



# Renal PFAC Owen Sound Satellite Visit Report

On June 7, 2016 representatives from the Renal PFAC visited the Owen Sound Satellite Hemodialysis Unit.

## Goals

- Promote Renal PFAC
- Meet satellite patients, and rural PD, Home Hemo and CKD patients from the area
- Gather feedback and suggestions from the rural patient population
- Generate interest from satellite patients who might be interested in joining council

## Attendees

- Fred McInnis, Bonnie Field, Don Smith and Angela Andrews, PFAC
- RN's and staff from Owen Sound
- Owen Sound satellite unit patients

## Process

When we arrived, we found that a patient and his wife had completed his treatment and were waiting for us to arrive in the waiting area. We explained the purpose of our visit, and a covered a little background on why the council was started, and our purpose. We also had a chance to talk to some of the staff and other patients, where we covered some of the accomplishments the council has made, and projects that are currently underway. We then gave the participants a chance to tell us about the satellite unit. We finished with a discussion about any improvements or changes within the Renal Program that patients from the satellite unit would recommend.

## Findings

We spent nearly an hour chatting with one family, and were able to gain some great insight on being a dialysis patient in Owen Sound. One particular story stood out from this family. This patient has a 45 minute journey to get to dialysis, and this past winter, the highway in his area was closed for almost one week due to winter conditions. This patient and several other patients in the same area were forced to miss 2 treatments, so the staff arranged for an ambulance to pick them up, and get them to dialysis despite the roads being closed. They arranged for them to stay overnight in town, and admitted one patient to the hospital. The family we talked to could not say enough to express their gratitude for this great act. The patient's wife also expressed interest in the satellite advisor position.

Although there were only a few patients in the unit that afternoon, the PFAC managed to gather some useful information. In general, the patients stated that they were very happy with the care from the satellite unit, and the renal program. They felt because the unit was small, they developed good relationships with the staff, and felt they could tell the staff if they had problems with their care.

- Transportation: patients were generally happy with the transportation services available, some patients rode with family and some took a local service available in the county. The local transport company has recently increased their services to include Saturdays so Tuesday/Thursday/Saturday patients can use this service as well. Some patients did mention that this service could be quite expensive (as much as \$50 per day), especially if they had to pay out of pocket for this.
- Parking: patients who park at the hospital get a pass for \$40 per month, which can be expensive if on a limited income.
- More Education and Dietitian/Social work visits: one patient was new to the satellite unit, and discussed having more education once hemodialysis at the satellite is started. They felt that they were either too ill or too overwhelmed when starting treatment to absorb information and requested that the dietitian could visit more often than once a year. The idea of using an iPad to communicate with the dietitian did not appeal to this patient. She also suggested the possibility of setting up an 800 number to call the dietitian/social worker/NP as it was expensive for her to call long distance.
- More Frequent Nephrologist visits: the patients indicated that they were happy with the frequency of physician visits (physicians visit monthly, but

patients are usually only seen once in two months, if they do need to be seen more urgently, the physician will see them monthly)

- Renal Patient Website: the website was promoted by the PFAC.
- WIFI is free for patients and families at the Owen Sound hospital.

### Actions

- PFAC brochures, the PFAC newsletter, the letter to patients and staff, and PFAC business cards were left with the unit

### Common Themes

- The overall impression of the visit was that it went well, and patients in Owen Sound are generally happy with their care
- The theme continues to emerge around patient transportation, in that it is either difficult to obtain, or the burden of cost is too high for patients who are on a limited income.
- Some patients are satisfied with phone calls with social workers and dietitians, but this does not apply to all patients, some would like to have more face to face visits
- Some patients felt there should be more education provided to dialysis patients after they have been on dialysis for several months, since they were too sick and unable to absorb information when they first started treatments

The overall impression of the visit was that it went well, and the group feels that council has benefited from a visit to this satellite unit.