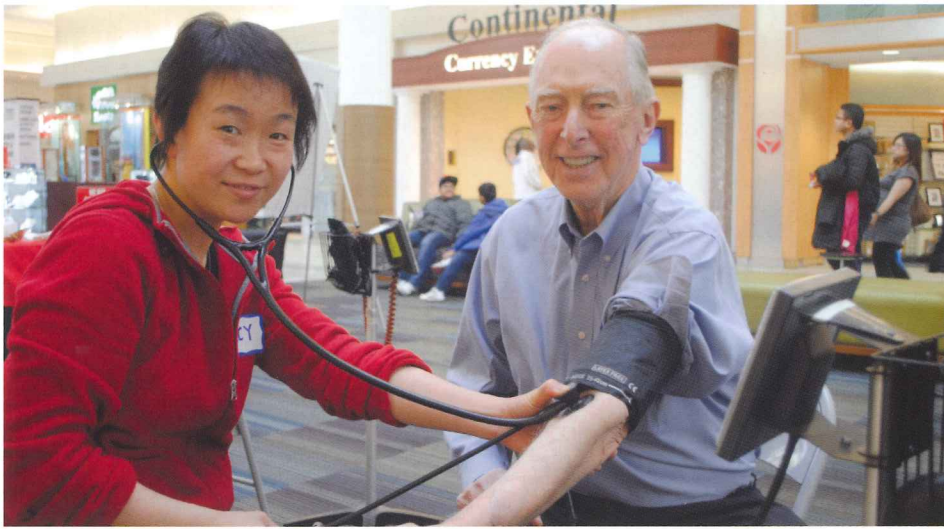


Community cardiac clinic

Regional cardiac care centre celebrates Heart Month



COMING FROM THE HEART. Ajax-Pickering MPP Joe Dickson was one of more than 300 community members to get a heart check up at Rouge Valley's Heart to Heart Community Cardiac Clinic. Attendees had their blood pressure taken by cardiac diagnostic technicians like Tracy Feng, and then received consultations by cardiac rehabilitation exercise therapists.

AS THE REGIONAL CARDIAC CENTRE for the Scarborough-Durham area, Rouge Valley Health System celebrated Heart Month this February with its second annual Heart to Heart Community Cardiac Clinic.

The event was held at local malls in east Toronto and west Durham on two different weekends. Cardiac diagnostics technologists and cardiac rehabilitation exercise therapists were on hand to perform blood pressure tests and provide consultations on heart disease risk factors. Staff also offered information on heart disease prevention and how to become more heart healthy.

"Heart Month is an opportunity for all of us to celebrate the level of cardiac care expertise and resources we have right here in our community. Our patients don't have to go far to get access to not only life-saving emergency cardiac services, but also cardiac diagnostics, arrhythmia management, and rehabilitation and prevention services," says **Amelia McCutcheon**, vice president, cardiac, cancer and critical care.

"If you want to improve the quality of your heart health, our cardiac care team is here to help. And this February, community members were able to meet with us just by heading to their local malls." | **NICHOLAS SMITH**



ALL HEART. Several provincial and municipal leaders dropped by the clinic event to show their support. Top row, from left, City of Pickering City Councillor - Ward 3 David Pickles; Pickering East Shore Community Association President Keith Falconer; City of Pickering Mayor Dave Ryan; Pickering-Scarborough East MPP Tracy MacCharles; and cardiac diagnostics technologist Sheena Khan. Bottom row, exercise therapist Michael Ruiz and City of Pickering Deputy Mayor Doug Dickerson.

HOW TO ORGANIZE "THE SYSTEM" FOR PATIENTS AND OUR COMMUNITIES — WITHIN OUR MEANS

BLOG BY RIK GANDERTON, PRESIDENT & CEO, ROUGE VALLEY HEALTH SYSTEM

WE ARE TAKING THE NEXT STEPS in the evolution of the health care system at Rouge Valley Health System (RVHS), and as with any change process, these first few steps will be among the hardest.

We will be analyzing what services our communities need and how best to meet those health care needs within the constraints of the global and Canadian economy and the financial environment in Ontario. The changes we are considering will take analysis, careful thought, creativity, open communication, consultation and expedient action to address the burning question: *How do we provide the range of services that meet the greatest needs of the communities at the highest quality and in the most fiscally responsible way within our limited resources?*

We know that highest quality care doesn't always come from hospitals offering a wide array of specialized services. We know that it costs more to try to do this because we cannot efficiently provide services that we perform only occasionally, and worse still, we cannot deliver these services at acceptable quality levels. This has been a challenge that hospitals have faced, but rarely talked about, for decades.

We know that choosing which specialties to focus our resources on will result in better outcomes, with fewer complications and fewer return visits for our patients. We also know that everyone would much prefer to have everything available in their local hospitals.

This is our opportunity to focus our resources to address the greatest community needs and grow the critical mass where we choose to specialize. We have already made some of these choices in previous strategic planning exercises, such as cardiac care, high-risk maternal newborn care, and advanced paediatrics. The process we will follow will identify those things that we do only occasionally or that we do not do well. We will then have to stop doing those things.

It's our job, as health care providers, to inform our communities that attempting to be all things to all people is not good for their health, not sustainable and not affordable. In short, we want our communities, our patients, and our team, to know that there are hard decisions ahead.