



# THE ZINGER

Newsletter for the Deep River and District Hospital  
Four Seasons Lodge and North Renfrew Family Health Team

April 2020



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## COVID-19 INFORMATION

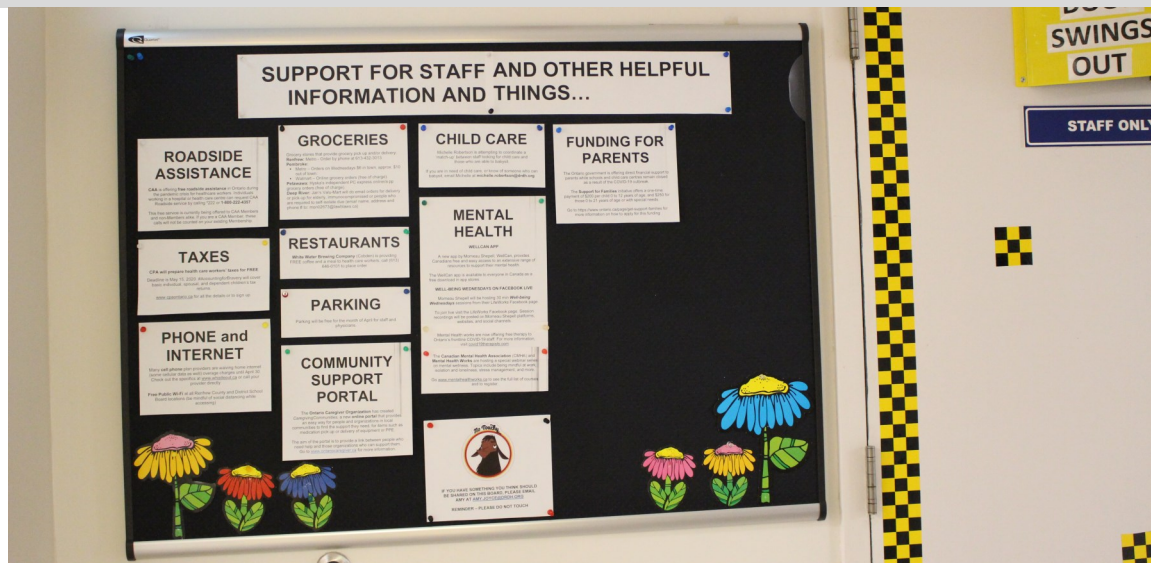
**INFORMATION FOR STAFF**

Please continue to refer to the daily emails from Janna Hotson, or other memos, for the latest information, updates, and direction related to COVID-19. With the situation evolving so rapidly, any COVID-19 related information in this Zinger may be incomplete or out of date.

These daily update emails are being saved on PolicyMedical for staff under Communications and Memos —> All Staff Memos —> 2020-2021.

## SUPPORT FOR STAFF AND OTHER HELPFUL INFORMATION AND THINGS...

An information bulletin board has been created for easy access to information on helpful items for staff. Items shared in daily email updates will be posted on this board, with the goal to have all the information in one place for quick



reference. Information such as free tax returns and discounts for healthcare workers will be posted here. The display board is appropriately titled, “Support for Staff and Other Helpful Information and Things...” and is located across from the locker rooms. If you know of any helpful information to go on the board, please email Amy at [amy.joyce@drdh.org](mailto:amy.joyce@drdh.org).

## *Memo—Uniform and Clothing Policy*

Effective April 8, ALL direct patient care staff, regardless of position or department, physicians, and environmental support services staff (laundry & housekeeping) are expected to arrive at work in “street clothes” and change into work attire at work. At the end of your shift, you must change into your “street clothes” to go home. This includes footwear. Given transmission risks, it is no longer appropriate to wear your uniform and work shoes directly home. Directions for all staff are as follows:

- **Bring your work clothes in a washable bag and change into these clean, dedicated work clothes and shoes at work.**
- **Before you leave work, change into clean, street clothes and put your dirty clothes into your washable bag.**
- **Place your work shoes in a plastic bag and leave them inside your locker.**
- **Wash your hands after handling shoes and work clothes.**
- **When you arrive home, leave your shoes in the garage or outside the door, shower immediately and wash your clothes and the bag they were in.**

In addition to the above, ALL staff at DRDH need to take proactive steps to minimize the risk of spread. All DRDH staff will be abiding by the following directions:

- **Remove all watches and hand/arm jewelry before work, do not wear nail polish, and bring your lunch and snacks in a washable bag.**
- **Sanitize your phone, ID badge, and glasses.**
- **Put your work dishes, water bottle, coffee cup etc. through the dishwasher.**
- **When you arrive home, leave your shoes in the garage or outside the door.**
- **It is highly encouraged that you shower before you interact with your family.**

This direction applies to all staff and is for the protection of you, your family and the community.

## *Memo—Laundry Safety*

Please ensure that only appropriate laundry is being placed in the laundry hampers (this includes: bed linens, soaker pads, bibs, patient gowns and patient/resident clothing). Other items such as disposable soaker pads, incontinence products, gloves, etc. pose a health and safety risk to our laundry workers and also may cause damage to the laundry machinery. If you have any questions regarding what is appropriate to go into a laundry hamper please see Ian Wilkie.

## *Memo—Pre-Registration for Out-Patients*

To reduce the areas patients have to access while they are in the organization, we have moved to pre-registration for out-patients. When speaking with the patient on the phone, book their appointment. Ask the patient if they have ever had an appointment here or been a patient in our Emergency Department. If they have, no further action is required. If they have not, please process with their registration.

If you do not have access to central registration, when appointment booking is complete, please transfer the patient to Registration (ext. 0) to be pre-registered. If you have access, please register the patient after their appointment is booked.

STAFFING UPDATES

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Sarah Harder



Megan Lisk



Carmen Walker



Amanda Kobylanski

We are pleased to welcome five new members to the team this month. **Sarah, Megan, and Carmen** will all be working as Clinical Care Assistants, **Amanda** is a Registered Nurse, and **Owen** (below) is the Executive Director for the Family Health Team. We are also pleased to welcome back **Kirstyn Aranyosi** as a Food Services Student. Clinical Care Assistants are upper year Nursing (RN) students who will work as unregulated health professionals (similar to PSWs) although they have an expanded scope to perform delegated medical acts. These Clinical Care Assistants will be added clinical support to care for anticipated increased patient needs resulting from COVID-19.

