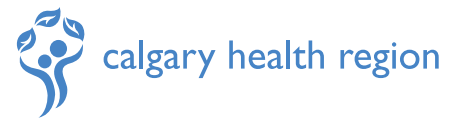


Our people. Our work. Our values.



frontlines

www.calgaryhealthregion.ca

May 10, 2004 Issue #109

New FMC ward offers glimpse into future

A new \$5-million, 36-bed teaching unit at Foothills Medical Centre sets a benchmark for future inpatient wards across Canada.

Unit 36 – dubbed The Medical Ward of the 21st Century – offers prototypical design and a mandate to pilot new approaches to health-care delivery, research, education and technology.

The Calgary Health Region, in partnership with the University of Calgary, opened the unit April 29.

“Unit 36 will allow us to provide excellence in patient care in a highly innovative and technologically sophisticated environment,” said Dr. John Conly, Professor and Head, Department of Medicine, Calgary Health Region and University of Calgary. “We anticipate that what we learn on this unit will be transferred to other medical inpatient units across the Calgary Health Region as well as across Canada.”

“No other health region in North America has tried this in as comprehensive a fashion,” Dr. Conly said. “We are looking at every aspect of patient care – from physical design to the way medical residents are taught – to pilot approaches that will help us achieve our overall goal of creating a new model of ward care delivery for medical patients for the future.”

Sonja Morrison, Patient Care Manager, Unit 36, said nurses are excited about the new unit.

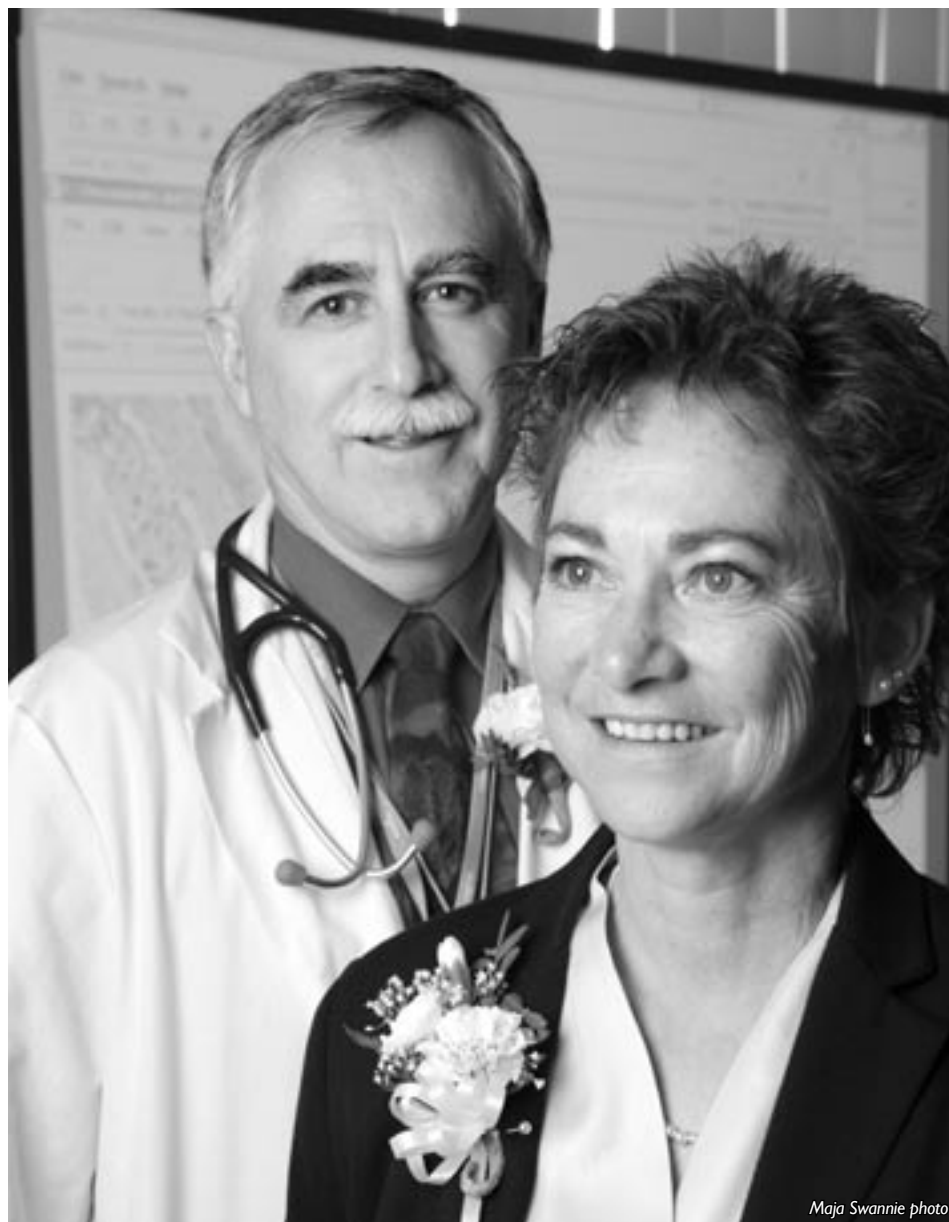
“Nursing is delighted because the design of the unit has been set up in such a way that nurses can spend more time with patients and less time looking for equipment or information,” she said.

