

Patients' stay now more convenient at Headwaters

Thursday March 5 2009

Headwaters Health Care Centre

Being admitted to hospital stirs up a lot of emotions. To help support you during this time, Headwaters wants to make your stay more convenient. The hospital is introducing a new account payment option. Soon patients will be able to authorize an imprint of their credit card to cover incidentals not covered by insurance or OHIP during the length of their stay.

The idea is similar to checking into a hotel and providing your credit card to cover extras like long-distance and room service. For the majority of patients, the only extras you'll be asked to pay for are television and phone rental, or the purchase of a toiletry pack. The new payment option will make it easier for patients to pay their account.

It costs Headwaters \$5 to issue an invoice to collect an outstanding account. Sometimes patients forget to visit the accounts office (next to the main entrance) to pay their bill when they leave the hospital. Collecting those debts costs the hospital. If the hospital works with a collection agency it costs us 50 per cent of our revenue — money that would otherwise be spent on programs and services.

Patients visiting the Headwaters area who need medical care but don't have insurance will be informed at registration about any costs they have to pay, and will be asked to authorize those costs on their credit card. When checking out of the hospital, your account can be paid for by cash, cheque, debit/Interac, MasterCard or VISA.

Personal care product packs now available

Many patients pack toiletries for their stay in hospital. Beginning this March patients will be able to purchase mom and baby personal care packs at a cost of \$20, and patient toiletry packs for \$10.

The price of the packs covers the cost of the items and is not a fundraising vehicle for the hospital.

The hospital provides some basic toiletries to patients who don't bring any with them, which costs the hospital more than \$20,000 annually. In today's economy, this is something the hospital can no longer afford to do.

Rather than having your significant others leave to go to the store and purchase these supplies, the packs are a convenient option.

Headwaters is encouraging patients to either purchase the toiletry packs or to bring their own unscented products from home.

In 2007, the hospital became scent-free to protect the health of patients, visitors and staff who are sensitive to scents. Some people who suffer from migraines or asthma may be affected by chemicals found in scented products. On the extreme side, some people have to be hospitalized as a result of strong scents, such as perfume or heavily scented flowers.

The public is invited to provide comments and suggestions about hospital services. Please contact Cholly Boland, president and CEO, Headwaters Health Care Centre, at 519-941-2702, ext. 2200.