

New Diagnostic Imaging equipment officially unveiled

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After a lengthy fundraising campaign that smashed all kinds of goals, and a bit of a wait for the fruits of their labours to be realized, administration, staff and patients at La Verendrye General Hospital (LVGH) are finally getting to reap the benefits of brand-new diagnostic imaging equipment that will help patients get more accurate and timely diagnoses.

At a ribbon-cutting ceremony at LVGH on Thursday, November 10, 2022, the Riverside Foundation for Health Care presented a cheque to Riverside Health care for the costs of the new equipment and upgrades, which included improvements to the x-ray room, the purchase of an elevating fluoroscopy table, as well as a new CT scanner and digital mammography machine. The overall funds were collected through the "Picture This" capital campaign that ran through late 2021 and into 2022. The campaign wound up surpassing its initial goal of \$1.5-million, eventually bringing in more than \$1.7-million dollars to help support health care close to home.

Tiffany Dolyn and Chalina Abraham are both medical radiation technicians (MRT), the professionals who are at the controls on the new imaging equipment when it comes to assessing patients. Both noted that the new equipment vastly improves the quality of the images they are able to take of a potential problem, helps cut down the amount of time a patient might need to spend at the local hospital, and even eliminates the need for other



Staff at La Verendrye General Hospital, along with representatives from Riverside Health Care and the Riverside Foundation for Health Care held an official ribbon cutting ceremony for the new equipment and upgrades to the hospital's Diagnostic Imaging unit on Thursday, November 10, 2022. The new machines and upgrades vastly improve response time and patient care in the region through faster image processing, gentler machines, and improved image quality.

patients to have to travel to other hospitals for some tests or diagnostics.

"We've actually had almost an entire department revamp," Dolyn said.

"There are multiple benefits for each modality that we have, for mammogram you're going to find it's a much clearer image, and we're also allowed to do a lot more additional imaging here as well, compared to our previous mammo unit. The CT unit we have now is a lot faster than our old machine, there's a lower radiation dose, it has a bigger gantry that might help those patients who are a little bit claustrophobic, a little bit scared of the unit."



The new CT machine at La Verendrye General Hospital features a larger gantry to help patients feel more comfortable, and takes much higher quality images for diagnostic purposes.

Dolyn said that another improvement with the new CT machine is an instant viewer that allows the technicians to view the produced images much more quickly than used to be possible, allowing for multiple images to be taken in a shorter amount of time in the event more are necessary for accurate diagnosis.

The time it takes the technicians to produce an x-ray has also seen a dramatic improvement, Dolyn said.

"Minutes to seconds going from CR to DR," she explained. "Before it took maybe about three minutes by the time we did a chest x-ray to see the first image."

"Now we can do it in 30 seconds," Abraham said.

Dolyn said the reduced time is again a benefit to the techs, who can get more done, but also to the patients who may not always be comfortable or able to hold still for

long periods of time necessary to get high quality images on older equipment.

"Three minutes can be a lifetime for some people," Dolyn said.

"Depending on their condition, their fear, so many factors can affect that."

Abraham added that the new mammography machine has also made the experience much more comfortable for patients who interact with it.

"The main thing with the mammo unit is that it's a lot better for the patient," she said.

"It's a lot quicker to acquire the image. A lot of the patients we've had said it's a lot more comfortable."

Dolyn said the new mammography unit allows the techs to do magnification views of images, something they were unable to do with the older unit, requiring a patient to be sent to Thunder Bay.

The new diagnostic imaging equipment at LVGH has brought the hospital up to the best of standards, both technicians said. It helps to ensure that patients in the area can get the best possible care, and it helps those who might need to routinely receive check-ups and scans by cutting down on the amount of time they otherwise would have had to wait for results, or drive to another hospital like Thunder Bay.

"People within our community can be confident knowing that we're actually up to date," Dolyn said.

"Fort Frances is up to date with the bigger centres. We have the new high quality imaging that helps with diagnosing."

It isn't lost on those at LVGH that the fact they have this new equipment is entirely due to the generosity and fundraising support of the entire district, and the giving nature of people within the Rainy River District means that everyone will benefit in the future from the new equipment and upgrades.

"We wouldn't have gotten the upgrades without the campaign," Abraham said.

"A big help was the 50/50 draws, the community giving and also getting back. It's the trend now in our area, but it's a great thing to have, honestly. We wouldn't have gotten these upgrades if we didn't have our community behind our back, and we did. We're very thankful."

"I get the shivers thinking

about it," Dolyn added.

"We're very fortunate to live in the community we live in. We all come together to make a difference for everybody involved in our community and surrounding community. Whether or not it's you, your child, your spouse, a parent, an aunt, uncle, someone you know is going to be utilizing our equipment in some point in time in their life. So thank you. As technologists it's wonderful to be able to provide these services to our patients, but it's also even more rewarding to be able to offer these to our patients."

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Christmas Tea & Bazaar
Sunday November 20th, 2 to 4pm
St. Mary's Parish, 209 Victoria Avenue
Admission: \$5 Adults, \$2 Children (under 7)
Bake Table • Crafts • Stained Glass • Special Draws
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• Wealth • Kid Zone • Candy Jar Guess
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Knox United Church
Christmas Luncheon & Bake Sale
Saturday, November 26
11:30am - 1:30pm
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Homemade Soup, Sandwiches & Distinct

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Inauguration Ceremony
for the 2022-2026 Municipal Council.