Morrison said planning the unit was an 18-month multidisciplinary collaboration.

“The opening of Unit 36 gave us an opportunity to talk about what we value as nurses and the best ways we can leverage technology and innovation to provide excellent patient care,” she said.

Andrea Robertson, Director, Medical Inpatient Services, said Unit 36 is all about providing safe, efficient and effective care for patients with complex medical conditions.

“Ultimately, we hope it will result in people getting better, faster,” she said.



Dr. John Conly, Specialist, Internal Medicine, Professor and Head, Department of Medicine, Calgary Health Region and University of Calgary with Sonja Morrison, Patient Care Manager, Unit 36, Medical Ward of the 21st Century.

Highlights of Unit 36 include:

- 28 private rooms with wheelchair-accessible private washrooms. Ten of these rooms have isolation capability with negative air pressure - ideal for managing an infectious disease outbreak like SARS, Avian Flu or other like illnesses.
- Enhancements for infection control, including handwashing stations.

- A four-bed observation ward with bedside retractable toilets and dedicated support space to house the most acutely ill patients on the unit.
- Moveable walls that can be used to isolate patients depending upon medical need.
- Wiring throughout the unit that will allow for complete wireless access using personal computers or handheld devices for the benefit of caregivers,

patients and their families.

- Duplication of gases such as oxygen, air and suction at each bedside, providing the capability to add a second patient to every room in the event of a disaster.

- Dedicated education rooms to create an optimum environment for telehealth and teaching functions.

- Monitoring of a patient's vital signs using remote-sensing technology.

Robertson said technology plays a significant role on the unit. For example, medical and health-care providers will have greater access to computers at the bedside and wireless handheld devices, which will simplify charting and ordering medications.

“Our vision is to link patients to their families and family physician whether that is in Calgary or Lethbridge, using information, telehealth and video technology,” she said.

“We are giving people the tools that will allow them to spend more time with the patients,” said Robertson. “We don't want technology to get in the way of touch.”

Robertson said the creation of Unit 36 will help guide the development of future medical units as the city adds capacity to keep pace with rapid population growth.

“We are growing so rapidly, it is fundamental that we have an opportunity to try things here and know that they work before we commit to the same physical structure for the next 50 years. We need to know what we are building is flexible enough,” said Robertson. “The whole design of this unit is to build and pilot new concepts. This unit is not done when it opens. When it opens, this is when we begin.”

Capital funding for Unit 36 was provided by Alberta Infrastructure. Construction of the unit began in July 2003 and was completed in April 2004. The Region has 17 medical inpatient units at its three adult urban hospitals. Each of Calgary's three adult hospitals has a medical teaching unit.

Leif Sollid
Communications

Intrusion detection systems save Region from spread of Bagle virus

The recent addition of intrusion detection systems to the Calgary Health Region's arsenal of security tools is being credited with halting the threat of the so-called Bagle virus.

Anyone with a home computer connected to the Internet knows how much work it takes to keep their system clean from viruses, worms, spam and a host of other threats. Multiply that by about 10,000 times and you'll get a feeling for what it takes to keep the Region information systems running smoothly and free of problems on a daily basis.

Intrusion detection systems (IDS) work alongside standard security protection measures such as firewalls and

anti-virus software, but add an extra line of defense by spotting hackers trying to circumvent firewalls and allowing system administrators to take proactive steps to prevent an attack. Intrusion detection systems also allow for much better identification of where suspicious threats are coming from.

The benefits of IDS were proven recently when the Bagle virus threatened the Region's Information Systems.

With the Bagle virus, malicious code is contained in an executable file with

a randomly generated name. Users must double click on the file to open it. Once launched, the worm installs itself on Windows systems and connects to an outside website to reveal the identity of the infected machine.

“IDS picked up the threat immediately and told us exactly which PC had the virus,” Blaine Boake, Director, IT Security, said. “We were able to move quickly to stop the spread of the virus across the Region.

Without IDS, we would never have been

able to isolate the specific computer and move so quickly.”

Boake said IDS is like combining a home alarm system with fingerprinting.

“They can detect someone rattling at our door trying to break in to our systems, and they make it much easier to identify the source of the threat so we can follow up,” he said.

Intrusion detection systems are becoming standard security features for many organizations as they recognize their reliance on information systems and the risk to those systems brought on by increased network interconnectivity.

“Protecting our information systems to the highest extent possible is obviously a major priority for us,” said Sam Tse, Executive Director, Information

Technology Services. “For us, the question was never should we deploy intrusion detection systems, it was what combination of systems will work best to give us the best security possible?”

Combining various intrusion detection systems is called a “holistic security solution” and provides the best possible protection against a realistic range of security threats.

The first intrusion detection systems were implemented in December 2003 and more will be added as required to ensure Region information systems are kept as secure and safe as possible.

Rob Evans
Communications

“Without IDS, we would never have been able to isolate the specific computer and move so quickly.”