FAMILY HEALTH TEAM WELCOMES NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This month, we welcome Owen Partridge to our organization as Executive Director of the North Renfrew Family Health Team.

Owen brings a wealth of experience to our organization. Owen began his role on Thursday, April 16, 2020.

Please join us in welcoming Owen to the organization.

welcome



Owen Partridge

BABY'S FIRST EASTER



Because we could all use a smile right now, please enjoy this adorable picture of baby Louis Willard really getting into the Easter spirit.



SPRING HAS SPRUNG!

The first blooms of the season at DRDH were spotted along the front of the building on April 7!



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## Four Seasons Lodge Launches New Program to Bring Residents a Taste of Home



The Four Seasons Lodge

Share a Resident's favourite or famous recipe with us, along with a message about the special memories it invokes, and we will make the recipe together with the Residents to bring them a **Taste of Home** during this time of social distancing.

The Four Seasons Lodge Long-Term Care Home is launching a new program to bring Residents a "*Taste of Home*" during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Food can be used to comfort us while we are spending more time at home, whether it be gathering around the table with those in your household, routinely preparing

meals each day, or preparing those special recipes that would normally be overlooked for a quick meal when we were rushed for time. Those who are preparing meals at home may want to bring something in for our Residents to enjoy, which is a kind gesture, but could put our Residents and staff at risk. Visiting and care package restrictions remain in place to protect everyone at the Four Seasons Lodge from exposure to COVID-19.

With the safety of our Residents in mind, the team at the Four Seasons Lodge is launching the *Taste of Home* program to prepare special recipes with our Residents during this time of social distancing and isolation.

The Four Seasons Lodge is asking families and friends of Residents to please share recipes (via email to [allison.lepack@drdh.org](mailto:allison.lepack@drdh.org)) so that our staff can make them together with the Residents. Recipes can be something you know is a favourite that a Resident might be missing at this time, or a special recipe that a Resident is famous for making. Along with the recipe, please include a message about the memories you have surrounding the recipe that we can share.

The *Taste of Home* program aims to share Residents' memories of home, community, and connections to their loved ones in order to help mitigate the effects of isolation that many of us are feeling during this time. Making recipes together with our staff will be a way for Residents to enjoy and share comfort foods, as well as stories and memories, safely during this pandemic. The *Taste of Home* program also offers an opportunity for families, friends, and support persons to participate in an activity with Residents from afar to show their love and support, without the risk of exposure to the COVID-19 virus.

For those who want to participate in the program but are unable to share stories or recipes, donations can be made on behalf of a Resident to the Four Seasons Lodge Recreation Program or the Deep River and Area Food Bank (by mail to 117 Banting Drive, Deep River, ON, K0J 1P0) and a card will be shared with the Resident on your behalf.

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## COVID-19 Precautions Lead to Changes in Laboratory and X-Ray Services

On the afternoon of March 30, the County of Renfrew declared a state of emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. With official laboratory confirmation that COVID-19 is in our community, and that it is being transmitted locally, the Deep River and District Hospital is



implementing the following additional measures to help limit the virus' spread:

- **The Diagnostic Imaging Department will only be doing out-patient X-Rays by appointment Monday – Friday, between the hours of 9:00 am and 11:00 am. Family Doctors or Nurse Practitioners will fax requisitions to the Diagnostic Imaging Department, who will then call patients to schedule an appointment.**
- **The Laboratory will only be completing blood tests by appointment on Mondays and Tuesdays, between the hours of 7:30 am and 11:00 am. To book your next blood work appointment at the Deep River and District Hospital, please call 613-584-3333 ext. 7850.**

All patients coming to the organization for a laboratory or X-Ray appointment will need to enter through the Emergency Department entrance and screening station.

The best way to prevent further spread of COVID-19 is to follow social distancing instructions and stay 2 metres away from others wherever possible. Avoid all non-essential trips in the community, and thoroughly wash your hands often. Don't forget to clean your cell phone and disinfect other frequently touched objects and surfaces.

If you think you may have COVID-19 symptoms or have been in close contact with someone who has it, first self isolate and then use [Ontario's Self-Assessment Tool](#) to see if you need to seek further care. If you have a health concern (including, but not limited to, a concern related to COVID-19) and need to speak to a physician, you should first call your family physician's office. If you do not have a family physician, or cannot access your family physician, call the Renfrew County Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre at **1-844-727-6404**.

## NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK—APRIL 19-25

It's time to applaud our volunteers!

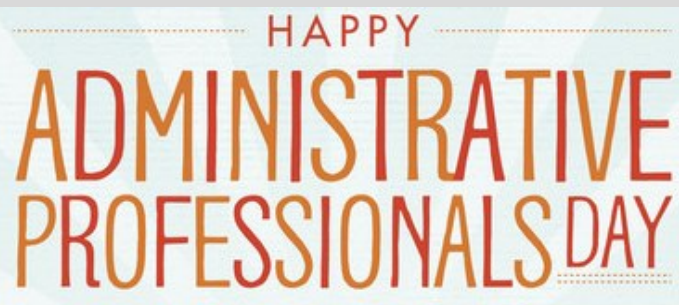
On behalf of everyone at the Deep River and District Hospital, Four Seasons Lodge, and North Renfrew Family Health Team, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to the many volunteers we have at our organization.

We appreciate all the work contributed by members of the Auxiliary, the Foundation, the Board of Directors, the Patient and Family Advisory Council, Patient/Resident Representatives, and many other volunteers.

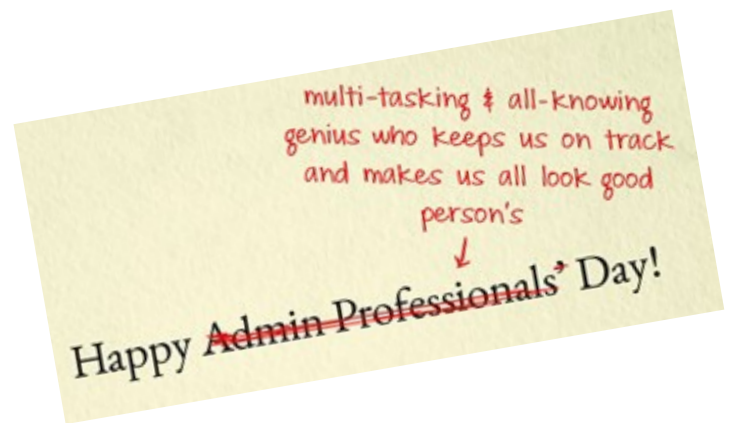
We can't wait until the time when it is safe to welcome all our volunteers back - we miss you! Please know we are thinking of you all during these tough times and hope you all are staying well.



## ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS DAY—APRIL 22



Administrative Professionals Day took place on April 22. Administrative professionals are essential for the smooth running of our organization (*and of course the publication of this Zinger*). Thank you to my fellow administrative professionals for everything that you do!



## MEDICAL LABORATORY WEEK—APRIL 26-MAY 2

Medical laboratory professionals are a crucial part of the health care team. They are behind every lab test result, providing vital information to guide diagnosis and patient care.

National Medical Laboratory Week, which is from April 26—May 2 this year, is a week where medical laboratory professionals are recognized and celebrated for their role in health care!

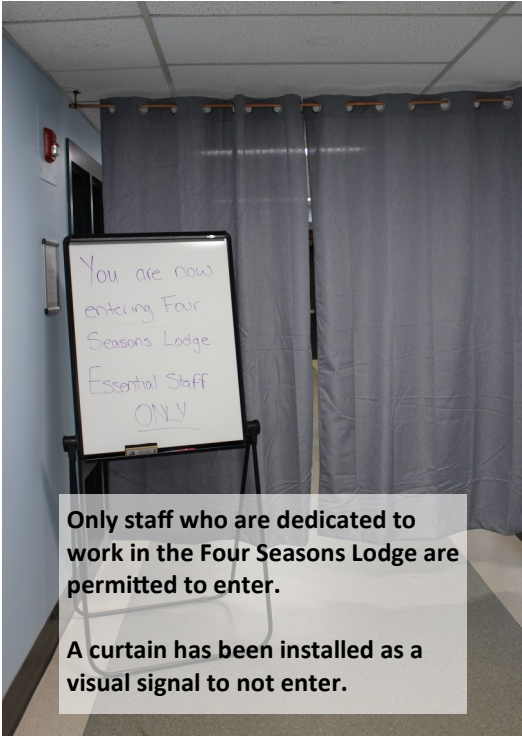
 A graphic with a background of four colored squares: green (top-left), blue (top-right), blue (bottom-left), and orange (bottom-right). The text 'HAPPY NATIONAL MEDICAL LABORATORY WEEK' is written in white capital letters across the center of the squares.
 

HAPPY  
NATIONAL MEDICAL  
LABORATORY WEEK



KEEPING OUR RESIDENTS SAFE

In order to minimize the risk of exposure to COVID-19 for our Residents, a number of changes have been implemented in the Four Seasons Lodge. Staff are being dedicated to work only in the Four Seasons Lodge, when normally they may have worked in different areas across the organization. A separate entrance, screening station, change room, and break room have been created for Four Seasons Lodge staff. The Four Seasons Lodge will now have a dedicated team who will be providing all the care and support the Residents will need. Although these measures will be a major adjustment for many staff, they will provide the best protection and safety possible for our most vulnerable. Thank you to everyone who has worked hard to ensure these measures are in place to protect our Residents.



**Only staff who are dedicated to work in the Four Seasons Lodge are permitted to enter.**  
**A curtain has been installed as a visual signal to not enter.**



**The Hair Salon has been repurposed into a temporary change room for dedicated Four Seasons Lodge Staff.**



**The Sunroom has been repurposed into a temporary break room for Four Seasons Lodge staff.**



**Four Seasons Lodge staff now enter through a separate entrance and screening station (via the Sunroom at the back of the building).**

FOUR SEASONS LODGE NEWS



**VISITING AT A DISTANCE!**

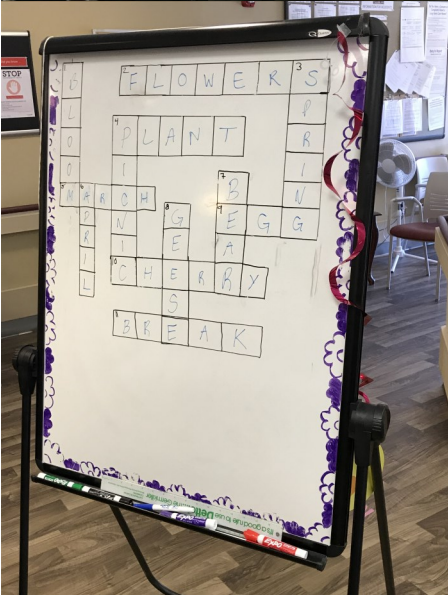
Visiting restrictions may be in effect, but Residents at the Four Seasons Lodge are still finding ways to connect with their loved ones while keeping each other safe.

**QUARAN-CUTS**

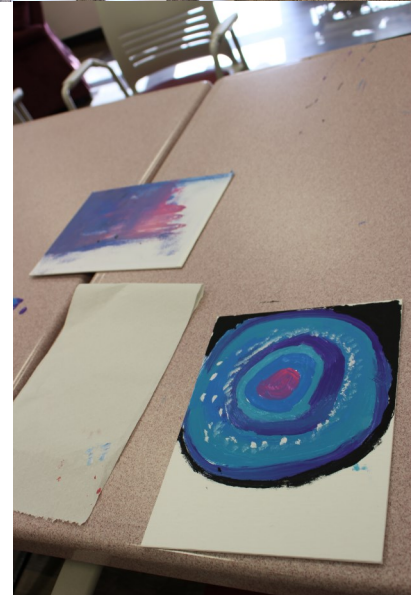
Due to the restrictions on visitors during the pandemic, our usual hairdresser Joan has not been able to come in for her regular appointments with the residents. Luckily Kelsie Fischer, who has been hired as an administrative assistant for the Emergency Operations Centre, is also a hair stylist apprentice. Kelsie put her skills to the test this month providing trims to many of our residents, and she ended up with some happy customers—everyone looks great!



FOUR SEASONS LODGE NEWS



Residents are keeping themselves busy with a number of activities while they have been staying home over the last little while. Pictured above, from left to right, are Residents doing at-home manicures, baking cookies, and trying their hand at bowling in the hallway! Pictured to the right and bottom-right was the Super Moon painting on April 7. Staff member Julia Okum-Fraser shared facts about the super moon while Residents channeled their creativity into painting it!



## Keep Primary Care your Primary Call



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During the current pandemic, family doctors and other primary care providers are making the switch to virtual appointments to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 for both themselves and their patients.

