

November 19, 2013

Partnership between Trillium Health Partners and Peel Public Health Gains National Recognition

Organizations participate in special program to improve health care in the community

(Mississauga, ON) – Trillium Health Partners and Peel Public Health have been selected to participate in an exclusive, national program led by the Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement (CFHI). The organizations will work in collaboration to improve the health of Peel residents by increasing breastfeeding supports.

Shelly Petruskavich, Manager Professional Practice Nursing, Trillium Health Partners, Cheryl Morin, Manager, Family Health, Region of Peel and Debbie Chang, Manager, Family Health, Region of Peel were awarded the 2013/14 CFHI EXTRA Cross Jurisdiction Fellowship for their proposed intervention project titled: *Evidence-informed Practice Change – Increasing Breastfeeding Exclusivity in Hospital*. The team is one of nine selected from across the country to participate in the 14-month program.

“It is so important for our two organizations to be working together towards the common goal of improving breastfeeding exclusivity since we each work to support patients at different stages of their breastfeeding experience,” said Petruskavich. “Working in partnership will allow us to develop a program for improving breastfeeding rates and the health of our community members.”

Exclusive breastfeeding is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as “no food or drink other than breast milk”. Breast milk is recommended by the WHO, Canadian Paediatric Society and Health Canada as the food of choice for the first six months of life. Exclusive breastfeeding is linked to both short term and long term health benefits for mother and child, including: a lower risk of respiratory tract infections, gastrointestinal infections, and obesity, as well as a decreased risk of chronic disease for baby and a reduced risk of maternal breast and ovarian cancer and bone fractures from osteoporosis for mom. In 2012/13, 8,911 mothers delivered their babies at Trillium Health Partners.

“Currently, 55 per cent of mothers go home breastfeeding their healthy, full-term babies from Trillium Health Partners. Through this program, we hope to increase that number by at least five per cent by June of 2014,” said Petruskavich. “This will help us to achieve our goal of 75 per cent by 2015.”

“Our work with Trillium Health Partners on this fellowship will help ease the transition for mothers as they adjust to life with their new babies,” said Dr. Megan Ward, Associate Medical Officer of Health, Peel Public Health. “By working together, we can give new mothers the supports they need to be successful when breastfeeding before they leave the hospital and when they get home. This in turn, may help them breastfeed longer, which will help make a positive impact on the lifelong health and nutrition of their babies.”

The project will focus on the prenatal, hospital and early postpartum programs and services offered by Peel Public Health and Trillium Health Partners with an emphasis on mothers who have had caesarean sections. The fellowship will analyze the root causes of supplemental feeding in hospital, and implement and evaluate interventions to increase breastfeeding exclusivity at hospital discharge and in the first two weeks of life.

The project fellowship is being sponsored by Michelle DiEmanuele, President and CEO of Trillium Health Partners and Dr. David Mowat, Medical Officer of Health, Peel Public Health. An Advisory Council, made up of a number of doctors and health professionals from both organizations, are supporting the work of the fellowship.

About Trillium Health Partners

Trillium Health Partners is one of the largest community-based acute care facilities in Canada. Comprised of Credit Valley Hospital, the Mississauga Hospital and the Queensway Health Centre, Trillium Health Partners serves the growing and diverse populations of Mississauga, West Toronto and surrounding communities. Trillium Health Partners is a teaching hospital affiliated with the University of Toronto and is an associate member of the Toronto Academic Health Science Network. Over 9,000 babies are born at Trillium Health Partners every year.

About Peel Region

The Regional Municipality of Peel was incorporated in 1974 on the principle that certain community and infrastructure services are most cost-effectively administered over a larger geographic area. The Region of Peel serves more than 1.3 million people and approximately 88,000 businesses in the cities of Brampton and Mississauga and the town of Caledon. For more information on the Region of Peel, call 905-791-7800 or visit peelregion.ca.

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