



ATTENTION: NEWS / HEALTH / NUTRITION EDITORS

Celebrating Nutrition Month: International Nutrition Survey ranks Trillium Health Centre as one of the “Best of the Best” in ICU Nutrition

Mississauga/West Toronto - March is Nutrition Month, a time when nutritionists remind Canadians of the importance of nutrition to their health and well-being. But what about seriously ill patients who can't feed themselves? They rely on hospital dietitians to provide the vital sustenance that helps them heal, even while they sleep.

At Trillium Health Centre, dietitians are working with physicians and nurses in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) to provide the best possible nutrition program, based on the growing body of medical evidence, for the very sick patients who are being cared for in the ICU.

Trillium Health Centre's Intensive Care Unit (ICU) team was recently awarded a “Best of the Best” Outstanding Achievement from the International Nutrition Survey 2008.

Trillium's ICU was ranked 7th among 167 ICUs from 22 countries based upon a survey assessing the nutritional status, ICU nutrition practices and outcomes of critically ill patients.

“This is well-deserved recognition for the Nutrition and ICU team,” said Patti Cochrane, VP, patient services and quality. “The ‘Best of the Best’ award from Critical Care Nutrition means that Trillium now serves as a standard for all other ICUs in the world and clearly demonstrates Trillium's culture of innovation and patient safety.”

Pursuing best practices for Nutrition in the ICU

Trillium's ICU has been formally participating in studies of nutrition therapies since 2001. This has enabled the team to evaluate its performance against the recommendations outlined in the The Canadian Clinical Practice Guidelines for Nutrition Support in Mechanically Ventilated Critically Ill patients. The importance of nutrition in this patient population motivates Trillium's ICU team to participate in the continuous quality improvement initiative. For example, use of award winning order sets ensures that every critically ill patient is assessed for nutrition upon admission, which enables patients to receive some form of nutrition as soon as possible, often on the very first day.

“In our ICU, we have great teamwork with our intensivists, nurses, and allied health staff,” said Vera Jovanovic, Clinical Dietitian in Trillium's Intensive Care Unit. “As a team, there is a true awareness and appreciation of the importance of nutrition in patient care. Collaboration and communication are key components in providing this aspect of care.”

“This award is further evidence of the quality and passion for which Trillium’s clinical teams are known,” said Janet Davidson, O.C., Trillium’s president and CEO. “Improving the patient’s experience and outcome is what it’s all about. It is satisfaction enough to see patients benefit from our efforts, but this kind of important external recognition is something for which our ICU team can be justly proud.”

Every patient is different

Critically ill patients are highly stressed and nutritional requirements are often elevated, despite the fact that the patients are too sick to eat when they need nutrition most.

“Providing adequate and appropriate nutrition has a positive impact on clinical outcomes,” says Trillium intensivist Dr. Neil Antman. “Giving the right nutrition at the right time improves wound healing, supports the immune system and maintains gut integrity.”

Trillium’s ICU team continuously evaluates how best to feed patients. They assess whether the patient can eat, the need for supplements or specialized formulas, the need for special tubes to infuse nutrition into the stomach or intestine and, occasionally, whether the patient is best served by artificial nutrient solutions administered directly into the bloodstream. Each patient is different and there are times when it is particularly challenging meeting nutritional needs. For example in a seriously wounded patient with kidney failure, sufficient protein intake is important for wound healing but too much protein stresses the failing kidneys. The Nutrition and ICU team collaborates daily striving for optimal patient nutrition.

“The “Best of the Best” award recognizes how well Trillium’s ICU team works in meeting its daily challenges.

About the Critical Care Nutrition’s “Best of the Best” Award

Kingston General Hospital’s Clinical Evaluation Research Unit conducted a survey collecting 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.

Participating hospitals were able to compare their performance with ICUs in their own country or region and with all ICUs in the global database. This survey was part of an ongoing quality improvement (QI) initiative, aiming to compare current nutrition practices in ICUs within and across different countries. The aim of the initiative is to illuminate differences, highlight strengths and weaknesses, and hopefully lead to practice improvements.

“Out of 167 ICUs around the world that participated in our International Nutrition survey, 82 sites were eligible for consideration for the ‘Best of the Best’ award, and Trillium was ranked 7th in this competition. You are to be commended for your outstanding accomplishments,” wrote Dr. Daren K. Heyland, Professor of Medicine at Queen’s University and Director, Clinical Evaluation Research Unit, Kingston General Hospital, in his letter announcing the award on behalf of Critical Care Nutrition. For more information, visit www.criticalcarenutrition.com.

About Trillium Health Centre

Trillium Health Centre is one of Canada's largest hospitals with regional tertiary programs in advanced cardiac, vascular, stroke, neurosciences, orthopaedic, and sexual assault and domestic violence services. Housing a model ambulatory care centre and the largest free standing day surgery centre in North America, Trillium serves over one million residents in Peel and West Toronto and from other communities across Ontario. With the continued support of the Trillium Health Centre Foundation, the hospital's fundraising arm, the two-site facility is attracting international attention for its innovative approach to providing safe, high quality health care services and has received numerous national awards for quality and innovation.

For more information on Trillium Health Centre, visit: www.trilliumhealthcentre.org.



Demonstrating the teamwork that makes Trillium's ICU Nutrition program one of the 'Best of the Best' in the world.

From left to right, Trillium intensivist Dr. Neil Antman, ICU nurse Victorine Bate RN, and clinical dietitian Vera Jovanovic, RD, CNSD consult on a patient's nutritional needs at the Intensive Care Unit at Trillium Health Centre - Mississauga.

Photo courtesy of Trillium Health Centre -A high resolution version of this photo is available on request.

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