



Hotel Dieu
HOSPITAL



KINGSTON
GENERAL
HOSPITAL

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Children's Outpatient Centre celebrates 40 years of excellence in pediatric care

(KINGSTON, ON) Nobody likes a birthday party more than kids and this year their very own medical centre is hitting the big 4-0.

Today, the Children's Outpatient Centre (COPC) at Hotel Dieu Hospital celebrates four decades of providing highly specialized outpatient care to this region's youngest patients.

"The vision of the COPC's founders was to create a place just for children that recognized their uniqueness and that specialized in their medical care," says Dr. Richard van Wylick, COPC medical director and acting program director for the joint pediatrics program at Hotel Dieu and Kingston General Hospital.

"That vision is a strong reality today."

Sometimes described as a hospital within a hospital, the COPC treats children from birth to the end of their 18th year. Along with a wide spectrum of specialized pediatric outpatient clinics, it includes a walk-in urgent care clinic that is invaluable to parents when a child suddenly spikes a high fever or takes a bad tumble. It also excels as a rapid-access pediatric service for family doctors in this region.

The COPC opened on January 12, 1970 at KGH as part of the Angada Children's Hospital. It had a core staff of three—pediatrician, nurse and receptionist, plus specialists who provided clinics in surgery, orthopedics, endocrinology, cardiology, allergy, respirology and gastroenterology. When necessary, it rallied for special clinics such as the one that kicked into gear over a weekend when typhoid fever took hold of a nearby summer camp in the 1970s.

In 1984, the COPC was relocated to Hotel Dieu. Over time, says van Wylick, it has only solidified its reputation as a standout medical facility that can handle complex care for children, including those with chronic illnesses such as cystic fibrosis and diabetes.

Since 1970, the COPC has quadrupled its patient volumes. On average, it runs 35 to 40 booked clinics every week (compared to 15 in 1970). Last year, it recorded almost 24,000 patient visits.

The key to the Centre's success, says longtime paediatrician Dr. Brian Wherrett, is the behind-the-scenes teamwork that has always been a COPC hallmark.

“You have very high-calibre nurses, doctors, physiotherapists, dietitians and other experts are all working together,” he says. “Thanks to that kind of expertise, we’ve made huge gains in interdisciplinary pediatric health care.”

Those gains are carrying through to the next generation of pediatric specialists, says van Wylick, noting that for the last 40 years nearly every Queen’s University medical student and pediatric resident, plus countless nursing, allied health and other students, have spent part of their training in pediatrics in the COPC. As a result, the Centre’s impact reaches across the country and to many parts of the world.

“For 40 years, the COPC has served the children and families of this region by being the place to get high quality, specialized outpatient pediatric health care,” says van Wylick.

“It has become synonymous with children’s health care.”

Working together, Kingston’s university hospitals provide a continuum of specialized health care in this region. Our hospitals offer leading edge clinical care, pioneering research and outstanding teaching opportunities through their affiliation with Queen’s University. These dynamic partnerships translate into quality patient care for our community.

Leading Care. Changing Lives. Together.

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