

ANNUAL REPORT

2025-2026

To provide high-quality,
patient centered healthcare in
collaboration with our partners.



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Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the land we live, work, and play on is the unceded, traditional territories of the Algonquin Nation. We are grateful for the opportunity to provide care on this land, and we thank the generations of People who have been Stewards of the land for thousands of years. We recognize and deeply appreciate their historic connection to this place, and respect the traditional knowledge and healing developed over generations. We also recognize the contributions of Métis, Inuit, and Indigenous Peoples of many backgrounds and from many treaty and non-treaty lands and territories who have shaped and strengthened this country. We make a collective commitment to do our utmost to uphold the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.



A MESSAGE FROM THE INTEGRATED PRESIDENT & CEO OF SFMH & RVH

This past year has been one of connection, progress, and shared commitment. At St. Francis Memorial Hospital, we are proud to continue providing high-quality, patient-centered care close to home—something that matters deeply to our community, especially as demand for services continues to grow.

Every day, I see the impact of our hospital through the compassion, dedication, and professionalism of our staff, physicians, and volunteers. Their work makes a meaningful difference in the lives of patients and families, and I am incredibly proud of the care and support they provide.

We have made important strides in strengthening care for today and for the future. This includes advancing planning and investment for the redevelopment of our Emergency Department, as well as upgrading our facilities, equipment, and technology. Enhancements to our Electronic Health Record (EPIC) and ongoing efforts to strengthen cybersecurity are helping to ensure safe, reliable, and modern care.

These important advancements are made possible through the generosity of our donors and the commitment of the St. Francis Valley Healthcare Foundation, whose support continues to transform care in our community.

Working together is at the heart of everything we do. Through our partnership with Renfrew Victoria Hospital and collaboration with regional health partners, we are creating a more connected system of care—one that helps patients move smoothly between services and receive the care they need, when and where they need it. Locally, we are proud to work alongside organizations such as Madawaska Valley Hospice Palliative Care, Valley Manor, Champlain Gardens, and Barry's Bay & Area Senior Citizens Home Support Services to ensure people in our community have access to the right supports close to home.

We also remain focused on what matters most—quality, safety, and the patient experience. Over the past year, we have continued to strengthen how we learn, improve, and prepare for accreditation, while maintaining a strong culture of accountability and teamwork. We are especially grateful to our Patient and Family Advisory Committee, whose voices help keep us grounded in what truly matters to those we serve.

At the centre of it all are our people. I want to extend my sincere thanks to our staff, physicians, volunteers, and partners for everything they do. Their commitment, kindness, and expertise are what make exceptional care possible every day.

Looking ahead, we are optimistic about the future. We will continue to grow and evolve our programs, embrace new ideas, and strengthen the partnerships that support sustainable, community-focused care. Together, we are building a strong and vibrant future for St. Francis Memorial Hospital—one that reflects the needs, values, and priorities of our community. Thank you for your continued trust and support.

Suzanne Madore

Suzanne Madore

Integrated President and Chief Executive Officer of
St. Francis Memorial Hospital and Renfrew Victoria Hospital



*Suzanne Madore,
Integrated President and Chief
Executive Officer of SFMH & RVH*

A MESSAGE FROM THE ST. FRANCIS MEMORIAL HOSPITAL BOARD CHAIR

Over the past year, St. Francis Memorial Hospital has continued to demonstrate strong performance and resilience while maintaining a clear focus on delivering high-quality, patient-centered care.

Key accomplishments include continued strength in quality and patient safety, progress in strengthening clinical practice, and the effective management of increasing service demand, supported by strong leadership, staff engagement, and recruitment.

A central highlight has been the redevelopment of the Emergency Department, a critical investment in the future of care at SFMH that will enhance patient experience, improve access, and support growing community needs.

SFMH has also made meaningful progress in strengthening its partnership with Renfrew Victoria Hospital, advancing a more integrated and coordinated model of care across the region.

