



Patient Care Tower Champions

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Welcome to the third in a series of stories dedicated to profiling the people working together to keep the wheels moving at Penticton Regional Hospital (PRH). These stories showcase the important work being done each day and highlight the enhancements to come with the new David E. Kampe Tower.

Penticton Regional Hospital's Diagnostic Imaging Department

Choosing a career can be an extremely difficult decision, but for Melody Doehle, an X-ray technologist at Penticton Regional Hospital, the decision was easy.

"My cousin was an X-ray tech, and when she was over for the holidays and on call she would take me in with her," says Melody. "I was 15 years old and that was what determined my career for me, I just didn't even think of anything else."

Melody has been working in Diagnostic Imaging (DI) at PRH since 2000 and says it was the patients that drew her to the field.



MRI tech Tami Ingram, Radiologist Dr. Paul Sanders and X-ray tech Melody Doehle.

Located on the main floor of the hospital, over 45 technologists, 7 radiologists, and support staff work in the Diagnostic Imaging department. Technologists assist in procedures and conduct exams to create images of the body for radiologists to utilize in the diagnosis and treatment of illnesses. Exams include ultrasounds, mammograms, CT scans, MRI scans, Bone Mineral Density scans, and X-rays.

"DI is such a technical field, but we also need to be able to show empathy and help patients relax to get the images that the radiologists need to make the right diagnosis," says Tami Ingram, an MRI technologist who has been working in the department since 1998.

Dr. Paul Sanders, a radiologist who joined PRH in January 2016, says he feels very fortunate to be part of the medical staff at PRH.

“It’s the perfect size hospital which provides a good volume and variety of imaging while maintaining a strong community atmosphere,” says Dr. Sanders. “It’s also great to belong to a department where you have supportive staff, from the technologists to the administrators, who appreciate the benefits of working in a smaller hospital and take pride in their work.”

The department is busy doing the imaging for scheduled exams, emergency patients, and hospital patients in the South Okanagan, with over 300 exams happening each day. Managing the volume of patients has been a challenge in the current facility as emergency exams take priority.

Once the new David E. Kampe Tower opens in spring 2019, a new clinic will be available for most scheduled exams, while emergency patients and hospital patients will remain in the existing building. This will allow more exams to be performed each day and provide more predictable wait times for community members.



Tami Ingram, Dr. Paul Sanders, and Melody Doehle standing in an X-ray procedure room in the existing hospital building.

“Every patient is important and with the new tower we will be able to better meet the needs of the entire South Okanagan community,” says Melody.

A new fixed MRI is another enhancement that will come with the new tower, increasing access to MRI scans in the community and providing more timely access to those needing urgent scans. Currently, MRI scans are done in a mobile unit located outside the hospital for 2 weeks each month.

“Keeping patients relaxed before a scan can be difficult when you add physical obstacles like going outside to the mobile unit. We are very fortunate to have had the unit, but the addition of a permanent MRI just down the hall will create a smoother environment for us to provide the care that’s needed,” says Tami.

The David E. Kampe Tower will also house a new Nuclear Medicine Department, two x-ray rooms, the mammography department, and ultrasound and bone density procedure rooms.

Many of the enhancements with the new tower were made possible by generous donations from the South Okanagan community. The funding for the fixed MRI and a SPECT CT unit for the new Nuclear Medicine Department were both secured through a \$3.5-million and \$1.5-million donation from Penticton businessman and philanthropist David Kampe.

“It’s a very positive thing that we have people in our community that can be that generous and able to contribute in a way that will benefit the hospital and community for years to come. It just makes everything more possible,” says Dr. Sanders.

At six storeys high and 280,000 square feet, the David E. Kampe Tower will increase capacity and functionality of ambulatory care services, include five new operating rooms, 84 new single patient rooms, a rooftop helipad and space to allow the UBC Faculty of Medicine program to expand. The project will also accommodate renovations to expand the emergency department and update the pharmacy and supplies and equipment stores.