

# ARE WE *bugging* YOU?

A visit by a member of the IPAC team to your unit may not always be cause for celebration, as the infection prevention and control nurses are the first to admit. But the mood was decidedly upbeat when IPAC toured the hospital during IPAC week in October to teach staff, be they nurses or orderlies, Enviro Services or Dietetics personnel, about safe infection prevention practices.

Kicking off the week was an *Eliminate, Don't Contaminate* circuit of the units, with nurses instructing staff on proper ways to handle waste. Meanwhile the more pleasant smell of popcorn wafted through the air during the IPAC Fair, with family-feud and roulette games challenging staff with questions related to infection prevention.

In the past, when JGH infection prevention nurses made an appearance, it was usually because a patient on the floor was battling an infection—an occurrence not uncommon in an acute-care hospital, but certainly never welcome. Infections that are acquired within the healthcare system are the fourth leading cause of death in Canada.

"We're striving to offer more continuity by making more regular visits to the floors. We don't want the staff to associate our visit with the occurrence of a problem on their unit. Instead, we want them to perceive us as a resource," IPAC Interim Coordinator **Silvana Perna** told staff during IPAC Week Rounds. "Now the same IPAC nurse is on call for a full week, rather than on a specific day. This increased presence allows us to resolve day-to-day issues and follow any potential problems for a full week. This



From left, Weibe Velasco from Enviro Services and Dietary Helper Bryan Coke play the roulette table in the IPAC Fair, as IPAC team members test their knowledge of infection prevention practices. Behind table, from left, Nursing Consultant Jennifer Eastmond, Data Manager Noveline Downer and Clinical Nurse Anne Desmarais.

frees up the other IPAC nurses that are not on call to focus their work on longer-term projects or prevention issues rather than dealing with daily flare ups," she explained.

Staff also learned that the nurses now specialize in various areas of infection prevention. For instance, a patient with a confirmed *Clostridium difficile* infection will prompt a follow up from Nurse **Jennifer Eastmond**, while you can expect to see Nurse **Lara Maalouf** managing an outbreak of an extreme drug-resistant organism.

And since outbreaks are contained

through collaborative effort, the IPAC nurses also ensure that staff are taking all of the necessary precautions to prevent their spread. Other key players in keeping staff informed and in line are the IPAC delegates (*Agents Multipliers*). This group of multidisciplinary team members, led by IPAC nurse **Fernanda Cordeiro**, are found on the nursing units throughout the hospital, offering training to reinforce the infection-prevention practices that help maintain a safe workplace environment.

One of the newer additions to the team, Nurse **Benoit St-Denis**, focuses on the risk to patients posed by improperly sealed construction projects. In coordination with the Project Management team, Mr. St-Denis audits different work sites throughout the JGH. This is an important facet of infection prevention, as, for instance, the dust that is released when a ceiling tile is removed may contain spores that can potentially infect a patient whose immune system is compromised. In high-risk areas, therefore, Mr. St-Denis will assess the risk based on the type of work being done and the patient population. He will then recommend the appropriate measures to contain dust around the work zone.



An impromptu octet accompanied by Bryan Highbloom serenades passersby about the bug-banishing benefits of proper hand-hygiene practices. From left: Silvana Perna, interim coordinator of Infection Prevention; Music Therapy stagiaire Jonathan Sidel; Microbiology Lab Technician Mina Patel; LDI Research Technician Romina Gheorghe; IPAC Nurse Jennifer Eastmond; Josina Van Den Nieuwenhof, head nurse on 6 West; IPAC Data Manager Noveline Downer, and Mr. Highbloom. Not shown: Dr. Matthew Oughton, Infectious Diseases physician. Visit [Pulse](http://Pulse) online to hear a live version of So Much Cleaner (sung to the tune of I'm a Believer). For more info: [jgh.ca/Pulse](http://jgh.ca/Pulse)

to her work and cares about each and every one of her employees as though they were her own flesh and blood." "Despite always being so busy and focused," said CRIU social worker **Rebecca Puterman**, "whenever anyone needs anything, Isabel's door is always open." **Mina Ladores**, the Head Nurse at Herzl and the CRIU, spoke on behalf of the nursing group, calling Ms. Pereira "the picture of dedication".



Isabel Pereira

JGH Executive Director **Dr. Lawrence Rosenberg** were turned over to Ms. Rodgers by Co-Chair **Lucie Shapiro**.

Ms. Ocansey describes in her nomination letter one of the typical instances of Ms. Rodgers' kindness: "She was helping a wheelchair-bound patient, who was accompanied to the hospital by an adult child with mental health behavioural problems. Even though this person was not a patient, Susan cared for him as though he were her patient as well, showing him compassion and respect and taking the time to address his concerns."