**If you have a family doctor or nurse practitioner, please keep them as your primary point of contact for your health care needs.** Family doctors and Nurse Practitioners in Deep River remain available to connect with their patients and ensure continuity of care, albeit remotely.

Patients should work with their primary care provider to maintain their health and well-being during this time. An important part of being resilient and enabling your immune system to fight off COVID-19 is maintaining good health and continuing to appropriately manage any conditions you may have. Stay on top of your well-being and do not let conditions worsen.

If you do not have a primary care provider, or you are unable to access your primary care provider, you can call the new **Renfrew County Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre (RC VTAC)** at **1-844-727-6404** to connect with care and support from a nurse practitioner, family physician and/or community paramedic. Since the launch of the RC VTAC at the end of March, the service has already been successful in strengthening access to primary care and reducing the demand on Emergency Departments.

If you require emergency care and visit the Emergency Department, please remember to bring all your medications with you. Ensuring you have your medications on-hand assists our team in providing care, and also helps address national medication shortages.

## DRDH Reminds Community to Seek Care if Needed

As the community continues to follow physical distancing recommendations from Public Health, the Deep River and District Hospital and North Renfrew Family Health Team (DRDH) want to remind our community to **continue to come to the hospital, or contact your primary care provider, if you have a serious health concern.**

“It is important that everyone continue to take the recommendations to stay home seriously, but it should not come at the cost of your health or safety”, said Janna Hotson, Chief Nursing Executive and COVID-19 response team lead. If you are in need of urgent medical attention, please go to your nearest Emergency Department or call 911 right away.

The Emergency Department remains open to provide emergency care. If you require a visit to the Emergency Department, please remember to bring all your medications with you. Staff at DRDH are taking every necessary precaution to ensure the health and safety of our patients, residents, staff and community. Our staff and medical team are ready and able to care for patients in the safest way possible.

Family doctors and nurse practitioners in Deep River also remain available to connect with their patients at this time, albeit remotely. If you do not have a primary care provider, or you are unable to access your primary care provider, you can call the new Renfrew County Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre (RC VTAC) at 1-844-727-6404 to connect with care and support from a nurse practitioner, family physician and/or community paramedic.

“A delay in seeking care could have a lasting impact on the outcome of your treatment”, said Dr. Kathryn Kipp, Chief of Staff at the Deep River and District Hospital. Some hospitals in our region have shared that when patients are presenting to their Emergency Departments, they are sicker than is expected normally. Some patients are only coming in to be seen after their symptoms have been around for longer than they would usually see.

There are a number of programs and services at DRDH that continue to run and care for patients in need, in person as well as virtually. For example, diabetes care, telemedicine, and primary care continue to be offered through phone or video appointments. In addition, out-patient laboratory and X-Ray services remain available by appointment. It is important for all patients to keep in touch with their family doctor or nurse practitioner, and other specialists who manage their care.

Maintaining your overall health and well-being is an important part of being resilient and enabling your immune system to fight off COVID-19. Stay on top of your well-being and please seek care if needed. DRDH is here for our community and is striving to provide an excellent, compassionate health care experience in the midst of these challenging times.



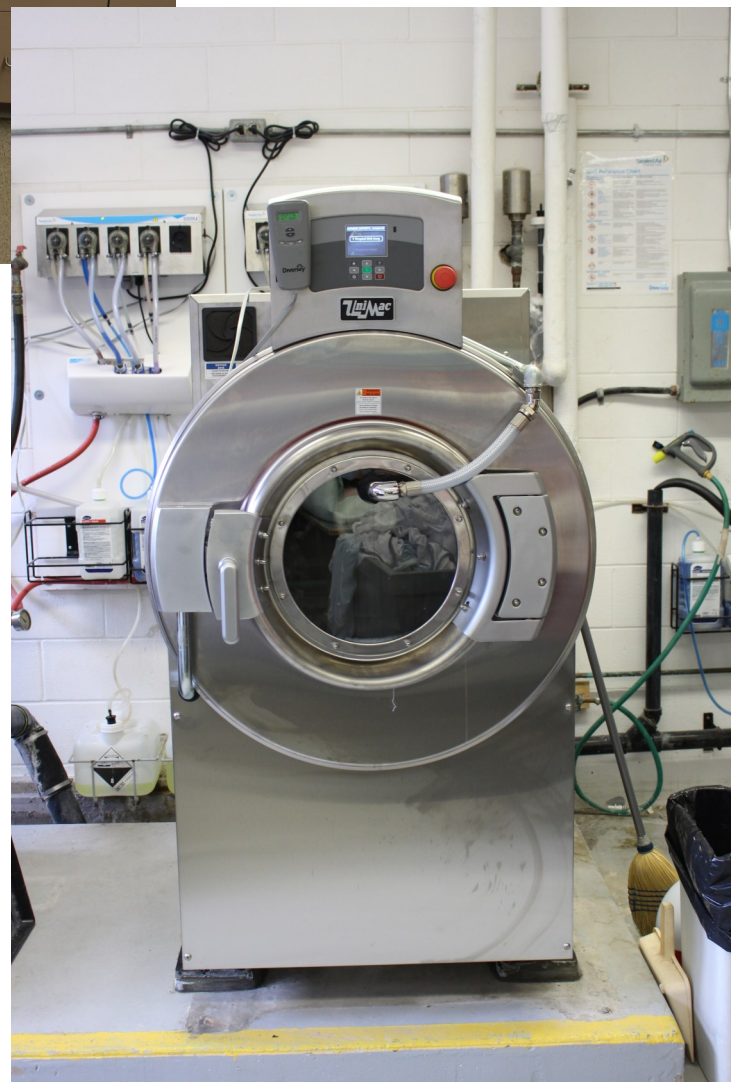
NEW APPLIANCES



On April 20, 2020 a new stove was installed in the kitchen in the Four Seasons Lodge. The residents and staff will be able to experience many baked treats and dinners thanks to the talents of staff and the new equipment.



On March 8, 2020 a shiny new washing machine was installed in the Laundry Department. This new machine is much more efficient than the previous one, which served us for many years before it reached end-of-life.





COMMUNITY SUPPORT

We have been receiving a tremendous amount of support from individuals and businesses in our wonderful community this last little while, and we are so thankful!

Although we may not be able to thank each person individually, please know that all of us at the organization are so grateful for the support being shown for healthcare workers during this time.

