

**Free Wi-Fi for patients and families at QEII Health Sciences Centre**  
**Donors give to keep us all connected**

**Halifax, NS:** Patients and families at the QEII Health Sciences Centre will soon be able to say connected 24 hours a day, 365 days a year with free, unrestricted Wi-Fi.

Thanks to the Gauthier and David families' gift to the QEII Foundation, the first phase of the year-long project was launched in late December, which gave free Wi-Fi access to patients in select high-traffic areas of the QEII.

"It was important to us that we gave to something that would benefit many patients and families at the QEII," said Paul Gauthier, spokesperson for the families. "We know the days can be long, and having free Wi-Fi helps to keep patients connected to their family, friends and support network. We saw the need, knew we could help, and worked with the QEII Foundation to make it happen."

The first phase of the QEII's project included: connection for the dialysis unit on the sixth floor of the Dickson Centre, the orthopaedic waiting room on the fourth floor of the Halifax Infirmary and the Charles V. Keating Emergency and Trauma Centre. More areas will have free Wi-Fi available as it is installed and tested over the next several months. The goal is to eventually make both of the QEII's sites (Victoria General site and Halifax Infirmary site) completely Wi-Fi accessible.

This news was welcomed by Gerry Post, a former inpatient of the QEII's Nova Scotia Rehabilitation Centre. Gerry still visits the QEII regularly for outpatient rehabilitation treatments.

"Until you are in the situation, you really have no idea how much having access to free Wi-Fi at the hospital means," said Gerry. "Not only did it allow me to stay connected with my daughters in Montreal and San Francisco, there are also a number of rehabilitation apps and opportunities available for patients, including voice recognition and eye-gaze technologies. I am very happy someone came forward to make this happen. Their gift truly makes a difference."

The few areas that had Wi-Fi access before the project launched were restricted, which meant sites such as Facebook and Netflix were not available. The new Wi-Fi, called *QEII\_wifi*, is free and unrestricted. This means patients are able to stay connected on social networking sites, check emails, watch movies and even do their online banking.

"Our job at the QEII Foundation is to help improve care for patients at the QEII," says Bill Bean, president and CEO of the QEII Foundation. "The Gauthier and David families are a reminder of how the generosity of a few people can touch an entire community. We are very inspired by their gift and creative thinking. We are excited to be a part of this project that is improving the patient experience and truly keeps us all connected."

The Gauthier and David families' gift covered the hard costs needed to install wireless access points across both sites. The gift was just over \$600,000.

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