

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Innovative Cardiac Care Program Wins Distinguished National Award

Groundbreaking collaboration between Trillium Health Partners and Saint Elizabeth Health Care benefits more than 1,000 cardiac patients annually

June 6, 2018 (Mississauga, ON) – Trillium Health Partners' (THP) Putting Patients at the Heart (PPATH) Program, in partnership with Saint Elizabeth Health Care, achieves national recognition as winner of the Canadian College of Health Care Leaders (CCHL), *3M Health Care Quality Team Award – Improvement Across a Health System*. The award is highly prestigious and recognizes innovation, quality and teamwork for the purposes of fostering a better health care experience for patients.

Responding to feedback about fragmented care on discharge and limited access to homecare, the collaborative PPATH program streamlines and simplifies access to follow-up care for cardiac patients, enabling them to return home sooner and with better supports. The PPATH team engaged extensively with cardiac patients, family caregivers, health providers and physicians to redesign and improve the health care journey.

By bringing the hospital and home care sectors together, the PPATH program provides one team, seamless services and the ability to share key patient health information through a shared electronic health record. Another unique feature of the program is a dedicated 24/7 support line, which helps patients get their questions addressed after surgery without visiting the emergency department. If necessary, a community nurse can visit the patient at home to assess any symptoms or concerns and recommend next steps.

Launched in 2015 as one of six integrated funding projects in Ontario, PPATH is now the standard of care at THP's regional cardiac surgery centre, which has the second highest cardiac volumes in the province. The national recognition from CCHL is an example of meaningful patient engagement, courageous leadership and diligent team work across sectors to provide patients with exceptional levels of care.

QUICK FACTS

- Patients in the PPATH program are able to return home, on average, **one day sooner** following heart surgery. In addition to supporting patients' choice to recover at home, this frees up three hospital beds and thus creates better access to inpatient hospital care for patients who need it
- Patients report **98% satisfaction** with the program. This high achievement likely reflects the fact that patients were actively involved in co-designing the service alongside THP and Saint Elizabeth, thus ensuring it incorporates what matters most to patients.
- Other key results include a reduction in post-surgery emergency department visits by **28%**, and hospital re-admission rates by **38%**.
- The PPATH program saves the health system an estimated **\$950,000** annually. The program is funded by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care through the Mississauga Halton Local Health Integration Network.

[**VIDEO: Putting Patients at the Heart – a new approach to caring for heart surgery patients**](#)

QUOTES

“I found that the hand-off from surgery to the intensive care to the critical care unit was perfect in the way the nurses communicated with us about each situation. We were able to call what was happening next. We could call the nurse at 11 at night to ask how she was sleeping, or seven in the morning to ask how she was. When you get home, you know everything becomes less clear. You have to take pills and you’re remembering, ‘what did they tell me?’ Being able to call 24 hours a day made a big difference. They were able to give us access to the person who’d been with us the entire time. It is absolutely patient-centred. You could see that the people really care about the patients.” Gerry Cunningham, Mississauga, Ontario

“The PPATH program is a great example of how hospital and home care teams can work together to support patients and families through a significant and often stressful life event like heart surgery. Creating sustainable change within a health system – from patient care to the funding model and information support systems – is not necessarily easy, but it’s definitely worthwhile. By putting patients at the heart and really understanding their experience and needs, we have been able to achieve exceptional health outcomes, patient satisfaction and system impacts.” Helene Lacroix, VP Clinical Innovations, Saint Elizabeth Health Care

“When we were designing PPATH, we asked our patients what they needed to feel supported and confident to recover at home after heart surgery. What we heard was that they wanted an active role in planning their care and that it was important to know whom they could call about their symptoms post-surgery, such as shortness of breath or chest pain. Being given information about what to expect after surgery can be difficult to process while in the hospital, and on returning home, patients and their caregivers can begin to feel overwhelmed. Without proper supports in place at home, patients often end up back at our hospital, which is not where they would ideally like to be to recover.” Stephanie Joyce, VP Patient Care Services & Health Service Integration, Trillium Health Partners

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Trillium Health Partners is one of the largest community-based hospital systems in Canada. Comprised of Credit Valley Hospital, the Mississauga Hospital and the Queensway Health Centre, Trillium Health Partners serves the growing and diverse populations of Mississauga, West Toronto and surrounding communities. Trillium Health Partners is a teaching hospital affiliated with the University of Toronto and is an associate member of the Toronto Academic Health Science Network.

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Saint Elizabeth Health Care is a national social enterprise providing home care, health solutions and education to people where they are and when they need it. With Canadian roots and more than 100 years of expertise, the not-for-profit charitable organization is accelerating health care innovation to support healthy lives globally. Through its team of 9,000 health leaders, Saint Elizabeth delivers 20,000 care exchanges daily, totaling 50 million in the last decade alone. Learn more at saintelizabeth.com or find us on social media.

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