"I love my work, we were pioneers in a way," Ms. Rodgers said as she accepted her Caring Beyond Award, referring to the TA program, which allows the PABs to remain and help on the units rather than leave to bring a patient to, for instance, have tests performed.

The final Caring Beyond recipient of the year also "transports" patients.

"**Bryan Highbloom** has been the JGH Music Therapist for several decades now, but his enthusiasm and engagement is as fresh as any newcomer's," wrote Communications Editor **Laure-Elise Singer** in her nomination letter. The travelling minstrel was invited to perform at the annual JGH Staff

Appreciation Holiday Party under a pretext to present him with his award.

"Bryan is the ultimate 'silent' multi-disciplinary team member—he unofficially belongs on just about every team in the hospital! Ultimately, though, every step Bryan takes, note he sings or chord he strums on his ubiquitous guitar, is for the patient," wrote Ms. Singer. "He brings his sensitive, sunny disposition to the units, taking requests and playing across the musical genres (be it rock, Yiddish folk tunes or jazz) with ease, skill and warmth—whatever will transport the patient to a happier place and time in their lives, far from their health troubles."

**Karine Lepage**, the head nurse on the Hematology-Oncology Unit, has for several years witnessed Mr. Highbloom's

compassionate nature.

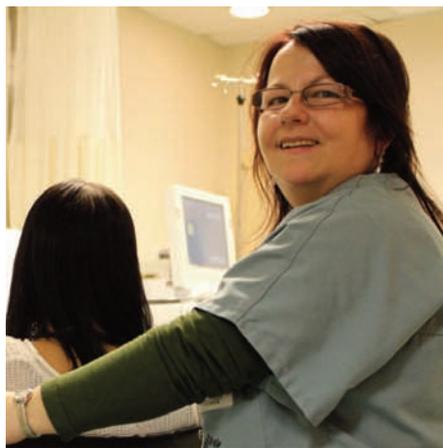
"You don't simply play music for patients, you comfort, soothe and listen to them," she said, as she took the mike at the holiday reception. "You offer them moments of happiness during which their illness, their suffering, their cancer, nausea and fatigue melt away. There are things that medication can not heal, times when relief can only come from compassion and empathy. That's likely the reason our patients and their families wait for your visits with such impatience!"

"What's more, in these times of transition, you are always here to cheer up our multidisciplinary team. You have no idea all the good you bring to me, to all of us," she told him. "You are humble and inspiring, never counting the minutes you spend with us, never refusing to help or support those in need."



For her part, Caring Beyond recipient **Susan Rodgers** spreads her infectious joy for her work throughout the hospital, says Nurse **Dinah Ocansey** of the Nursing Resource Centre. Ms. Rodgers joined the JGH in 2007 and worked as an orderly, gaining familiarity with many areas of the hospital including the Emergency Department, Postpartum, Family Medicine and Surgery.

Her wealth of experience was called upon more recently, as she worked closely with Nursing Resource Centre Coordinator **Rosalie Johnson** in developing the hospital's Transport Attendant (TA) system.



Susan Rodgers brings a patient to Hemodialysis.

Ms. Rodgers joined the TA team, which officially came together in June 2014, and is dispatched to transport both in- and out-patients to and from every corner of the hospital in either a bed, stretcher or wheelchair. "Susan goes beyond the call of duty to ensure that every patient who comes her way is tended to in the most respectful way and feels safe, secure and in good hands," said Ms. Johnson, as the Caring Beyond pin, plaque and letter from



Child Psychiatry Counsellor Mia Grillakis and Educator Stephen Hennessy present Mr Highbloom with a Caring Beyond card specially created by children in the program.

**Barbara Lang**, the Director of Volunteer Services, was on hand to thank Mr. Highbloom for "caring and sharing with staff and patients alike". The team from Child Psychiatry paid a visit from their facility to present Mr. Highbloom with a card hand-drawn by the children who belong to the program, eliciting "ohhhs" of delight from hospital staff gathered in the Atrium. "As your friends for 25 years, you've helped so many children and families," said Nurse **Mia Grillakis**. "You show your caring for all, your love for all." Mr. Highbloom replied, as he admired the card, "You all know this means more to me than anything."

Mr. Highbloom serves as a reminder to all hospital staff, wrote Mr. Singer, that they don't need medical training to help heal patients.

► TO RECOGNIZE A JGH STAFF MEMBER WHO CARES BEYOND, FILL OUT A FORM ONLINE OR IN C-107 OR A-112.