

News

ER reno impresses staff

BY GRAEME WOOD
Special to the News

A new pediatric resuscitation room, state-of-the-art decontamination room and wireless communication system are among several new features in Richmond Hospital's recently renovated emergency department.

The department was officially unveiled to the public April 15 by health minister Mike de Jong and has received positive reviews from staff.

"In terms of the flow, that's probably the main thing, it's way better. And our capacity has improved dramatically so we're able to see more patients," said emergency room (ER) nurse and staff coordinator Rich Dillon.

Other notable new features include: two improved isolation rooms, an expanded cast clinic, a new urgent care area that will be used to treat patients not in need of full emergency services (such as those with minor fractures or wounds), and a larger waiting room with new security measures.

"This was a very open department before and anyone could come in and go anywhere through so one of the features (staff) have now is secure access (cards)," explained Fiona Francis, the ER's interim manager, who has worked at the hospital for 25 years.

While the \$4.9 million renovation, which began in the fall of 2009, expanded the department from about 7,300 square feet to 9,300 many of the improvements were aimed at reducing patient wait times and improving efficiency amongst staff,



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Health minister Mike de Jong, second right, joined local MLAs and Richmond Hospital chiefs to launch the

according to Francis.

"It's about expanding capacity but also utilizing space," noted de Jong.

One of the ER room's new crown jewels is an ER-to-lab pneumatic tube system to deliver medication, equipment and samples, thus eliminating a time-consuming trip by a staff member.

De Jong visited the ER along with local MLAs to get a first-hand look at the new wireless voice-controlled communication system the ER staff will use.

He said the renovation was needed for a growing Richmond population.

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