Pictured here is just a sampling of the support we have received this month!

## Memo—*Code Red* during COVID-19

In light of the changes in place for COVID-19, please note the following in the event of a Code Red:

- **If a “Code Red” is paged staff are NOT meet in the cafeteria/FHT waiting room**
  - ⇒ Staff not providing direct patient care should exit the organization at the closest exit that does not cross the fire zone and meet in the outside meeting space #1 by the garage in the staff parking area
  - ⇒ If the staff parking lot by the garage is unsafe as that part of the building is affected, staff will meet in the outside meet space #2 – the parking lot by the Family Health Team
  - ⇒ Ensure you maintain social distancing while outside
- **Staff providing direct patient/resident care and in support areas are to continue to follow the current process (All dedicated FSL staff are considered to be providing direct resident care)**
  - ⇒ Ensure windows and doors are closed
  - ⇒ Lighting is on in all areas/rooms
  - ⇒ Doors are flagged appropriately
  - ⇒ Patient/resident, staff & visitor census is counted
  - ⇒ Any other department specific tasks (shut on range hood, turn off oxygen value, etc.)
- **Fire response team, Admin-on-call and the CEO (during business hours) and the Medical RPN (after hours) are to attend the fire site.**
  - ⇒ If the fire site is in FSL, these staff are to go to the FSL door, open it and call out to staff to ensure there is an actual emergency PRIOR to entering FSL
  - ⇒ If an actual emergency (smoke, flames, etc.) these staff can enter the home without first donning appropriate PPE
  - ⇒ If not immediate emergency noted, these staff should first don appropriate PPE (gloves, gown and procedure mask)
  - ⇒ 2 PPE boxes has been placed in the FSL hallway entrance under the mailbox to ensure ease of access to PPE in an emergency. These boxes contain: a gown, a procedure mask, and 1 pair of large size gloves





## Memo—Care Packages and Deliveries

The following guidelines provide direction on what is permitted into the organization in relation to care packages and deliveries. These guidelines may be subject to change at any time, based on provincial, regional or local direction or risk assessment.

### Deliveries – Items:

- Patient/Resident essential care items will be permitted. These items are those that are needed for activities of daily living (i.e. hearing aids, glasses, dentures).
  - ⇒ All items must be placed in clear, sealed bag and left at the screening desk;
  - ⇒ Bagged items will be wiped down and delivered directly to the patients/residents' room; staff will wear gloves during handling of bags and items;
- Deliveries of minimal personal items will be permitted (i.e. tablets, cell phone, slippers, and personal clothes). All items must be able to be laundered or disinfected.
  - ⇒ All items will be placed in clear, sealed bag and left at screening desk;
  - ⇒ Bagged items will be disinfected and delivered directly to the patients/residents' room; staff will wear gloves during handling of bags and items;
  - ⇒ Laundry items will be separated and sent to be laundered prior to patient/resident use
  - ⇒ Personal Items Form will be updated with disclaimer that all items must be laundered or disinfected by staff when dropped off; organization is not liable for damages

### Deliveries – Food:

- Food items will be permitted, provided they are delivered directly from a health unit inspected facility or grocery store for residents & patients:
  - ⇒ Grocery store / purchased food items must be in original, sealed container;
- Delivery of donations of meals/food for staff must be from health inspected facility; food items must be in containers that can be disinfected.
- The Taste of Home program aims to ensure our residents have comfort foods that connect them to home and family.

## IN THE NEWS

On April 28, William, Janna, Richard and Dr. Kipp sat down with YourTV for an interview about COVID-19's local impact on our organization. Click on the photo to the right to watch the interview:



PROTECT YOUR FAMILIES

# COVID-19

## How to minimize risk to your family



### BEFORE WORK



Remove all watches and hand/arm jewellery



Take lunch and snacks in a washable bag



Have a change of clothes in a washable bag



Don't wear nail polish, and wash your hands often

### AT WORK



Change into clean, dedicated work clothes



Sanitize your stethoscope and workstation



Sanitize your phone, ID badge, and glasses



Sanitize your lunch area before you eat



Observe appropriate hand hygiene before/after each patient, or touching a surface



Wear the appropriate PPE for each situation



Do not shake hands, or give high-fives



Remain 6-feet away from other people when possible



Change into clean clothes before leaving work. Put work shoes in a plastic bag and leave them in your locker.



Put your dirty clothes into the washable bag

### AT HOME



Leave outside shoes in the garage or outside the door



Sanitize your phone, ID badge, and glasses



Wash all your clothes and the bag they were in



Shower immediately after getting home



Put dishes, water bottle or coffee cups through dishwasher



Take time for wellness and self-care each day

*Adapted from the Queensway Carleton Hospital*

## Renfrew County Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre (RC VTAC) Assesses Approximately 1,500 Patients Since Go-Live



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The Renfrew County Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre (RC VTAC) has now assessed approximately 1,500 patients since it launched on March 27, 2020. Care is provided 24/7 by a physician, community paramedic and/or nurse practitioner to Renfrew County residents who do not have a family physician or cannot access their family physician.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the RC VTAC has strengthened primary care access for all Renfrew County residents and protects the region's Emergency Departments, allowing their teams to focus on urgent care.

"The RC VTAC has been the right solution to best manage the primary care needs of Renfrew County residents who would otherwise need to rely on an Emergency Department for non-emergency health concerns," said Dr. Jonathan Fitzsimon, Chief of Medicine, Arnprior Regional Health, and RC VTAC Clinical Coordinator. "Our early results show that we are providing the right patients with the right care in the moments they need it."

Kim Sell, a home care provider, was visiting a client in a Pembroke area retirement home and noticed the individual's wound had deteriorated and required follow-up. Because her client doesn't have a family physician, Kim called RC VTAC to connect with a family physician, who was able to deal with the problem over the phone.

"My client avoided an unnecessary Emergency Department visit, two taxi rides and many hours in a waiting room," said Kim, Client Services Supervisor with Carefor Health and Community Services.

The RC VTAC is a centralized, 24/7 healthcare service that supports every Renfrew County community.

*Continued on next page...*

“Keeping people out of our Emergency Departments who aren’t currently experiencing a medical emergency is key for our region to slow the spread of COVID-19,” said Dr. Gina Corrigan, Lead Physician, North Renfrew Family Health Team and RC VTAC family physician. “The Renfrew County Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre has created a safe alternative for many patients to access timely care for non-life-threatening issues. Every person we keep at home is another person we may have prevented from contracting COVID-19, which is even more important for high risk populations.”

