

A need to know

Rates of a deadly hospital superbug have dropped by more than 25 per cent in Ontario since 2008. That translates into about 100 saved lives every year.

That's great news.

Even better, the apparent cause of this dramatic improvement is not some pricey new drug or medical gadget, but a simple move to increased public transparency.

The rates of *C. difficile* fell after the Province made it mandatory for hospitals to publicly report cases of this hospital-acquired infection.

It's quite amazing what can happen when people know they'll be held publicly accountable for something. Doctors, nurses and other staff who work in our hospitals have long known what needs to be done to reduce infection rates—hand washing, isolating sick patients and proper room-cleaning procedures are high among them.

But knowing what to do and doing it perfectly each and every time, especially in a hectic hospital environment, aren't quite the same thing. Ontario's public reporting requirement has helped keep hospitals focused on the problem of *C. difficile*.

Public reporting of outbreaks gives all patients and their families the information they should have before going into a hospital. It also forces hospitals to compare themselves and act accordingly.

Openness isn't just the right thing to do. It saves lives, too.

WEB POLL RESULTS

(Go to www.theifp.ca)

Canada won 18 medals at the last summer Olympics (3 gold, 9 silver and 6 bronze). How many medals will Canada win in London?

- 18-25 (33%)
- less than 10 (28%)
- 13-18 (23%)
- 10-13 (16%)

The Independent & Free Press

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Letters to the editor

CASHh invaluable to cancer patient

Dear editor,

This past February, I was diagnosed with cancer.

After several trips to Sunnybrook Hospital, doctors decided that I would have radiation therapy at their Odette Cancer Centre. I would require 36 sessions over the upcoming eight weeks.

The word "cancer" spells absolute terror to anyone and the pain, time and the general process just adds to the dilemma. Support from the family gave me the courage to face it all. Then I was introduced to CASHh (Cancer Assistance Services of Halton Hills). I was in complete disbelief at the numerous services they provide for free.

On a daily basis they arranged for a volunteer to drive me to Sunnybrook Hospital, sometimes picking me up as early as 5:30 a.m. to have me at the hospital for 7 a.m., always smiling, cheerful and encouraging. The office staff (also volunteers) never ceased to amaze me, ready to adjust to my ever-changing schedule due to hospital re-scheduling. Every volunteer

associated with CASHh is truly amazing— simply the best. Bless you all.

I would also like to thank the fundraisers and donors of this tremendous organization. Rest assured, your efforts and financial contributions are being put to a very much-needed and appreciated cause.

CASHh has no support from any level of government or from the Canadian Cancer Society. So if a canvasser should knock on your door next April, please dig deep and know that your donation is doing wonders for the many people who have hear that nasty word "cancer" from their doctor.

If there was any positive side to my experience, it was meeting all the great people who helped me. Just knowing you are out there will be my pride and pleasure for the rest of my life.

Millie Edmonds, Georgetown

Nemo brings a smile

Dear editor,

I just wanted to say a public thank you to the family that "owns" Nemo on 10 Sideroad near Trafalgar Road.

I drive by this giant Nemo on the

way to and from work and he never fails to make me smile. I thought I was the only one looking forward to seeing him every day but turns out Nemo has spread smiles all over Halton.

Some people are going out of their way to visit him, others are sent by people like me and now Nemo has his own FaceBook page: <https://www.facebook.com/TheClownFishOfGeorgetown>.

So, I wanted to share the Nemo fun with all of Georgetown as he is named after us.

Debra Hayes, Georgetown

Share your thoughts

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