Looking ahead, SFMH will continue to focus on quality and safety, workforce stability, innovation, and financial sustainability, while further strengthening regional collaboration to support more connected care close to home.

A sincere thank you to all Board members for their continued commitment to SFMH and the communities they serve. The Board also recognizes the leadership team, staff, and physicians for their dedication, professionalism, and unwavering commitment to delivering exceptional patient care.



Kevin Quade

St. Francis Memorial Hospital Board Chair



*Kevin Quade,
St. Francis Memorial Hospital
Board Chair*

A MESSAGE FROM THE ST. FRANCIS MEMORIAL HOSPITAL CHIEF OF STAFF

On behalf of the Medical Advisory Committee, I am pleased to report at this year's Annual General Meeting in my role as Chief of the Medical Staff for St. Francis Memorial Hospital.

This past year has been one of meaningful progress and renewal. The redevelopment of our Emergency Department is advancing well, and we look forward to opening a modern, state-of-the-art facility in the near future. This important investment represents a significant milestone for both our hospital and the broader community, strengthening our ability to provide timely, high-quality care close to home. The next phase of the project will include renovations to the existing Emergency Department, along with enhancements to our medical records and ambulatory care areas—further supporting a more integrated and patient-centered care experience.



*Dr. Daniel Ostapowicz,
St. Francis Memorial Hospital
Chief of Staff*

We continue to strengthen our valued academic partnerships, including our collaboration with the University of Ottawa's Pembroke Family Medicine Teaching Unit. Through these partnerships, we are proud to support the training of family medicine residents, as well as medical students from the University of Ottawa and Queen's University. These relationships are essential to building the future healthcare workforce and sustaining high-quality care in rural communities.

Over the past year, we have welcomed two new physicians to our community. Dr. David Bruinsma brings extensive Emergency Department experience from the Hamilton area and has assumed the role of Chief of Emergency Medicine. We look forward to his leadership and contributions in the years ahead. We are also pleased to welcome Dr. Maryam Nayyerabadi, who has joined our community through the Practice Ready Ontario program and is practicing with the Family Health Team. This program plays an important role in supporting internationally trained physicians to become licensed in Ontario while improving access to care in underserved communities.

Looking ahead, hospitals across Eastern Ontario will be coming together through the Atlas Alliance to implement Epic, a shared electronic health record system, this fall. This includes Pembroke Regional Hospital, joining St. Francis Memorial, Renfrew Victoria, and Deep River and District Hospitals. This transition represents a significant step forward in enabling safer, more coordinated, and more seamless care, with improved access to patient information across the region.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to our dedicated medical staff, hospital teams, and community partners for their ongoing commitment to excellence. Together, we are strengthening our local healthcare system and ensuring that the communities we serve continue to receive the care they need, close to home.

Dr. Daniel Ostapowicz

Dr. Daniel Ostapowicz

St. Francis Memorial Hospital Chief of Staff

2021–2026 Strategic Plan

Quality of care

We will improve patient and family experience

- Successfully complete the Emergency Redevelopment project
- Meet the targeted objectives on all patient services and patient safety
- Integrate patient and family experience into planning and decision making
- Emphasize performance measurement and reporting; while focusing on patient safety, timeliness, quality and transparency
- Provide access to care without barriers

System integration

We will improve our partnerships to increase effective, seamless patient centred care

- Demonstrate Ontario Health Team leadership
- Ensure a patient centered approach
- Invest in Technological systems to further our Vision

Our mission

To provide high-quality, patient centered healthcare in collaboration with our partners.

Our vision

To be a leader in health services that are patient centered, integrated and responsive to rural community needs.

