

March 27, 2007

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MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Excellent Wait Times for Middlesex Hospital Alliance

A recently revised and updated Ministry of Health Wait Times website shows that Middlesex Hospital Alliance (MHA) is performing well with services targeted by the province's Wait Times strategy - reporting some of the best times in the province.

"We are very pleased to see that our wait times are among the best in the province for the health services that we provide," Middlesex Hospital Alliance CEO Mike Mazza says. This is a strong objective indicator of how hospitals in smaller urban centres can provide quality care to their residents, Mazza says.

The services provided by Middlesex Hospital Alliance that are monitored by the province's strategy are Total Joint Replacements (TJR) - for both Hips and Knees - and Cataract surgery.

The Wait Times strategy of the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care targets six major health services. The strategy is designed to increase access and reduce wait times for these services, including significantly increasing the number of procedures to reduce the backlog that has developed over the last decade. According to the Ministry, patients can use the Wait Times information reported on the Ministry web site system "to make informed choices about where to be referred for quicker service."

For Total Joint Replacement Hip surgery, MHA has the second fastest wait time in the Local Health Integration Network (LHIN), along with St. Thomas, and is an impressive sixth overall in the province. For Total Joint Replacement Knee surgery, MHA has the third fastest wait time in the LHINs, and for cataract surgery, MHA is ninth in the province.

The MHA Hips & Knees Program began last fall at the Strathroy site of MHA when the Ministry approved MHA to perform 150 total joint replacement surgeries over the next year, according to Mazza. At that time, Mazza said that Hips and Knees would be an important program at MHA in the near future. "This is exactly the sort of niche program that community hospitals can and will operate successfully and efficiently. Our new Hips and Knees Program will play a major future role at Middlesex Hospital Alliance."

The Eye Care program, specifically cataract surgery, is operated under ophthalmologist Dr. Rogelstad's direction – and with the surgical and ambulatory care teams at Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital. The program has implemented new technologies and procedures that have reduced the time it takes to complete cataract surgery, including more efficient patient flow, and a reduction of duplicated supplies, such as streamlined sterile packs at the surgical site. And, in a partnership with multinational company Bausch & Lomb, MHA provides the top of the line lens for cataract surgery- at no extra cost to consumers. MHA is the only hospital in the area to do so. "This partnership allows us the opportunity to provide the best upgraded technologies as our standard of care," CEO Mike Mazza says.

The Middlesex Hospital Alliance cataract surgery program has consistently provided excellent care, quickly - maintaining one of the shortest average waiting times in the region, since the Wait Times strategy started.

When the CT Scanner begins operation in May at the Strathroy site, MHA will be providing three of six health services targeted by the Wait Times strategy. Says Mazza, "we support the Ministry's Wait Time strategy - it allows us to benchmark our own performance and importantly, it improves access to these health care services and allows clients to evaluate the centres that provide them."