

Celebrating the WLMH CT's Scanniversary

It's been a year since the team at West Lincoln Memorial Hospital (WLMH) provided its first computed tomography (CT) scan at the site. Getting to that historic day last June was more than a decade in the making.

"What an amazing year we've had here in the CT department at West Lincoln," said Mindy Chmielewski, Sr. CT Technologist at WLMH. "One year of providing care to the community and helping to reduce wait times across Hamilton Health Sciences network. I really couldn't have asked for a better team to persevere through these difficult times we are facing in healthcare. We have amazing support within the community and within our hospital site as well."

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Over the past year, more than 7,300 scans were performed at the site. Approximately 3,000 of those scans were either inpatient or patients from the emergency department. Previously, these patients would need to be taken to a clinical site in Hamilton to receive the scan. A nurse from WLMH would usually go with the patient on that journey.

"Having the CT scan at the site has significantly decreased our investigational delays and as a result has allowed us to diagnose and resolve our patients health concern in less time," said Dr. Joan Bellaire, Medical Site Lead at WLMH. "It has considerably improved the flow of our patients within our emergency department. It has also eliminated the need for nurses to accompany our patients off site for an off-site CT scan, which eased some of the challenges with nursing shortages that we and most hospitals are facing."

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By all accounts, integrating the CT scanner into site operations has been essentially seamless. This is largely due to many teams at the site who work together to create a patient care atmosphere that is “second to none.”

“Since its implementation, site teams have collaborated to provide a remarkable experience for patients and families,” said Bethany Hancocks, clinical manager responsible for diagnostic imaging (DI), emergency department and other units at WLMH. “The DI team has worked diligently to ensure all of our techs have the essential training they need to complete these essential exams for patients in the West Niagara community and surrounding areas. The commitment to providing an optimal patient experience is recognized not only on the smiles of the patients we see through the department, but also in the feedback we have received from our grateful patients and families.”

The path to bring the CT to the site was a long one, but was accelerated by HHS’ landmark Managed Equipment Services (MES) agreement with Siemens Healthineers in early 2020. It was also supported by generous community donations through the WLMH Foundation.

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