Financial performance

We will maintain sustainable financial stability

- Leading as a resource-conscious health provider
- Seeking improvement through efficiency and sustainability

Strength in people

We will recruit, develop and retain qualified staff

- Improve our recruitment plan ensuring inclusivity
- Ensure a healthy and safe workplace
- Demonstrate and support Just culture, innovation, learning and Continuous Quality Improvement
- Improve staff engagement



QUALITY OF CARE

At St. Francis Memorial Hospital, Quality of Care remains a key priority in delivering safe, patient-centered services. A strong commitment to improving the patient and family experience includes integrating their voices into planning and decision-making while advancing patient safety across all programs. Through a focus on performance, transparency, and equitable access to care, the organization continues to strengthen the quality and timeliness of care for the community. Highlights from the past year include:



System Pressures & Capacity Management

- Maintained high occupancy levels, with Emergency Department volumes beginning to rise in advance of expected summer demand.
- Strengthened surge planning and readiness strategies to manage capacity pressures during flu and respiratory illness seasons.
- Implemented Ontario Health East ALC best practices.



Clinical Services & Innovation

- Expanded EORLA laboratory coverage to provide onsite services until 11:00 p.m. daily, eliminating on-call gaps and improving access to timely diagnostics.
- Supported innovation in clinical practice through physician pilot of Epic's DAX Copilot AI scribe for enhanced documentation efficiency.
- Implemented best practices to improve patient experience and key performance indicators related to the Emergency Department.
- Launched a joint Ethics Committee and began participating in a Nephrology Research Project.



Accreditation & Quality Improvement

- Advanced preparation for Accreditation 2026, including completion of Global Workforce Surveys, self-assessments, and gap analyses, with action plans underway.
- Continued to embed patient experience as a core priority through the annual Quality Improvement Plan, with a focus on meaningful improvements in care and outcomes.
- Implemented Tendable, a streamlined online audit system that enables faster, clearer, and more efficient audits, supported by real-time analytics, simplified data review, and improved workflow efficiency. The platform strengthens quality improvement across the organization.
- Launched a joint Quality, Risk, and Safety Committee.



Best Practice & Professional Practice Development

- Progressed Best Practice Spotlight Organization (BPSO) pre-designate work, with measurable improvements in care supported by RNAO best practice guideline implementation and staff participation in the Global Summit.
- Established a formal Professional Practice Framework and launched joint interdisciplinary Committees to support evidence-informed care across nursing and allied health.
- Welcomed an Integrated Nursing Professional Practice Manager to support leadership and frontline teams in advancing nursing quality initiatives.



Patient & Family Centered Care

- Advanced patient and family-centered care initiatives, including strengthening the role of essential caregivers and improving patient education and communication.
- Partnered with the Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC) on key initiatives, including admission resources, delirium education, end-of-life care symbols, patient information booklets, and quality improvement planning.



Partnerships & Community Integration

- Advanced initiatives to support patients in remaining at home longer and improving overall health outcomes.
- Developed a collaborative pilot proposal with Ontario Health at Home, Community Paramedics, Renfrew County Housing, and community partners, including defined key performance indicators to support evaluation, scalability, and reductions in ALC and failed discharges.
- As a key partner within the OVOHT, continued to improve access to care for unattached patients.



STRENGTH IN PEOPLE



At St. Francis Memorial Hospital, Strength in People remains a foundational pillar of the strategic plan. A strong commitment to recruiting, developing, and retaining a qualified and inclusive workforce supports a healthy, safe, and supportive workplace. Through a continued focus on staff engagement, leadership development, and a culture of innovation, learning, and continuous quality improvement, strong teams are being built to meet the evolving needs of patients and the community. The following highlights reflect progress made this year in advancing people-focused priorities and investing in those who deliver care every day.



Leadership Development & Collaboration

- Leadership teams from SFMH and RVH participated in four joint leadership development days.
- Introduced monthly management training sessions to support ongoing leadership development and consistency across teams.
- Launched a talent management program and leadership succession planning.



Recruitment & Workforce Planning

- Recruitment efforts remain a key priority, with ongoing initiatives to attract and retain physicians and team members across all programs.
- Staffing in preparation for the summer months continues to present challenges, with active efforts underway to address workforce needs.
- Welcomed a new Nurse Manager to support clinical leadership and strengthen team capacity across programs.
- Introduced an Integrated Accreditation Coordinator role to lead ongoing Accreditation readiness, strengthen quality initiatives, and support alignment with best practice standards.
- Welcomed Dr. David Bruinsma as Chief of the Emergency Department, providing leadership and supporting high-quality, patient-centered emergency care.



