

The ongoing RHAG-HHN collaboration has seen changes at all levels of staff, services, and organizational structure. The below are some of these changes as of November 2022, as understood by the Rural Health Action Group (RHAG) Co-Chairs.

### **Staffing updates (as of November 2022)**

- **Brunswick West inpatient unit** – in January vacancy rate was 70%; as of November it is 30%.
- 3 staff came back to work from various leaves this past year.
- Hired 2 experienced RNs (Registered Nurses) and 2 new Grads into permanent full-time positions this year.
- All LPN (Licensed Practical Nurse) positions are filled.
- Hired 4 Patient Care attendants (PCA2s) this year to complement the care team
- More casual RN and LPN staff have been hired to help fill known and last-minute vacant shifts.
- A retirement, one move to travel Nursing, and a temporary full-time position remain vacant; efforts to fill all continue.
- Started to admit some acute patients from the ED (Emergency Room), allowing local residents to stay here if requiring admission.

### **Emergency Room (ED)**

- Have 3 local physicians covering the ED at present, with a locum from Ontario willing to come for a week every couple of months.
- The ED nurse rate has fluctuated from 44% -67% this year, but as of November 1, it is at 22%. The vacancies include 1 full time permanent position and 1 temp. maternity leave.

- Have hired a total of 5 nurses for the ED – 2 new grads into full time permanent, and 3 experienced RNs into permanent part time. Also had 1 RN return from long term leave.
- 5 casual Nurse Practitioners (NP) are now working in ED as part of the care team.

**ED Flood** Fiona brought a flood into the ED, which now requires extensive repairs. This forced a move of the ED services to another space in SMH. Work is underway in the ED to re-open, but time frame not clear.

**At this time the hours of the ED will remain from 8-4 each day, until we can secure more physicians for expanded and consistent coverage.**

### **Educator role**

Staff had indicated a lack of learning opportunities, so a permanent **FT Facility Educator** began in August. She ensures mandatory education are met and is providing new opportunities for learning.

### **Recruitment**

- SMH has been in Nursing Recruitment events at St FX and in the Moncton area; and has seen some specific interest in nursing in Sackville.
- **Physician Recruitment** – Dr. Johnson and Dr Enright have been working together to recruit Physicians to Sackville for both the ED and Family Medicine practice(s).
- There are a few Moncton physicians exploring opportunities in the ED here in Sackville.
- Dr Chiasson, Dr Kanji and Nurse Manager Brittany attended a community - led recruitment event for potential physician recruits. At least 12 recruits

showed direct interest in practicing in Sackville, and these are being followed up on.

- There is another recruitment event HHN will be participating in soon.

### **Realignment of Services and Management**

- A Nurse Manager for Brunswick Unit is in place, and another for the Emergency Department and Outpatient clinics.
- The Operating Room is now managed by a Regional Manager in Moncton. It, and a second Operating Room, will be upgraded. This capacity will benefit the overall surgical waitlist.
- HHN is seeking a Facility/Business Manager for SMH. The hire will report directly to the Executive Director and work collaboratively with other Program Directors in Moncton.

### **Other Activities of Note**

- Cross training of staff in all departments now; sense a real shift in culture around SMH. Cross training also allows us to better utilize our staffing resources to cover the clinical areas.
- Regular staff meetings take place in all departments.
- Social events planned monthly if possible.
- Staff asked for more Students to help highlight what Sackville has to offer. There are 7 first year nursing students enjoying clinical opportunities on Brunswick unit.
- SMH will be a pilot site for a High School Engagement Day, where students will come on site and hear about various professions job opportunities with the Hospital.