

February 1, 2007

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MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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More For Women's Health at MHA

Middlesex Hospital Alliance adds to its enhancement of women's health services with a new colposcopy clinic at the Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital (SMGH) site.

"This new clinic contributes to our ongoing aim to enhance the women's health services that are available at Middlesex Hospital Alliance," Mike Mazza, CEO of Middlesex Hospital Alliance (MHA) says. The recent renovation and expansion to the ambulatory care section of the Strathroy site has provided the necessary space for more clinics, such as this. "The colposcopy clinic is providing an additional local service for women's health so that they need not travel for example to London, for this procedure," Mazza says.

Colposcopy is a visual examination - somewhat like endoscopy or orthoscopy - using a low-power microscope. A colposcopy is the first follow-up diagnostic test that is done to determine the presence of possible abnormalities found in Pap smears. The microscope intensifies the cervix 10-40 times its normal size and the procedure can be used to identify or rule out the existence of any pre-cancerous conditions in the cervical tissue. It is a relatively simple and painless procedure that takes approximately fifteen minutes.

The colposcopy clinic will be led by Dr. Robert Di Cecco, a London-based obstetrician/gynecologist who will be at the Strathroy site once a month to start, and more frequently if referrals require it. Women will be referred by their family physicians for colposcopy. Staff working in the colposcopy clinic will be trained to assist Dr. Di Cecco and with the operation of the colposcope.

Middlesex Hospital Alliance offers many medical services and clinics especially for women. For instance, Bone Mineral Densitometry (BMD), is a simple test used primarily to diagnose osteoporosis and mammography, a procedure that can detect abnormalities in the breast, are two diagnostic procedures that are both available at the Strathroy site. And, MHA is one of several sites in the province operating the Ontario Breast Screening Program. This initiative aims to reduce breast cancer deaths in Ontario women over 50 years through an organized breast screening program where women can either make their own appointment or be referred by their family physician. Additionally, the MHA Family Practice Obstetrics Clinic - also known as the Mom & Baby clinic - is now located in the new Ambulatory Care Centre at Strathroy site. The birth facilities at SMGH include family-centred birthing rooms, a labour room and a whirlpool tub. There is also telemetry equipment that allows a woman in labour to walk around while being monitored.

Mike Mazza, CEO of Middlesex Hospital Alliance says, "We are committed to enhancing the health services available to women. A local woman should be able to access basic services at her local community hospital."