

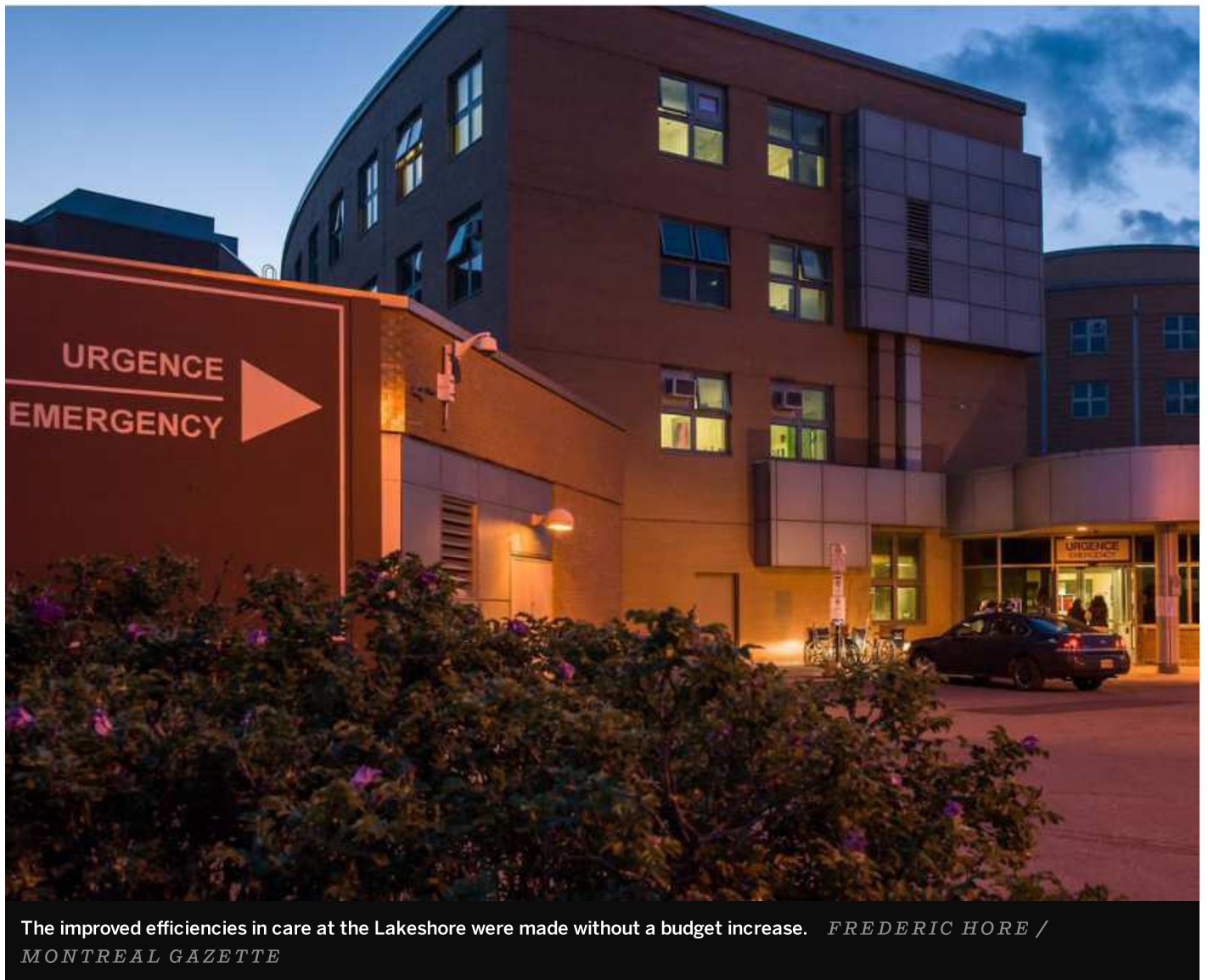
# Statistics from Lakeshore Hospital reveal improvement in services



ALBERT KRAMBERGER, SPECIAL TO MONTREAL GAZETTE

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Published on: July 26, 2016 | Last Updated: July 26, 2016 12:55 PM EDT



Officials at the Lakeshore General Hospital say reorganization and restructuring of its services has improved efficiency to better accommodate patients without breaking the budget.

On Monday, Dr. Fadi Aris, a diagnostic radiologist, pointed out some statistics indicating health-care services have been improving at the Pointe-Claire hospital.

For instance, the number of CT scans performed on patients from the emergency ward reached 6,726 in the past fiscal year (April 2015 to March 2016), representing a 25 per cent increase in volume from the previous year.

“That’s all in the same 24 hour period for the cases from the emergency room. There is no delay for the care of the ER patients,” Aris said of CT scans.

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(MRI) machine for ER cases, with 840 procedures done in the past fiscal year, compared to about 500 previously, representing an increase of about 60 per cent.

“This deals with emergency cases like strokes,” Aris said of MRIs.

The Lakeshore has also developed a radiation free test for the diagnosis of pulmonary embolism through a special MRI technique, a procedure geared toward pregnant women.

“The most important thing we’ve done for the emergency room population was the diagnosis for pregnant women for pulmonary embolism. These are blood clots in the lungs,” Aris said.

Compared to other tests, such as CT scans, MRIs do not expose the expectant mother or fetus to radiation, making it a safer option. As far as he knows, Lakeshore is the first hospital in Quebec to offer this MRI test, Aris said.

“What we have done is create a technique in the MRI that has no radiation, no dye injection for the mother. So there is no exposure to radiation. We are given a diagnosis if there is an embolism or not,” Aris said. “The breasts of a mother are metabolically active so they are more sensitive to radiation for the development of cancer. The baby is also metabolically active, it’s growing (in the womb). So there is also a risk to the baby from radiation. For us to be able to direct the patient towards a safe diagnosis, it’s revolutionary.”

The Lakeshore has had its MRI for about 11 years, but the modification to allow for pulmonary embolism tests has been developed more recently.

As well, the Lakeshore is now using the MRI to screen for prostate cancer. This allows for better vision of the tumour and nerves, and permits more precise targeting for surgery.

“Now we are able to localize the cancer to guide the biopsy and to confirm the diagnosis,” Aris said. “At the same time, we discuss (the MRI results) with the surgeon to preserve the nerves and to guide the surgery.”

Over the past few years, the Lakeshore has improved its prostate cancer screening, staging, diagnosis as well as treatment, he said.

“We’ve decreased delays. Cancer is time sensitive,” he added.

These improved efficiencies in care at the Lakeshore were made without a budget increase, Aris said.

“We’re advancing the care of these patients just by reorganizing the resources that we have,” he said.

The Lakeshore is part of the West Island Centre intégré universitaires de santé et de services sociaux (CIUSSS) which also oversees the Lac-Saint-Louis and Pierrefonds CLSCs, the Centre d’hébergement Denis-Benjamin-Viger, St.-Anne Hospital, St-Mary’s Hospital, the Grace Dart Extended Care Centre, the Douglas Mental Health University Institute, Batshaw Youth and Family Centre, the West Montreal Readaptation Centre and the Dorval-Lachine-LaSalle CSSS.

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