Staff & Community Engagement

- SFMH welcomed students from the Madawaska Valley District High School careers class in May 2025 for a site tour, helping to promote healthcare careers and community engagement.
- The organization continues to engage experts, learn from peer organizations, and listen to the needs of staff and the community to guide improvements.
- Invested in communications capacity through the addition of a Digital Content Creator/Videographer to enhance storytelling, staff engagement, and community connection.



Continuous Improvement

- Development of the organization's next strategic plan is currently underway.



SYSTEM INTEGRATION

At St. Francis Memorial Hospital, system integration is essential to delivering effective, seamless, patient-centered care. A strong commitment to strengthening partnerships across the region reflects leadership and supports a coordinated approach that puts patients first. Through ongoing investment in technology and collaborative initiatives, progress continues toward a more connected system that supports the organization's vision and improves access, experience, and outcomes for patients and the community. The following highlights demonstrate progress over the past year:



Clinical Integration & Regional Collaboration

- Team members actively participate on multiple Ottawa Valley Ontario Health Team (OVOHT) committees, contributing to regional planning and collaboration.
- Continued expansion of the Atlas Alliance, with additional hospitals joining, is strengthening opportunities to optimize care delivery across the region.
- The Regional Chief Nursing Executive group is collaborating to deliver shared education for both new and existing staff, reducing duplication and leveraging regional expertise more effectively.
- Enhanced access to specialized diagnostics through the addition of a full-time vascular sonographer, supported by RVH referrals, strengthening regional collaboration and improving timely access to care.



Enhancing Access to Care

- Ongoing work to improve access to diagnostic services closer to home, supporting timely and convenient care for patients.
- Strengthened partnership with Ontario Health atHome, focused on supporting the aging population to remain at home longer and enabling earlier, safe discharges from hospital.
- Expansion of hematologic oncology systemic therapy services at RVH in January 2026 enhanced access to specialized cancer care closer to home, reinforcing the longstanding partnership with The Ottawa Hospital and benefiting patients across the region, including those in the SFMH catchment area.



Digital Integration & System Readiness

- Close collaboration with Pembroke Regional Hospital to support Epic implementation readiness, including sharing insights on future-state workflows, resource requirements, and leading practices for go-live and stabilization.



Operational Integration & Shared Services

- Continued to advance system integration through the alignment of key support services across both sites.
- Established an integrated Human Resources department to support consistent workforce practices, policies, and staff experience.
- Implemented integrated Finance Manager roles to strengthen financial oversight, coordination, and decision-making.
- Integrated Materials Management services to improve supply chain coordination, efficiency, and resource utilization across the organizations.
- Implemented updated Corporate and Medical Bylaws to strengthen governance, support organizational alignment, and ensure compliance with evolving regulatory and clinical standards.





FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

At St. Francis Memorial Hospital, financial performance is grounded in a commitment to maintaining sustainable financial stability while delivering high-quality care. Guided by a resource-conscious approach, strategic investments continue to support infrastructure, services, and partnerships that address both immediate needs and long-term resilience. Through a focus on efficiency, innovation, and sustainability, the organization is strengthening its financial position while ensuring the ability to meet the evolving needs of patients and the community. Key initiatives from the past year include:



Capital Investments & Infrastructure

- The Emergency Department Redevelopment Project is well underway with the first phase.
- The hospital received \$2.1 million in Health Infrastructure Renewal Funding (HIRF) from the Ministry for a slope stabilization project, supporting the safety and sustainability of hospital infrastructure.
- During the year, \$451K in new equipment was acquired to support patient care and service delivery.
- The BMD machine was received near the end of the year, enhancing diagnostic capabilities.



