

MEDIA RELEASE

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Nurses Boost Obstetric Experience

Nurses at the Strathroy site of the Middlesex Hospital Alliance (MHA) are boosting their obstetric experience – in the classroom and in the delivery room – through a learning opportunity provided at London Health Sciences Centre (LHSC).

“Strathroy delivered more than 200 babies in 2006 – for us that’s a bit of a mini baby-boom,” Nancy Maltby-Webster, COO at MHA, says. “Even with that, because of the nature of the birth experience and nurses’ shifts, they haven’t all had as much ‘hands-on’ experience in the delivery room that a department such as busy LSHC can offer.”

While all of the Strathroy OB nurses are fully qualified, the teaching module at LHSC provides an opportunity for them to enhance their knowledge and gain more varied experience in labour and delivery. “As a teaching centre with an active obstetrics department, LHSC may have as many as five to six deliveries per nursing shift, so the MHA nurses have an opportunity to learn from many different deliveries,” Maltby-Webster, says.

This past summer three nurses – Karen Laur, Kayla Thorne and Candy Arsenault – attended the classroom teaching opportunity, followed by a two week placement on the OB Labour and Delivery Unit of LHSC. These nurses had already completed SMGH unit orientation to obstetrics and had varying levels of exposure to labour and delivery experiences. Obstetric volumes have not been very high at Strathroy over the last decade, but that is changing and the nurses wanted more clinical experiences to maintain their competency. Four other nurses will be doing the same this month.

At the LHSC, this initiative was arranged by Nancy Watts, Clinical Educator of the Obstetrics Program LHSC, with support of Ellen Rosen, VP Women's Health Services. Says Rosen, "The program is also a benefit to LHSC because Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital is an excellent option for regional low risk deliveries, allowing LHSC to focus their resources on higher risk deliveries."