

Better care for cardiac patients



Jocelyn de Hoop, RQHR cardiology technologist

“We know there is still work to do, but we’ve made significant headway. There are fewer ‘redos,’ staff are working more efficiently, there’s less waste and patients are receiving better quality, safer care.”

Vicki Ehrlich
Director, Cardio-Neuro
Diagnostic Services

Cardiac patients are consistently getting quicker care because staff have improved how they label electrocardiogram (ECG) tests. An improvement team has developed new training methods, created visual reminders, and developed new standard work and procedures around labelling and patient identification practices. The result: Labelling errors that require staff to redo patients’ ECGs test occur about 250 times per month – or five per cent of the time. Previously, the error/re-do rate ranged between 17 and 33 per cent, or between 765 and 1,486 ECG tests monthly. Physicians need ECG test results to help diagnose and begin treatment for a heart attack. The quicker patients receive care, the less their hearts are permanently damaged.