Funding & Financial Support

- Ministry of Health approved 3% increase to existing funding levels to support the delivery of patient care.
- The hospital secured one-time funding in the amount of \$300,000 to support initiatives aimed at reducing Alternative Level of Care (ALC) pressures.
- Additional regional investments included funding for the Rainbow Valley Community Health Centre (RVCHC) to expand primary care rostering, supporting increased Physician, Nurse Practitioner, Registered Nurse, and administrative resources.
- Invested in a provincial benefits plan to support long-term financial sustainability while enhancing employee benefits, contributing to recruitment, retention, and overall staff wellbeing.



Regional Efficiency & Integration

- Hospitals across the region continue to work collaboratively to explore partnership opportunities that enhance patient access and outcomes while improving system-wide efficiencies.



Financial Position & Sustainability

- St. Francis Memorial Hospital concluded the fiscal year in a positive financial position with an operating surplus of \$369,832. The organization remains focused on long-term sustainability, including transitioning toward innovative and integrated models of care.
- The organization's overall financial health remains strong, with a current ratio exceeding 1.54, indicating sufficient liquidity to meet short-term obligations.
- To date, \$11,039,342 has been invested in the ED Redevelopment project. The St. Francis Valley Healthcare Foundation has contributed \$1,122,683 in support of the redevelopment and associated clinical capital equipment, for which we extend our sincere thanks. The Ministry of Health has also provided significant support, contributing \$6,415,719 toward the project.

2025-2026 REVENUE

Ministry of Health Ontario	\$ 13,930,777
Patient Services	584,927
Preferred Accommodation and	177,128
Chronic Co-Payments	
Investment Income	201,783
Other	881,842
Amortization of Deferred	285,058
Contributions Related to Equipment	
Program Revenue	1,993,266

\$18,054,781

2025-2026 EXPENSE

Salaries, Wages and Purchased	\$ 6,941,929
Services	
Employee Benefits	1,724,886
Medical Staff Renumeration	2,915,825
Medical & Surgical Supplies	164,319
Drugs	197,004
General Supplies, Services &	3,344,713
Other	403,007
Program Expenses	1,993,266

\$17,684,949

OUR CARE BY THE NUMBERS

At St. Francis Memorial Hospital, every number tells a story—of patients cared for, services delivered, and the dedication of our team. These metrics offer a snapshot of our impact over the past year, reflecting our commitment to quality care, access, and continuous improvement in our community.



Emergency & Inpatient Care



ER Visits

11,687



Admitted Patients
(Inpatient Unit)

423



Patient Days in
Hospital

9,474



Average
Length of Stay
(Inpatient Unit)

9.5 days



Beds
(Active & CCC)

20



Specialized Services



Hemodialysis
Treatments

1,325



Cardiac
Rehabilitation Visits

1,839



Diabetic
Clinic Visits

1,290



Diagnostic Imaging



Ultrasounds

1,594



Mammography
Exams

979



Bone Mineral
Density Tests

415



X-Rays

7,075



Human Resources



Staff
Members

158



Clinical Care
Assistants (CCA's)

5



Clinical
Scholars

3



Active
Physicians

6



Associate
Physicians

0



Courtesy
Physicians

174



Locum
Physicians

2



Top 5 Communities We Serve



Madawaska
Valley



Killaloe, Hagarty
and Richards



South
Algonquin



Brudenell,
Lyndoch
and Raglan



North Algonia
Wilberforce

TRANSFORMING EMERGENCY CARE FOR THE FUTURE

Emergency Department Redevelopment Project

St. Francis Memorial Hospital's Emergency Department Redevelopment Project represents a significant investment in the future of care for our community—enhancing access, modernizing infrastructure, and strengthening our ability to respond when it matters most.



BUILDING FOR BETTER CARE

Throughout 2025 and into 2026, construction progressed steadily on the new Emergency Department addition. Early phases focused on preparing the site, including exterior building work, excavation, and foundation installation. While some stages—such as brick removal and excavation—created temporary disruptions, every effort was made to minimize impact on patients, visitors, and staff.