The RC VTAC has family physicians representing the whole of Renfrew County. This includes physicians from Arnprior, Barry’s Bay, Deep River, Pembroke, Petawawa, and Renfrew.

“Primary care teams from across Renfrew County shared the concern that the pandemic would amplify the issue of many residents not having access to a family physician,” said Karen Simpson, Executive Director, Arnprior and District Family Health Team and RCVTAC Administrative Lead. “In response, we came together as a health-care system across the county, with support from an impressive number of health-care providers and medical receptionists representing all areas in Renfrew County to ensure we can provide 24/7 care to all our residents.”

**Approximately 25 per cent of the calls to the RC VTAC result in an in-home assessment by a community paramedic. Out of these visits, about 80 per cent of people meet the testing criteria and are swabbed for COVID-19.**

“Our goal remains ensuring our 911 Paramedic resources and Emergency Departments are being used for the most critical patients who are experiencing a life-threatening emergency,” said Mike Nolan, Chief, The County of Renfrew Paramedic Service. “The Renfrew County Virtual Triage & Assessment Centre has extended our existing Community Paramedic model by providing access to a primary care physician. This allows us to support and keep people safely at home for as long as possible through in-home assessments, point-of-care testing, virtual remote monitoring, and leave-behind wireless devices.”

The RC VTAC connects eligible residents who have a health concern (including concerns related to COVID) with timely care and support. Residents who need to refill a prescription will be directed by the RC VTAC to contact a community pharmacist who can manage the refill without the support of a physician.

“Arnprior Regional Health, along with other hospitals in Renfrew County, are maximizing their capacity during the pandemic by deferring non-urgent services,” said Eric Hanna, President and CEO, Arnprior Regional Health. “The RC VTAC is a complementary strategy ensuring that we preserve our limited health care resources to fight COVID-19.”

Eligible Renfrew County residents can contact the RC VTAC at 1-844-727-6404. This new service is covered by OHIP with a valid health card. Learn more at [www.rcvtac.ca](http://www.rcvtac.ca)

#### **About Renfrew County Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre**

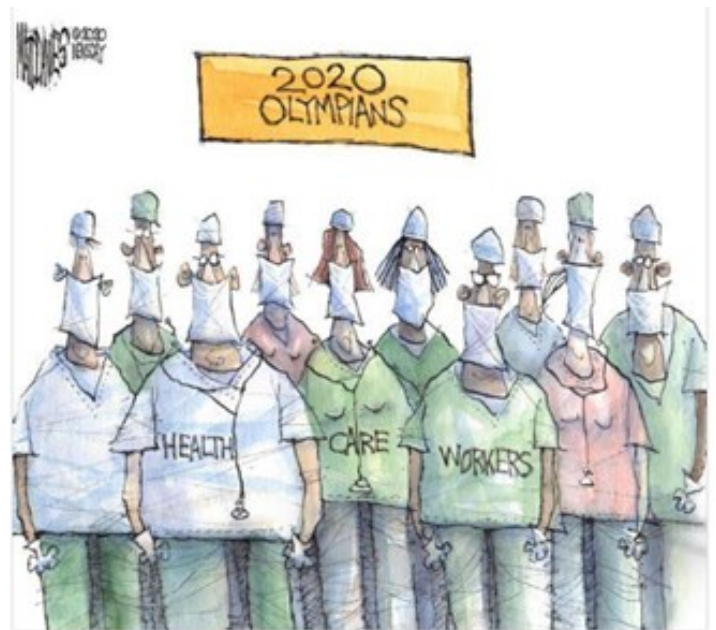
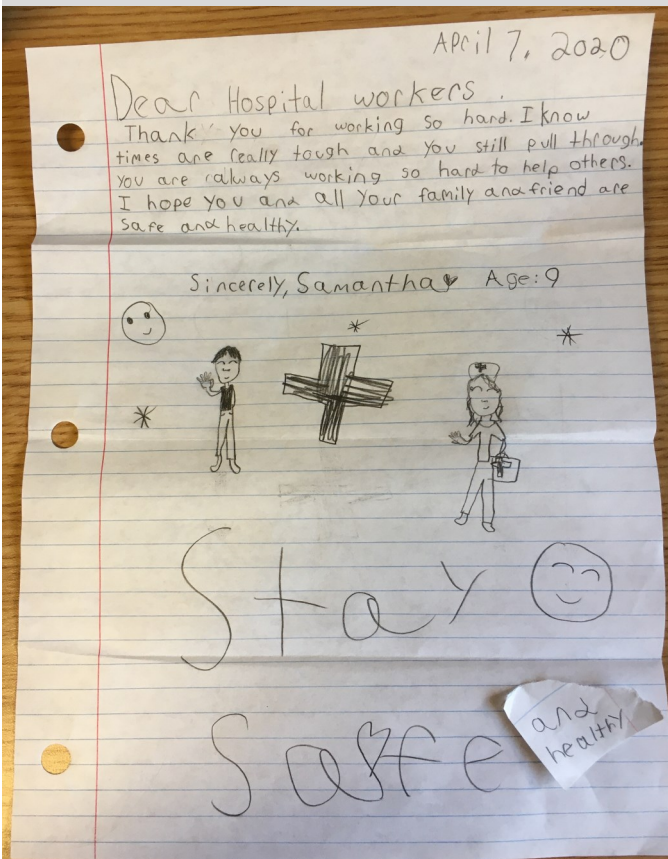
RC VTAC was created in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to strengthen access to primary care for all Renfrew County residents. It connects Renfrew County residents, who have a health concern (including COVID-19 concerns) but either do not have a family physician or cannot access their usual family physician, with 24/7 care and support from a family physician, nurse practitioner and/or community paramedic via phone, video or an in-home assessment. It also provides referrals to other services including mental health support. Learn more at [www.rcvtac.ca](http://www.rcvtac.ca)

PHYSICIAN SLEEP ROOM RENOVATION



A second on-site sleep room has been created for physicians and just needs a few finishing touches! Having this room allows for physicians who are coming from out of town to have a place to sleep before their early morning shift starts. Previously, the organization would put these physicians up in a hotel room, so having another room on site will result in significant cost savings.

