Code Orange Training Exercise Good Practice for Hospitals

(Wednesday, June 25, 2014 – Muskoka, ON) – A mock disaster in downtown Bracebridge today put hospital staff, physicians and volunteers through their paces in responding to a community emergency.

Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare (MAHC) prepared for an influx of patients with varying medical conditions and severity of injuries while at the same time maintaining regular service levels. A Code Orange is an external community disaster or emergency situation that will impact the capacity of hospital services.

“A training exercise is the best learning experience for staff, physicians and volunteers in what to expect during a community disaster and how the hospital’s emergency response plan is executed,” explains Natalie Bubela, Chief Executive Officer. “Regularly testing our emergency response plan helps to identify opportunities for improvement and ensures that MAHC is properly equipped to safely and effectively respond in the event of a true emergency.”

The training exercise began at approximately 10 a.m. this morning when a transport truck carrying chemical material was struck by a train at the railway crossing at Taylor Road and Hiram Street. The training exercise involved community emergency responders, including ambulance dispatch, paramedic services and police. The Town of Bracebridge, Township of Muskoka Lakes, District of Muskoka, Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit, Red Cross and community agencies such as Muskoka Victim Services and 211 Community Connections were also involved, as well as community volunteers who participated as patients by role playing.

More than a dozen victims were transported to the hospital, where a CBRNE event (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Environmental) response was executed.

“We would like to thank all of the local emergency personnel, health service providers, the community agencies and volunteers who partnered with us to conduct this training exercise,”
says Bubela. “We would also like to thank the patients and visitors for their understanding as we completed this important training exercise.”

There were no disruptions to regular patient care during the training exercise.

-Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare (MAHC) is a multi-site health care organization providing acute care services at the Huntsville District Memorial Hospital and South Muskoka Memorial Hospital in Bracebridge. Find out more about MAHC by visiting www.mahc.ca.

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