By mid-year, major milestones were achieved, including completion of the foundation and structural base, followed by the construction of masonry walls and installation of structural steel. As the project advanced into late summer and fall, work shifted to enclosing the building, allowing interior construction to proceed.



PROGRESS YOU CAN SEE

By the end of 2025, the new ED addition had taken clear shape:

- Roofing and exterior windows were installed, bringing the structure closer to completion
- Interior work advanced significantly, including electrical, plumbing, ventilation, and IT infrastructure
- Key connections to the existing hospital were established, preparing for seamless integration

Supporting infrastructure improvements were also completed, including stabilization of the western slope, relocation of propane systems to accommodate a revised helicopter flight path, and preparation of surrounding parking and access areas.



IMPROVING ACCESS & FLOW

As part of the redevelopment, important changes were made to improve patient and ambulance access:

- A new parking area was developed to support staff and patient flow
- The hospital's gazebo was relocated to accommodate the upgraded helicopter landing path
- Site work ensured safe, efficient movement throughout the construction period

These changes will ultimately enhance how patients arrive, move through, and access care at the hospital.



PREPARING FOR WHAT'S NEXT

With the new addition nearing completion, the project is transitioning into its next phase—renovation of the existing Emergency Department space. This next stage will modernize current facilities and ensure a fully integrated, state-of-the-art emergency care environment.



A COMMITMENT TO OUR COMMUNITY

This redevelopment reflects SFMH's ongoing commitment to providing high-quality, accessible care close to home. Once complete, the new Emergency Department will offer improved patient flow, enhanced clinical spaces, and the infrastructure needed to support evolving healthcare needs for years to come.



Rendering of the completed future Emergency Department at St. Francis Memorial Hospital.

THROUGH THE LENS: BUILDING OUR NEW EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT



BETTER CARE, CLOSER TO HOME:

Advancing Care with a New Bone Mineral Density (BMD) Machine

In early 2026, St. Francis Memorial Hospital invested in new technology to enhance patient care close to home. The Diagnostic Imaging department welcomed a new Bone Mineral Density (BMD) machine, replacing a unit that had been in use for more than 20 years. The previous machine had become increasingly unreliable and could no longer support updated clinical standards. Its replacement ensures patients receive high-quality, evidence-based assessments aligned with current national guidelines.



A Modern Approach to Bone Health

The new GE Lunar Prodigy BMD unit brings advanced capabilities that support earlier detection and ongoing monitoring of osteoporosis and fracture risk. With integrated modules and updated reporting tools, clinicians can make more informed decisions and provide more consistent, standardized care. Importantly, this technology ensures that patients in our rural community receive the same high standard of care as those in larger urban centres, promoting health equity.



Enhancing the Patient Experience

Patients benefit from a smoother and more timely experience, including shorter appointments and quicker access to results. The new system maintains high diagnostic accuracy while continuing to use low-dose imaging, ensuring both safety and quality.



Supporting Quality & Continuous Improvement

This investment reflects SFMH's commitment to quality of care, modernization, and continuous improvement. By upgrading essential diagnostic equipment, the hospital is strengthening its ability to deliver timely, accurate, and patient-centered care—now and into the future.



Improving Access & Efficiency

The new system is faster, more reliable, and better integrated with existing hospital systems. Key improvements include shorter scan times allowing more patients to be seen each day, reduced wait times and improved access to local services, seamless integration with EPIC for efficient reporting and record access, and the ability to compare current scans with historical patient data.

With increased efficiency and reliability, the department expects to address current waitlists within a few months of full implementation and expand clinic availability to meet community demand.

Introducing Our New Bone Mineral Density Machine!

Enhancing diagnostic care - right here, close to home.



