

Re-opening of Obstetrics at James Paton Memorial Regional Health Centre

March 2024 - Ongoing

Motivation



From April 2022 until March 2024, NL Health Services' obstetrical services in the Central Zone were offered primarily at the Central Newfoundland Regional Health Centre (CNRHC) in Grand Falls-Windsor, resulting from human resource challenges at James Paton Memorial Regional Health Centre (JPMRHC) in Gander.

During this time, individuals who lived on the east side of the Central Zone reported significant impact on service access. For example, a family residing in New-Wes-Valley needed about three hours to reach the nearest delivering facility.

The thriving Midwifery Program that started in Gander in 2019 also required a birthing facility to practice to full scope. While obstetrical services were not being offered at JPMRHC, a small team of midwives continued to practice in Gander. This solidified their value within the health-care system.



Team members coming together



Happy team on re-opening day



Quilts and hats donated by a community group



First baby

Outcomes/Progress

Since March 18, 2024, the obstetrics unit at JPMRHC has delivered care to over **80** families. The Obstetrical Program currently has filled nursing positions at **88%** with excellent team engagement. It practices frequent simulations and drills and takes part in weekly multidisciplinary rounds discussing upcoming and past cases.

The program continues to gather, analyze and act on formal and informal feedback from clients and families to provide the best service possible.

Key goals for the future:

- Have a fully self-sufficient internal nursing team
- Hire a fourth midwife
- Increase capacity to take students including nursing, paramedicine, medical and midwifery
- Achieve Baby Friendly designation
- Maintain consistent obstetrical service at both Central Zone birthing sites
- Continue to create a family-friendly environment with our education and community partners.



“ I feel this orientation placement played a vital part in building my skills and confidence going into this job. It was an exceptional experience. ”

- Obstetrics RN

Goals are achievable when teams know **what** resources are available; and **when** and **how** to mobilize them.

Goals

- To successfully re-establish obstetrical services at JPMRHC in Gander.
- To align with NL Health Services' strategic goal of increased access to care.

Road to Re-opening

Re-opening of obstetrical services required months of evaluation, planning, work and dedication.

The Obstetrical Program developed a plan keeping in mind the following four major components:

- **Human resource** requirements including nursing, physician, midwifery and other team members
- **Training** requirements including partnership with tertiary care
- **Physical environment** including repairs, equipment and supplies
- **Communication** with internal and external partners, including community partners

Re-opening Overview

- Some of the Obstetrical Program's newer nurses worked side by side with nurse experts at the Janeway Children's Health and Rehabilitation Centre. Four nurses took part in this partnership and experienced over 30 normal and complex births. A six-week comprehensive orientation was provided to all obstetrical nurses at JPMRHC.
- The obstetrical unit underwent numerous upgrades and improvements.
- Recruitment teams helped connect and on-board health professionals.
- Leadership teams regularly met with community partners and care providers.



Continued Journey

This immense and rewarding process provided the opportunity for the obstetrical program to re-create a service that fits the needs of a changing community and embraces a genuine attitude of collaboration and quality.

The recruitment and retention of physicians and other health-care professionals throughout the province is a key focus for NL Health Services as well as providing quality and safe obstetrical services to patients.



ICARE

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Central Zone | JPMRHC Obstetrical Program

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