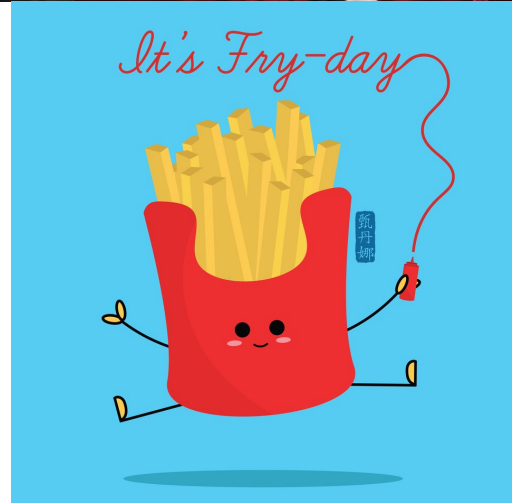
THANK YOU HEALTH CARE WORKERS!



FRY-DAY



Staff arranged a take-out French fry and poutine lunch on April 24 for a well deserved treat!



AMBER GETS A SURPRISE



On April 22, Administrative Professionals Day, Residents and staff at the Four Seasons Lodge surprised Amber Cox with some goodies to thank her for everything that she does! What a clever idea—who doesn't love a good pun with a side of candy!?

HEALTH MATTERS DIGITAL EDITION

The Spring 2020 edition of Health Matters magazine is being published in an online only format due to COVID-19.

As we would normally have copies of this publication available around the organization, we thought we would share the digital issue with you instead:

<http://ovhealth.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Health-Matters-Spring-2020-Edition-1.pdf>



**Health Matters** SPRING 2020  
 THE OTTAWA VALLEY'S HEALTH MAGAZINE  
**Special Online-Only Edition**  
 Local experts talk about giving birth, handling grief, mental health, medications and building routines  
 Hotlines & Helplines  
 Things to Do  
 Healthy Facts  
 Health Crossword  
 NEW! Word Search  
 Local Health Directory  
 COVID-19 Information

NATIONAL DAY OF MOURNING

**APRIL**  
**28**  
 Day of Mourning

**We remember** those who died, or were injured or made ill, from their work  
**We commit** to protecting workers and preventing further workplace tragedies

## Maintaining your mental well-being if you are a health care worker during the COVID-19 pandemic

Many people are experiencing feelings of anxiety, distress, and concern about COVID-19, and the health care workers on the front lines of this pandemic may be experiencing even more stress. However, if you are a medical professional or caregiver, you may be enduring stress above and beyond that of others and struggling to maintain your mental well-being while doing your job.

Research among health care workers in China earlier this year found that 50.4 percent of participants reported symptoms of depression, 44.6 percent reported symptoms of anxiety, 34.0 percent reported symptoms of insomnia, and 71.5 percent reported psychological distress.

It has never been more important for you to do what you can to care for your mental well-being while doing your best to help people sickened during this pandemic. Here is some advice you may want to consider.

**Stress is OK.** It is normal to feel overwhelmed or stressed by COVID-19 and its implications. It is also important to remember that experiencing things like anxiety and worry and their symptoms are normal responses to these unprecedented circumstances. They are not a sign of weakness.

**Keep things in perspective.** Remember that you are doing your best to help as many people as you can. However, you are only one person. We will get through this pandemic because countless individuals from scientists to nurses and doctors are doing everything they can to contain and defeat the virus and treat patients.

**Your health matters.** You are likely experiencing one of the most mentally, emotionally, and physically demanding periods of time in your professional life. If you're not looking after yourself then your health will soon suffer. Try to eat a healthy, balanced diet, maintain an exercise regime, and get sufficient downtime during work hours and sleep between shifts.

**Stay connected.** Even though you are likely working harder than ever before, do what you can to stay connected with your family and friends. In addition to the stress many of us are feeling during this time of self-isolation and physical distancing, they may also be worried about you. Phone calls and video at a regular times can help you feel like you're maintaining those close ties to others.

**Switch off the news.** Turning on the news can exacerbate the stress you are already feeling and trigger anxious feelings. While it is important to stay informed, you should consider limiting your media intake if it is upsetting you or those around you.

**Don't neglect past problems.** If you have experienced mental health issues in the past, remember the things you can do to prepare should those issues return. Acknowledge any feelings of distress, activate your support network at home and in work, and seek professional support if you're having difficulties.

**Call your assistance program.** If you are struggling with anxiety and worry due to the pandemic, caring counsellors can help give you the support you need. Never be ashamed or afraid to admit that there is, or could be, an issue and take steps to get the help and support that you require. Your mental well-being is of paramount importance, especially in these difficult times, and it is important that you dedicate time to managing it.

Article from our EFAP Provider:

<https://www.morneaushepell.com/ca-en/maintaining-your-mental-well-being-if-you-are-health-care-worker-during-covid-19-pandemic>





## INTRODUCING LIFESPEAK!

## LIFESPEAK IS A NEW WELLNESS PROGRAM AVAILABLE FOR FREE TO ALL STAFF STARTING MAY 1

LifeSpeak is a global wellness platform that gives you and your family members instant access to expert advice on all kinds of topics. Mental health, relationships, personal finances ... everything is here. You can watch

videos, download podcasts to listen to at your convenience and interact with world-renowned experts in real time during our monthly webchats. LifeSpeak is available anywhere, anytime and is 100% confidential. Click on the photo below to sign into the Dashboard and check it out:

**client password = lifespeak**



## VISITING RESTRICTION REMINDER

### VISITING RESTRICTIONS REMAIN IN PLACE AND ONLY ESSENTIAL VISITORS ARE PERMITTED.

Essential visitors are those with an immediate family member that is actively dying, and are granted permission to visit on a case by case basis. **End-of-life patients** who are clinically deemed eligible for essential visitors will be permitted **1 designated visitor**, who must meeting the following requirements:

- Must be immediate family members of the patient or resident.
- Eligible essential visitors failing screening will not be permitted to enter.
- Visitors under the age of 12 are not permitted.
- Essential visitors are required to visit only in the patient room. Visitors are not to travel or linger at any other location on the unit or in the organization.

If a palliative patient's condition deteriorates further, visitation by a 2nd person will be assessed on a case by case basis. Visiting restrictions are aimed to protect patients, residents and staff from transmission of COVID-19.

## Renfrew County Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre Results in 74% of Patients Avoiding a Likely Emergency Department Visit

**RC VTAC** delivers the **right care** at the **right time** — without unnecessary use of the Paramedic Service or Emergency Departments.

The **ED** is avoided by approximately **74%** of patients assessed by **RC VTAC**.

