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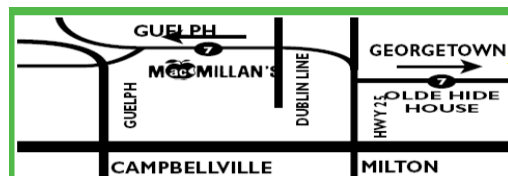


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Ground was broken to begin construction on the new Georgetown Hospital Emergency Department expansion in May 2012 and the first patients were seen in the 14,000-sq.-ft. modern, efficient space in October 2013.

File photo

Georgetown Hospital's \$14 million improvement project in the homestretch

By **LISA TALLYN**

Staff Writer

Georgetown Hospital is in the homestretch of a \$14.2 million construction/renovation project that has seen its Emergency Department (ED) triple in size.

The final phase of the project— renovating the former ED space to house a larger, centralized Diagnostic Imaging department— is currently under way with completion slated for May.

Ground was broken to begin construction on the new ED expansion in May 2012 and the first patients were seen in the 14,000-sq.-ft. modern, efficient space last October. The former ED was only 4,720-sq.-ft. and sized to see about 14,000 people each year, not the more than 30,000 that are actually treated there. That number is expected to increase by 12 per cent over the next five years.

The new area more than doubles the number of stretcher spaces in the department, from 10 to 21, which are situated in a racetrack design around the ED.

"The difference now is every single stretcher is in its own room so there's privacy, confidentiality, and infection control," said Cindy McDonell, Georgetown Hospital's Chief Operating Officer.

The ED also now includes two larger rooms for pediatric emergency care equipped with beds so parents can sleep over if needed, and a larger and more efficient trauma room.

There is a quiet seclusion room for mental health patients, something the

previous ED didn't have, and also a gynecological exam room equipped with its own washroom.

There is also a Rapid Assessment Fast Track (RAFT) area allowing for the rapid assessment and treatment of less serious injuries and illnesses that can be opened and closed depending on the volume in the ED.

Shirley Andrechek, Patient Care Manager for the Emergency Department at Georgetown Hospital, said the staff love the new ED and EMS staff do as well.

"The registration staff really like the triage registration model that's been implemented," said Andrechek.

"The care has not changed, but there's a peacefulness in that unit, because of colour, space, the texture on the counter, and privacy," said McDonell. She said for patients the space is less chaotic, more peaceful and soothing, and "probably, ultimately more therapeutic."

The new Diagnostic Imaging department will bring together x-ray, ultrasound, bone densitometry and mammography into one designated space instead of in various locations throughout the hospital, as it is now.

Also as part of the redevelopment, Diagnostic Imaging now includes a new CT scanner— the hospital's first— which is already installed and operational adjacent to the ED ensuring easy access for Emergency staff and physicians. The first patients were booked for the CT scanner in December.

See HOSPITAL, pg. 10

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