PARTNERING WITH PATIENTS & FAMILIES

Patient & Family Advisory Committee



PATIENT VOICES

Helping Shape Care

The Patient and Family Advisory Committee (PFAC) continued to play an essential role in advancing patient- and family-centered care at St. Francis Memorial Hospital in 2025/2026. Comprised of volunteer patient and caregiver advisors, the Committee brings forward lived experiences to help guide decision-making, strengthen services, and enhance the overall care experience.

Throughout the year, PFAC Members partnered with hospital leadership and clinical teams, contributing valuable insight across planning, quality improvement, education, and governance initiatives. Their involvement ensured that patient and family perspectives remained central to programs, policies, and service delivery.

AREAS OF IMPACT



Quality Improvement & Accreditation



Emergency Department Redevelopment



Patient Education & Resources



Best Practice Spotlight Organization (BPSO)



Organizational Governance



Leadership & Strategic Planning

KEY CONTRIBUTIONS

2025-2026



Patient and Family Advisors



Number of Meetings Held



Policies, Tools & Materials Reviewed



Patient Education Initiatives

Contributed to patient education initiatives, including materials on navigating the healthcare system and caregiver resources.



Emergency Department Redevelopment Planning

Shared input on Emergency Department redevelopment planning, focusing on patient flow, comfort, and communication.



Quality & Safety Initiatives

Provided feedback on quality and safety initiatives, including Accreditation priorities and clinical tools.



BPSO Initiatives & Resources

Supported implementation of Best Practice Spotlight Organization (BPSO) initiatives and patient-facing resources.



Organizational Governance

Contributed to organizational governance through participation in reporting, planning, and leadership transition activities.



"As a PFAC Member, I am proud to serve as a community volunteer, bringing an external perspective to support meaningful improvements. Working alongside hospital staff, there is an opportunity to contribute to policy development at St. Francis Memorial Hospital and to help ensure the voices of patients and caregivers are reflected in decision-making. This work helps enhance the quality of care and the overall patient experience. PFAC Members also have the opportunity to support Barry's Bay & Area Senior Citizens Home Support Services (BBAHS) and Madawaska Valley Hospice Palliative Care (MVHPC), contributing to the ongoing development of compassionate, high-quality services for individuals and families throughout the community."

- William Kloosterman, Patient and Family Advisor

Care Close to Home: A Life-Saving Difference at SFMH

Patient Story

“*I felt safe, I trusted every decision—and somehow, they made the hospital feel like home.*”

What began as subtle shortness of breath during everyday activities—walking, dancing, even starting a new Pilates routine—didn’t initially raise alarm for Vicky Cybulski-Blank. Like many individuals, she attributed the symptoms to fatigue, a pulled muscle, or the winter season. But something didn’t feel right.

On the evening of March 15th, that instinct became impossible to ignore. *“I said, there’s something going on. This just doesn’t feel right.”* After experiencing unusual chest discomfort at home, she made the decision to come to St. Francis Memorial Hospital (SFMH)—a decision that would ultimately save her life.

From the moment she arrived, the care was immediate and compassionate. *“From the time I walked in until the day I left—nothing but praise. Everyone was phenomenal.”*

Within minutes, she was assessed and brought in for testing. While initial results appeared normal, the care team remained vigilant. Subtle changes in her bloodwork told a different story. *“They took it seriously. That made all the difference.”*

Her care team recognized the warning signs of a potentially serious cardiac event. She was admitted, stabilized, and quickly referred for further treatment. That Wednesday, she was transported for a cardiac procedure that revealed a 95% blockage in a major artery—commonly known as a ‘widow-maker.’ *“I didn’t present like a typical heart patient. That’s why this matters. They didn’t dismiss me—they listened.”*

A stent was successfully placed, preventing what could have been a major heart attack. Throughout her time at SFMH, it wasn’t just the clinical care that stood out—it was the people. *“The compassion, the attention, the small things—they went the extra step every time.”* From nurses who anticipated her needs, to staff who ensured she had a meal waiting after a long day of tests, to the friendly faces who greeted her each day—every interaction reinforced the strength of care close to home. *“Whether it was the nurses, the cleaning staff, or those delivering meals—everyone treated me with kindness. You don’t get that everywhere.”*

