairs to a respirologist's consultation room, test the client and get the medical history, and then report to the respirologists, who determines the next steps for that client.

Since moving to JPOCSC, the Lung Health Clinic has expanded from asthma-only sessions three days per month to working with a variety of lung diseases, four days a week, with plans to increase to five days per week.

"We get to know our colleagues in the various outpatient clinics here. We meet regularly to see how we can complement each other's work," Jess says.

Clinicians from the various clinics have begun setting up multi-disciplinary appointments for clients. The group, working with the clients, sets priorities, identifies which clinicians are needed, and creates comprehensive care plans. Efforts are made to keep these complex clients working with their original RT. Besides helping clients who can't tolerate coming in for multiple visits, they are reducing wait times by months by bringing different specialists together.

Both UBC residents and some RT trainees from Thompson Rivers University come here as part of their programs to gain non-

acute respiratory experience. "They train in Surrey because we can offer such a wide scope of outpatient experience. RT trainees rotate among the pulmonary function labs and clinics as well as acute care at SMH," Jess says. "That's really important to training and recruitment, because they get excited about the work we do at Surrey, and we are going to need many RTs when the Critical Care Tower opens next year and as JPOCSC programs continue to grow."

Education is key to rehabilitation. JPOCSC operates Lung Rehab programs for stable clients with chronic lung disease, including COPD, in seven six-week lung rehab programs per year on site and six programs in the community. Clients learn to exercise safely, challenge themselves and manage their disease.

JPOSCS is also piloting a well-received Saturday COPD Management class in Punjabi.

"The partnership and collaboration here is unique," Jess concludes. "The robustness of the outpatient respiratory therapist role, and the addition of research – it's a very exciting place to work, and we're really attracting top quality staff because of the work we do here."



Supporting the Lung Diagnostics and Rehabilitation Clinic met the Surrey Fire Fighters' Charitable Society's mandate of supporting medical research as well as helping individuals in the community.

Research valuable part of clinic activities

Research ultimately benefits patient care. It also helps attract top-notch staff to a medical facility.

Lung Diagnostics and Rehabilitation is currently involved in a clinical trial for bronchial thermoplasty on the first Canadian patients among 200 across North America, in a study sponsored by Boston Scientific. It includes five-year followup of a treatment, already in use in the U.S., which is the first non-medication asthma therapy.

In the procedures, being done at SMH, a catheter with a basket is lowered through a scope and radio waves shrink the smooth muscle tissue in air passages to allow better air movement. To date, studies show that this treatment leads to a significant improvement in quality of life. Followup visits occur at the Lung Diagnostics Clinic. The treatment is not yet publicly available in Canada.

Two more clinical trials are being considered by the Fraser Health Research and Ethics Board, both dealing with asthma treatment.

"A key to improving health..."

Now entering its third year, the Jim Pattison Outpatient Care and Surgery Centre remains a leader in the delivery of outpatient services, providing approximately 50 programs and services. Improving health through research and academic development is a key objective for the dedicated physicians, specialists and medical professionals that provide care at this award-winning Centre.

Surrey Fire Fighters' Charitable Society

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