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New specialized program for surgical nurses offered at Headwaters

Written By PAULA BROWN

Headwaters Health Care Centre (HHCC) is helping surgical nurses advance their careers by offering a new specialized in-house training program.

Through funding from the Surgical Pathway Fund, which supports hospitals to retain and empower health professionals who support surgery patients, as well as a partnership with five hospitals in the North Simcoe Muskoka region, Headwaters Hospital has developed an in-house education program.

?Our investment through the Surgical/Diagnostic Imaging Efficiency and Innovation Fund is helping Headwaters significantly increase the number of surgeries performed each week, while reducing wait times, improving the quality of life of more Dufferin-Caledon families, so they can get back to the activities that matter most,? said Sylvia Jones, Dufferin-Caledon MPP.

The program is designed for Headwaters nurses who aspire to learn specialized skills to work in either the operating room or post-anesthetic recovery room (PACU). The curriculum is equivalent to surgical nurse college requirements and is made available at no additional cost to Headwaters nurses.

According to Headwaters, the hospital has been able to fast-track surgical training for nurses by 12 months through the on-the-job training program.

?As a Headwaters nurse, I sought out this program internally for personal growth and development. I loved the opportunity to receive flexible, in-house training that works with my current schedule and personal life. I was able to train to become a scrub nurse in Headwaters' operating room, and I am also being cross-trained on pre-operative day surgery and endoscopy. Now, I'm able to see the full circle of nursing care from investigation, consultation, treatment, surgery, and recovery,? said Kayla Flores, a registered practical nurse who has been working at Headwaters for two years.

A benefit of the specialized training program is that it will allow the hospital to respond to existing challenges in health human resources including wait times for surgery and procedures.

Headwaters said that as a result of the investment in surgical nursing career growth, they've been able to offer more surgical appointments to patients and operate at full capacity.

?This investment in our surgical teams means Headwaters patients can receive faster care from more highly qualified surgical health practitioners. With the province's funding, we are aiming high with delivering more surgical procedures to our patients,? said Alean Jackman, director of Surgical Services of Obstetrics and Ambulatory Care.

The in-house training program is also part of Headwaters' strategy to retain and advance the skills of nurses at the hospital. Headwaters Surgical Services and Clinical Education Teams are in the midst of training its second cohort of nursing staff.