**No primary care provider?  
No access to a primary care provider?  
RC VTAC is ready to help.**

 **1-844-727-6404**  
 **www.rcvtac.ca**

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Early data shows that 74% of patients assessed by the Renfrew County Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre (RC VTAC) would otherwise likely visit an Emergency Department and/or call the 9-1-1 Service to address non-emergency health concerns.

“The RC VTAC provides Renfrew County residents who don’t have a primary care provider or can’t reach their primary care provider with an effective alternative to visiting the Emergency Department for non-urgent health issues,” said Dr. Jonathan Fitzsimon, Clinical Coordinator, RC VTAC and Chief of Medicine, Arnprior Regional Health. “The RC VTAC exists so that nobody is left at home to suffer without the care they need.”

The 24/7 health-care service launched on March 27, 2020 in response to the COVID-19 situation. To date, the RC VTAC clinicians have assessed more than 2,000 Renfrew County residents via phone or video appointments. In addition, there have been well over 550 patients who receive an in-home assessment from a community paramedic and out of these visits, 80% meet the criteria and are swabbed for COVID-19 testing.

“We’ve noticed a significant change in the way people are using 9-1-1 as well as Emergency Departments,” reported Mike Nolan, Chief of the County of Renfrew Paramedic Service. “We know that many of the people calling RC VTAC would have, in the past, called 9-1-1 or presented themselves to the Emergency Department as it was their only choice. For those that primary care providers are concerned about, a community paramedic will go to their home, do a follow-up assessment, initiate treatment, and in some cases leave behind remote monitoring devices so they can be managed virtually, 24/7.”

During the COVID-19 pandemic all five Renfrew County Emergency Departments remain open and residents who are experiencing a health emergency should call 9-1-1 immediately. This may include:

- Suspected heart attack • Major bleeding
- Suspected stroke • Severe breathing problems

*Continued on next page...*

“When the pandemic struck, we focused regionally on how to preserve hospital capacity in the case we experienced a surge of patients,” said Eric Hanna, President and CEO, Arnprior Regional Health. “The RC VTAC is one of many complementary and successful strategies that we have deployed in Renfrew County to protect our Emergency Departments.”

The Community Acute Team (CAC) is a critical part of the RC VTAC strategy to prevent unnecessary 9-1-1 calls, Emergency Department visits and hospital admissions. The CAC functions as a “virtual ward” with appropriate physician support to allow patients to be managed safely in the community rather than the hospital. The CAC provides support when a patient through the RC VTAC is identified as requiring further comprehensive assessments, ongoing monitoring and/or treatment in their home.

“The recent data findings confirm the RC VTAC is helping to deliver the right care at the right time – and keeping residents at home safely who don’t need to be at the hospital during the pandemic,” said Karen Simpson, Administrative Lead, RC VTAC and Executive Director, Arnprior and District Family Health Team.

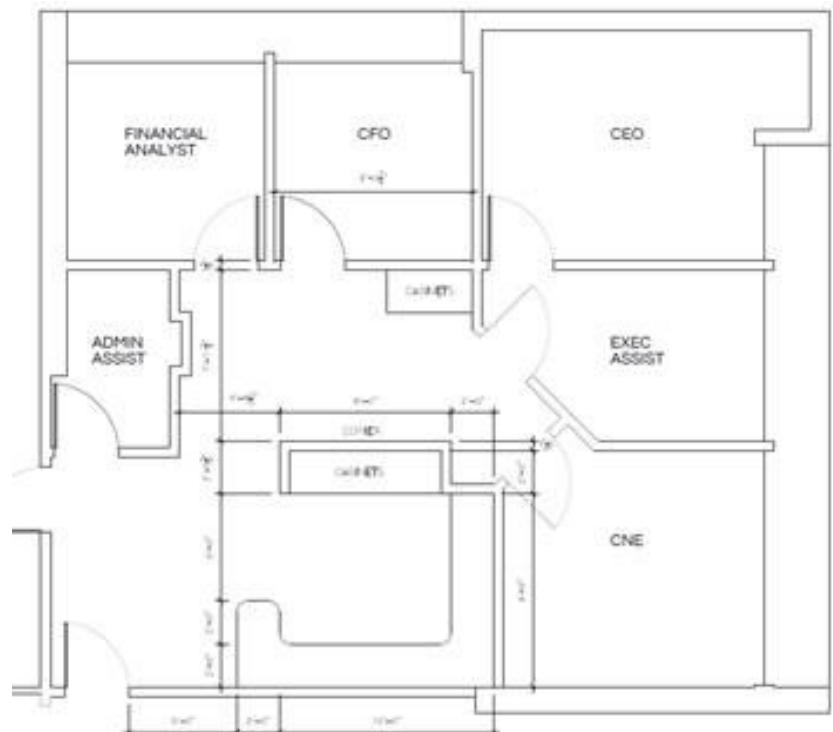
The RC VTAC is available to eligible Renfrew County residents, 24/7 by calling 1-844-727-6404.

## BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS

The recent decrease in non-essential services, outpatient visits and individuals coming into the organization have created an opportunity for previously planned improvements to be completed in the coming weeks.

Over the next month, renovations of the administration space will occur to move the finance department to the front of the administration space (see image). This will make the area more accessible for those entering finance, reduce cross-over between those paying and staff and address identified health and safety and infection control concerns of the area. To allow this work to be completed, this week the finance department will move to the physiotherapy space and other offices in the admin area will be temporarily relocated throughout the building.

Additional improvements over the coming weeks include replacement of the shower room floor on medical, the carpet in the emergency counselling room and the flooring in the rest of the Diagnostic Imaging department.



A MESSAGE FROM SOME 2016 BABIES VIA EORLA



ORGANIZATIONAL FACEBOOK PAGES CREATED



To help us share information with our communities in a timely manner, organizational Facebook pages were created last month. There is now a page for Deep River and District Hospital, North Renfrew Family Health Team, and Four Seasons Lodge. Clicking on the screen shots below will take you to each of the pages so you can give them a “like” and invite your friends to help us keep our communities informed.



*Is there something you would like to see appear in the next issue of the Zinger?  
Please submit photos and information to [amy.joyce@drdh.org](mailto:amy.joyce@drdh.org).*

*The Deep River and District Hospital receives funding from the Champlain Local Health Integration Network (LHIN).  
The opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the views of the Champlain Local Health Integration Network.*