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## MEDIA RELEASE

*For Immediate Release*

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### *Busy Strathroy Hospital is more Efficient*

Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital is a busy spot these days – and that’s good news. “We have more clinics and programs than ever before, our surgical volumes are up almost 20 percent over last year and well over 200 newborn babies delivered this year. It all contributes to a very busy and efficient site,” Mike Mazza, CEO of Middlesex Hospital Alliance (MHA) says.

The busy hospital is not an indication of people in Strathroy getting sick more often – but of their ability to access outpatient clinics available to improve health, Mazza says. For example, the successful MHA Eye Care Program, headed by ophthalmologist Dr. Michael Rogelstad has performed 150 more cataract surgeries this year than last. Additionally, the new MHA Hip & Knee Joint Replacement Program is accounting for some of the increased surgical volume. And, of the 2850 surgical procedures projected to be performed this year (MHA’s year end is March 31), over 85 percent of them are same day procedures.

“It’s additionally good news for a small hospital like ours, that we have not actually increased operating room time,” Mazza says. “Instead, the increases have been managed through improving efficiencies.” And, more good news – none of this has come at the expense of patient satisfaction. Indeed, excellent patient satisfaction is reported for most day surgeries.

Surgeries have been made more efficient through streamlining procedures for patients, but also by adding an automatic washer/disinfector – basically an instrument decontamination machine that means clean instruments are ready to go faster. Operating rooms are being turned over to accept the next patient faster, and in some cases procedures are less invasive than in the past. Certainly, cataract surgery is one example of this, where a patient routinely spent four days in hospital, instead of today’s four hours.

The efficiency in practices and procedures is a noticeable benefit for patients too. For example, pre-admission procedures are streamlined, so that many day surgery patients need arrive only one hour prior to their procedures. “There’s less time sitting and waiting, for patients having day surgery,” Mazza says. Also beneficial for patients is a reduction in the number of visits to the hospital before a procedure.

Pre and post-operative procedures are designed to ensure patient safety and comfort, too. For instance, a cataract patient is greeted at the main door of the hospital, usually by a volunteer, and shown to the cataract surgery waiting area. After a brief wait, the procedure is performed and the patient has a short post-operative wait time. Then, the patient is contacted at home with a follow-up phone call from MHA staff or a volunteer within a few hours after the surgery, followed by an ophthalmology appointment the next day.

These same protocols are also being developed for the new MHA Hip & Knee Joint Replacement Program – limiting the required number of pre-admission visits and following up with patients after discharge. Hips and knees patients generally spend from three to four days in hospital following surgery and have reported satisfaction with care received from the entire team – including nursing, physiotherapy and diagnostic imaging – and support staff. The Arthritis Society and CCAC provide support and preparation for the patient’s return home. Says CEO Mike Mazza, “It’s important to know that our procedures are efficient but also beneficial to patients.”