

The Peterborough Examiner

Letters to the Editor;

Fri Jan 8 2010
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Hospital healthier post-peer review

Re "Union says it's not 'fear mongering' " (Jan. 4) -

On behalf of Rouge Valley Health System (RVHS), I'd like to correct inaccurate information presented in this news article.

The position Peterborough Regional Health Centre finds itself in is not unique. In March 2008 RVHS started its three-year deficit elimination plan. The plan was developed as part of our response to our peer review.

Michael Hurley has focused on the negatives but let's look at the realities. Seventy-five per cent of a hospital's costs are people, so to improve our efficiency we had to issue layoff notices. We also invested heavily in retraining so that we could move nurses into empty positions in critical care areas. Where possible, under the collective agreements, we redeployed staff to newly funded programs and services. At March 31, 2007, we had 2,368 full-time and part-time staff including 235 management and non-union and 839 nurses. At Dec. 31, 2009, we had 2,344 staff including 219 management and non-union and 832 nurses. Only one unionized person left RVHS under this program involuntarily.

Contrary to what Mr. Hurley says, our patient wait times have decreased in every area that is publicly reported. We have also increased the volume of services that we provide. This year we will have seen 8,500 more emergency room visits than in 2007, delivered 400 more babies, carried out 600 more surgical procedures and treated 900 more weighted cases.

RVHS now spends its health care tax dollars within budget. By March 31, 2010 we will have generated a surplus of at least \$2.6 million for the year (our second surplus since March 31, 2008 when we incurred a deficit of \$6.5 million).

I encourage the community to support your hospital in these times of great change.

RIK GANDERTON President and CEO Rouge Valley Health System

Re "PRHC deficits probed" (Dec. 23) -

Forget the peer review, Peterborough Regional Health Centre has always been grossly underfunded, any person on the street knows that. We also have one of the oldest populations in Ontario, and outside of Victoria, B.C., in Canada.

Unless the provincial government brings the "proper funding and stability factor" to PRHC this hospital and community will likely fail! MPP Jeff Leal should note that voters might have short-term memories but health care professionals do not.

Layoffs might not be as bad as thought because attrition of current staff will go up as they decide the risks are not worth the benefits. Expanding and recruiting in the future will become even harder. Under the Local Hospital Improvement Network system I am sure Oshawa will cheer at our loss and their gain. ARTHUR SETKA

Mountland Dr.

What are scanner protesters hiding?

Re "Longer airport waits" (Jan. 6) -

For crying out loud, people! What's the big deal? We've all got the same parts being scanned -some bigger, some smaller. Rather this small invasion than a crash landing in a fiery tomb.

Grow up, folks. I liked what one "tweeter" said on CNN: Flying is a privilege, not a right. If you don't like the rules, take a boat.

I also tend to wonder what exactly these complainers are trying to get away with, that these body scanners might catch them with. The old phrase "methinks he does protest too much" comes to mind.

BEV MILES Rita Cr., Omeme

Be bold, Opposition, and kick Harper out

What kind of country has Canada become when the Prime Minister is more concerned about holding on to power at any cost than showing any type of leadership, moral or otherwise; and Conservative MPs function as ventriloquist dummies, dutifully mouthing the messages of the puppet master?

The opposition parties must defeat Stephen Harper and his government on a motion of non-confidence at the first opportunity. The problems facing Canadians globally and across the country demand visionary, collaborative problem solving; not narrow, partisan thinking.

I urge the leaders of the opposition parties to be bold and daring. Too much is at stake for caution or inaction.

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Write to us

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All letters must bear the writer's name, address and daytime telephone number.

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