New General Cardiology Clinic - Triage Service at the General

Did you know that, according to Statistics Canada, someone dies every seven minutes in Canada from heart disease or stroke; and that cardiovascular disease (heart disease, diseases of the blood vessels and stroke) accounts for the death of more Canadians than any other disease?

Within Ontario alone, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care reports that 26,000 individuals each year die of heart disease – that’s 35 percent of deaths in the province.

Hamilton Health Sciences is taking steps to ensure that individuals in our community can access cardiology care even quicker with the opening of a new General Cardiology Clinic – Triage Service at the General Hospital on July 5.

“The goal is to provide a reliable method for rapid access to cardiology out-patient services,” explains Dr. Stuart Connolly, Director, Division of Cardiology. “The wait to see a cardiologist can sometimes be up to several months.”

Patients will be seen in the new clinic within 72 hours for urgent referrals, within two weeks for semi urgent referrals, and within two months for elective referrals. The clinic will also provide rapid assessment for atrial fibrillation patients.

“The service is a part of the existing Cardiac Ambulatory Clinic,” explains Lori MacCullouch, Clinical Manager, Cardiac and Vascular Program. “A cardiology triage nurse will screen all referrals to determine urgency and will direct appropriate referrals to the participating cardiologists.”

The clinic will serve patients who:

- present in the Emergency Department and can wait safely at home for required outpatient cardiology services as assessed by the Emergency Department physician
- are seen in HHS and St. Joseph’s clinics and who require outpatient cardiology services in conjunction with other services
- are being discharged from hospital and require ongoing outpatient cardiology services when it is not possible for the patient to see a community cardiologist
- are seen in Family Practice offices and require outpatient cardiology services sooner than is available in their community within existing cardiology resources

Physician referral will be required. The service will begin accepting semi urgent and elective referrals on June 23, and urgent referrals on July 1.
For more information about the service, please contact Anne Wilkinson, Cardiology Triage Nurse Clinician, at ext. 49080.