

MEDIA RELEASE

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Another advancement in infant care at Niagara Health

Niagara Health's tiniest patients are receiving enhanced care thanks to new technology in our Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU).

When NICU team members at the St. Catharines Site need to consult specialists on the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at McMaster Children's Hospital (MCH) in Hamilton, they can now connect through video.

The video connection, through the Ontario Telemedicine Network, gives the MCH team a bird's-eye view of the patient, their vital signs and other important information. The MCH team can control the view, as well as listen and speak to the team at Niagara Health about a baby's condition.

Previously, these consultations happened over the phone. Now that the McMaster team can see the baby, a more detailed plan of care can be put into place.

"The ability for the Niagara Health and MCH teams to work together as if they were in the same room is another significant advancement in infant care in Niagara," says Dr. Madan Roy, Deputy Chief of Pediatrics at MCH and Chief of Pediatrics at Niagara Health. "This collaborative approach ensures we are being comprehensive and providing the best quality of care."

The video technology, a mobile unit that can be used anywhere in the NICU, may also reduce the need for patients to be transferred from Niagara to Hamilton for follow-up care.

"Having a sick baby is stressful enough, so anytime we can provide care closer to home is important for our patients and their families," says Carol Munro, Clinical Manager of the NICU and Children's Health Unit. "Being able to connect through video with the MCH team is very reassuring for our physicians and multi-disciplinary staff."

Brock University study

Brock University Health Sciences students are conducting research on the effectiveness of the new system. Their work is happening through the Interprofessional Education for Quality Improvement Program (I-EQUIP). I-EQUIP functions as an extension of the classroom, providing an opportunity for students from Brock University, as well as leaders and front-line staff from Niagara Health to work together on a variety of quality patient-care initiatives.

Power of partnership

The NICU partnership is another example of Niagara Health and McMaster Children's Hospital collaborating on an innovative project to enhance patient care. In 2019, the [Pediatric Tele-resuscitation system](#), the first-of-its-kind system in Ontario, was launched. The system uses video conferencing-like technology to allow Emergency Department teams from Niagara Health and McMaster Children's Hospital to remotely work together to care for pediatric patients who are critically ill.

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