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HEALTH



Steve Somerville/Metroland

Sherwin Jamisola holds his son Syrus at the entrance of an assessment room in Southlake Regional Health Centre's emergency department.

Hospitals make strides on ER wait times

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Many other Ontario hospitals can look toward York Region for inspiration when reducing wait times.

Newmarket's Southlake Regional Health Centre is top in Ontario for ER wait times - at about 1.3 hours on aver-

age. According to Health Quality Ontario's recently released Under Pressure: Emergency Department Performance in Ontario, the limit patients waited in Emergency to see a doctor in 2014-2015 was three hours.

"We are leaders in the province, specifically our door to doctor time, which far exceeds the provincial average," Emer-

gency department director Kim Storey said. "We've found a number of operational efficiencies and a philosophy change. We're able to react, in real time, to our patients. We're really proud. Wait times translate into quality of care."

Southlake's ER handles about 300 patients per day - they're on pace for 111,000 in total this year.

That makes the Southlake ER one of the busiest in the province, she said.

Physician schedules are tailored to meet patient needs every day and the doctors are assisted by 'navigators' tasked with organizing some of the routine elements of their jobs. This allows

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