

## Media Release

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### **KGH's intensive care unit ranks second in international nutrition audit**

A second-place ranking in an international nutrition audit means Kingston General Hospital's intensive care unit (ICU) will now be one of the standards against which all others are measured.

KGH was recently awarded a "Best of the Best" award for its showing among 157 ICUs in 22 countries in this survey designed to improve upon nutrition therapies provided to critically ill patients in intensive care units around the world.

In a project led by Naomi Jones at KGH's Clinical Evaluation Research Unit, the survey collected data on the clinical condition, nutritional status, nutrition practices and outcomes of almost 3,000 critically ill patients beginning in May 2008. Participants collected data over a three-month period and catalogued the results online using a web-based data collection tool.

Participants were able to compare their performance against ICUs within their own country or region, against all ICUs in the database as well as against recommendations outlined in *The Canadian Clinical Practice Guidelines for Nutrition Support in Mechanically Ventilated Critically Ill Patients*, authored by Clinical Evaluation Research Unit Director Dr. Daren Heyland, research dietitian Rupinder Dhaliwal and KGH Critical Care Program Medical Director Dr. John Drover.

Conducting surveys of nutrition therapy in ICUs, explains Dr. Heyland, helps define gaps between these recommendations and what actually occurs. "The prevalence of malnutrition is high in ICUs and this has a negative impact on clinical outcomes. By providing patients with the right nutrition, we can improve wound healing, boost their immune system and help their digestive system work more effectively which, together, favourably influence the chance of surviving critical illness."

Attaining a "Best of the Best" rating among 157 ICUs is a significant achievement for KGH, says Dr. Heyland, a Professor of Medicine and Epidemiology at Queen's University. He credits much of the improvement to increased dietitian staffing in the ICU. "By allocating more dietary resources directly inside the ICU, we are able to better educate staff about the importance of nutrition in treating

critically ill patients. We've shown through this survey and others that improved nutrition can make a difference in patient outcomes."

"It is exciting and gratifying to learn that KGH is among the centres leading the world in nutrition therapy in the intensive care unit," says Dr Drover, who is also an Associate Professor at Queen's University. "Participation in these nutrition surveys have helped us raise awareness and understanding of the importance of nutrition in critically ill patients and how improved nutrition may lead to fewer complications and improved survival."

*Affiliated with Queen's University, Kingston General Hospital is a 456-bed specialized teaching and research hospital that serves more than 500,000 people in southeastern Ontario and is the community hospital for the Kingston area. KGH provides an array of specialized acute and ambulatory clinical services including trauma, cardiac, stroke, pediatric, perinatal, end stage renal and stem cell transplants. Home to the Cancer Centre of Southeastern Ontario, KGH is dedicated to compassionate, high quality health care in a dynamic academic research environment. It features a robust research program and provides hands-on skill training for close to 1,900 health-care students annually. For more information, visit the web site at <http://www.kgh.on.ca> .*

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