



DELTA'S INVOLVEMENT TO SAVE DELTA HOSPITAL FROM HAVING ITS SERVICES DOWNGRADED (2002-2006)

Although health care is not a core area of responsibility of local government, the Corporation of Delta has become involved in issues at the Delta Hospital because of its responsibility as set out in the Local Government Act to “represent the interests and respond to the needs of their communities” and “fostering the current and future economic, social and environmental well-being of its communities”.

Delta Hospital History

Throughout the period leading up to April 2002, Delta Hospital provided a range of health services to the community, including: 24/7 physician staffed emergency care services, 63 acute beds, 3 cardiac/intensive care beds, 24/7 surgical clinics, special clinics, surgical day care services and laboratory, radiology and high volume diagnostic imaging services.

Delta Council fought alongside the residents of the community to SAVE DELTA HOSPITAL from having its services downgraded. Actions taken by Delta Council since 2002 included the formation of the Mayor's Task Force on Delta Hospital and a Delta Hospital public opinion question on the 2002 Local Government Election Ballot asking residents whether they would be willing to fund an \$800,000 operating grant to FHA to maintain historical emergency service levels at Delta Hospital. A majority of residents (approximately 60%) responded positively to the public opinion question indicating their support for municipal funding to maintain emergency room services. In addition, legal remedies were also sought by the municipality to prevent the reduction of services at the hospital.

Delta Hospital was downgraded to a sub-acute facility but was able to maintain 24/7 Emergency Services which had been slated to be downgraded. The hospital currently has 40 beds, and offers the following services for the Delta community: 24/7 Emergency Services, Ambulatory Care, Chronic Disease Management, Endoscopy Services, Laboratory Services, Outpatient services, Radiology Services, and Surgical Day Care. The hospital also has capacity for limited scheduled 24-hour elective surgeries and inpatient beds for stable medical patients, sub-acute medical and orthopedic patients, as well as hospice/palliative care patients.

In 2006, the Delta Hospital undertook an expansion and reconfiguration of the Emergency Department to meet current needs. The Emergency Department at Delta Hospital was opened in 1980 and was designed to handle approximately 12,000 patient visits annually. It is now handling nearly double that number with over 20,000 visits each year. The expansion tripled the size of the existing Emergency Department and doubled the number of beds to include: 10 observation, 10 'acute' and 5 'fast-track'



beds. The expansion also included a relocated surgical day care and expanded ambulatory care which will enhance services.



STATUS OF SERVICES AT DELTA HOSPITAL November 2008
Written by Save Delta Hospital Society (SDHS)

Acute Care:

In November 2008, Delta Hospital was reinstated as an acute care facility. Staffing levels have been increased to reflect this. The medical ward consists of 40 beds, of which 3 are hospice. All types of patients occupy these beds including medical, rehab, post-op, palliative and those awaiting long term care placement. A new program called "iCare" has been started which involves a team approach to patient care. The team of doctors, nurses, social workers, physiotherapists and occupational therapists meet every morning to plan the care for the patients. By setting daily goals and having a patient specific plan, the best use of hospital beds is achieved. Families are encouraged to help with mobilization of the patients and being part of the plan to return patients to their home, where ever possible.

Surgical Daycare:

The 3 Operating Rooms at Delta are in full use and with new equipment, supplied by the Hospital Foundation and Auxiliary, new procedures are being carried out. Recent orthopedic equipment purchase has allowed the orthopedic surgeons to do more procedures. Limited emergency surgery, such as appendectomies and gastric scoping can be done Monday to Friday, 3-5 pm. Occasional overnight stays after surgery are necessary and the patients typically stay on the medical ward or in the ER.

Emergency Department:

The ER sees approximately 50-80 patients a day. A computerized tracker system has been in use since Dec, 07. Patients coming into the ER are seen briefly at the reception desk where the clerk enters their name, birth date, PHN number (care card) and their stated complaint. This information puts the patient onto the tracker and generates a triage form for the Triage nurse.

The Triage nurse calls the patients up to her desk from the waiting room (usually in either severity of complaint or time order), does a quick assessment and enters a triage number and a specific patient complaint into the computer. After this step, the receptionist calls the patient back to finish the paperwork and the patient waits in the waiting room until called into the department by the Triage nurse. Throughout the patient's visit to the ER the computer "Tracker" is used by the doctor, nurse, lab and x-ray to keep track of where the patient is and what has been done for them. The electronic medical record (EMR) can be easily accessed as can the ability to enter requests for tests, lab work and also future appointments such as ultra-sound. Patient specific educational information can be printed from the tracker in up to 5 languages. This process is being used throughout FH.



The over crowding of the ER with admitted patients continues to be a big issue and has worsened over the last year. Some of the causes of this are increases in the frail and ill elderly population, lack of long term placement beds and lack of acute care beds. The RNs have recently campaigned for an increase in staff, through their union process for Professional Responsibility. This increase was recently approved.

Extended Care Unit:

The extended care unit has 96 long term care beds. The unit is well known for its pleasant surroundings and very caring staff.

Laboratory:

The lab has recently increased their out-patient hours and is now open Monday to Friday 7:30am - 7pm, Sat and Sun 10:30am – 3pm. They provide 24 hour coverage to the ER and in-patient ward.

Medical Imaging:

(X-ray, Ultra sound, Mammography) The x-ray department is fully computerised with digital x-rays and ultra sounds via the PACs system. This means that images taken at one hospital in FH can be seen at other hospitals in FH. This department is open from 8 til midnight daily and has on call technicians at night. Out patient hours are 9am - 8pm daily. The need for a CT scanner is evidenced by the numerous transfers per day to Peace Arch hospital that require ambulance transfer and staff to escort the patient. Internal Medicine: There have been some changes in this department with the introduction, a year ago, of the Rapid Access Clinic for internal medicine appointments at Delta Hospital. Three days a week, patients who need urgent access to an Internal Medicine consultation, can be seen at this clinic. Coverage of the 24 hour on-call for internal medicine is still not fully covered although there has been a recent addition to the department.

Other Services:

Out patient programs offered at Delta include Diabetes education, Physiotherapy, Dietician consults, and some mental health support groups.

Building Changes: Recently a Sacred Space (Chapel) was completed and a new meeting room was constructed in the old cafeteria. The front entrance is being redone and will include a coffee shop which will be run by the Auxiliary. They also have a beautiful new gift shop in the lobby.