

MRI's Impact Already Being Felt



It's here, fresh out of the box. Stratford's MRI arrived just before Christmas and the final touches of MRI suite construction and staff training are nearing completion. Already we've scanned a handful of patients—the first of some 3,100 patients from our

Another feature of the new MRI was evident during a recent "Mock Code Blue" at the MRI suite. A mock code is a practice session called to familiarize staff with procedures in the event of an emergency—in this case a cardiac arrest. As the MRI's magnet is "always on", the Code Blue response team are not permitted to enter the Magnet Room because of the metallic instruments (pens, scissors etc.) on their bodies.

"Instead, our MRI technician is able to wheel the MRI bed outside the suite to the waiting Code Blue response team, where it can be raised or lowered so lifesaving procedures can start," explains Jeff. "It's safer and faster for the patient, and in a real emergency every second can count."

Fundraising for the MRI (Making a Real Impact) Campaign is also progressing well with \$2.8 million raised towards the \$3.8 million goal. "While we're already seeing the benefits of the MRI, we still have \$1 million left to raise," says Andrea Page,



Nosheen Munir, Registered MRI Technologist (front) and Erin Mielke, Charge MRI technologist in MRI Control Room.

region each year who will now have quicker, easier access to this incredible piece of diagnostic equipment with no need to travel to centres like London or Owen Sound for a scan.

Life changing—even life saving—the MRI is an indispensable tool for the fast, accurate diagnosis of various cancers, stroke, brain tumors, multiple sclerosis and other life-threatening conditions. Its impact will be felt by each of us—in our own communities, neighborhoods, even within our own families.

"In fact the impact of the MRI is already being felt," explains Jeff Kerk, Program Director of Medical Imaging. "We're now handling a steadily growing number of patients and that will continue to increase as the MRI suite gears up to full speed by early March."

Reduced waiting times for accessing an MRI are expected. Waiting times for non-emergency MRIs in our region have recently been about 98 days, according to Jeff. "We don't have a specific figure, but we're anticipating a significant reduction in that wait in the weeks and months ahead," he explains. "We're also expecting to see our first pediatric patients in the near future. Having the MRI here in Stratford will be a big plus for parents and children alike."

Reactions from patients and staff who have been helping test the MRI during this start-up phase have been very positive, says Jeff. "The large bore or extra wide opening is proving popular—especially amongst people who've experienced older models of MRI with their narrower openings."




Jeff Kerk, Program Director of Medical Imaging and Erin Meilke get ready for Mock Code Blue

SGH Foundation Executive Director. "Our donors have responded with tremendous enthusiasm, but it's the last leg of the campaign that's the hardest—just like running a marathon."

So far 290 donors have given \$1,000 or more to the campaign, qualifying them for inclusion on the MRI Donor Wall. "In fact, we're creating two donor walls—one is a simple addition of a panel on our existing Heart & Soul Campaign wall in the June Blanch Lobby, while our second wall will be a completely new creation in the MRI waiting room where every patient waiting for a scan will see it," says Andrea.

"Recognizing our donors at the appropriate level is as important to us as it is to many of our supporters," she says. "We know it's not their only motivation for giving, but everyone likes to be appreciated for doing something good."



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Stratford General Hospital Physicians give MRI Campaign

"A Shot in the Arm"



Back Row (L-R Drs): Tyler Rouse, Barbara Cowing, Philip Squires, Jason Bandey, Peter Brooks, Gregg Hancock, Leanne Peters, Eric Thomas, Peter Hodes, Wayne Parsons, David Leaney, Paul Bartlett, Kirsten Blaine, Michael Troster, Greg Stewart. Front Row (L-R Drs): Michael Gillett, Christine Bloch, Sean Blaine, David Tamblin, Rob Walker, Doug Thompson, Brian Hughes, Mark Diotallevi, Stacey Snider, Paul Weir.

Physicians have smashed their MRI Medical Staff Campaign goal of \$50,000 with a total to date of \$91,825.42! This rivals their recent support of the Heart & Soul Redevelopment Campaign where physicians also exceeded their \$200,000 medical staff goal by more than \$100,000! Physicians have played a leading role in promoting a culture of philanthropy by organizing events, making generous personal donations and educating patients about the value of supporting local healthcare. Pictured are some of the members of Stratford General's Medical Staff who celebrated the total after a recent Grand Rounds education session. The "Big Cheques" celebrate a \$10,000 gift from the Stratford General Hospital Medical Staff and their MRI Medical Staff campaign to date of \$91,825.42. Congratulations Doctors and thank you for your leadership and generosity!

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