Her experience also highlights an important message—particularly for women, whose cardiac symptoms may not always follow expected patterns. *“Women need to listen to their bodies. I almost didn’t come in.”*

Today, she continues her recovery through cardiac rehabilitation—right here at St. Francis Memorial Hospital. *“It’s two minutes from home. It’s accessible, it’s supportive, and it’s helping me get stronger every day.”*

Reflecting on her experience, one message stands out clearly:

“We are so lucky to have this hospital. Care close to home didn’t just make things easier—it saved my life.”



Pictured here is Vicky Cybulski-Blank, a recent SFMH patient, embracing recovery with gratitude and resilience.



Pictured here is Vicky Cybulski-Blank, working toward recovery and renewed strength in the cardiac rehabilitation program at SFMH.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

FEEDBACK AND REFLECTIONS FROM OUR PATIENT SATISFACTION SURVEYS

Patient feedback is an essential part of how we learn, grow, and continuously improve the care we provide. The comments shared through our inpatient and emergency department patient satisfaction surveys offer valuable insight into the experiences of those we serve—highlighting moments of compassion, excellence, and connection. These reflections help guide our commitment to delivering high-quality, patient-centred care every day.



"Very efficient, and thorough! The doctor was fantastic and explained everything perfectly and in terms that were easy to understand! The intake nurse was very sweet and kind as well as the nursing student! The X-Ray technician was super sweet and amazing at her job!! Great job everyone keep up the great work!"

"All staff and doctors took the time to explain everything in words I understood. I felt like I was the only patient there, but I knew they were very busy. Always smiling which made me feel better. All tests were done in a reasonable length of time. On discharge, all stopped to wish me well and wave goodbye."

"Thank you so much for your comfort and genuine concern about my well being, you truly go above and beyond, and I think you deserve to be reminded just how appreciative we all are of your wonderful care."

"We are so grateful to have St. Francis Memorial Hospital within a manageable drive from us. We never fail to have an excellent experience there. We have such confidence in the staff and the level of care. Thank you!"

"All of the staff were amazing. For a small hospital we are second to none. The care I received was above and beyond. We are so lucky to have the dedicated team of professionals in our community."

"From ER to my room on the second floor, it was the most caring, empathetic, respectful treatment I have ever received at a hospital. Second to none, the staff are unbelievable."



LOOKING AHEAD

As healthcare needs continue to evolve, St. Francis Memorial Hospital remains focused on strengthening access to care, enhancing the patient experience, and investing in the future of rural healthcare. These priorities will guide efforts in the year ahead while continuing to deliver high-quality care close to home.



2026-2027 Key Priorities & Initiatives



Expand Addictions & Treatment Services

Enhancing access to compassionate, coordinated care for individuals and families affected by substance abuse.



Launch of the Caregiver Support Program

Providing education, resources, and support to empower caregivers in their vital role within the healthcare journey.



Introduce the Hospital-to-Home Program

Supporting smoother transitions from hospital to home to improve continuity of care and patient outcomes.



Invest in Diagnostic Imaging

Introducing new X-ray and mammography equipment to support the new Emergency Department and strengthen diagnostic capabilities.



Strengthen Education & Placements

Expanding student placements and hands-on learning opportunities to support workforce development and future healthcare professionals.



Advancing Phase 2 of the ED Redevelopment Project

Continuing infrastructure improvements that will enhance patient care, safety, and capacity for years to come.



Strategic Planning for the Next Five-Year Cycle

Engaging patients, staff, physicians, volunteers, and community partners to shape the organization's next strategic direction.



Accreditation Survey - December 2026

Preparing for Accreditation Canada's survey process to demonstrate continued excellence in quality, safety, and patient-centered care.



Sustaining Quality and Efficient Performance

Maintaining strong performance and accountability across key quality, operational, and patient experience indicators.





CONTACT US



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