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Fire breaks out at GBHS

Posted By MARIA CANTON , SUN TIMES STAFF

Posted 2 days ago

A blaze broke out in a patient's room on the fourth floor of the Owen Sound hospital Saturday.

Thirteen patients were evacuated from Unit 4-1 shortly after 10:30 a. m. after a patient's bed caught fire.

No one was injured.

Heavy smoke filled the room and the heat from the blaze activated the sprinkler system in the medical unit, which was already closed to new admissions after an outbreak of the superbug VRE last week.

Water from the sprinkler system had almost completely extinguished the fire when crews arrived on the scene, but there was still heavy smoke throughout the unit.

"By the time we got there the nurses had already evacuated the wing of the hospital and the sprinkler system had done its job," said Capt. Randy Moore of the Owen Sound fire department.

"The fire would have had to have been at least 170 F to activate the sprinkler system"

Firefighters extinguished what was left of the blaze and did a full search of the unit to ensure everyone was out.

"There was still moderate to heavy smoke in the wing. You couldn't see the end of the hallway, but the fire doors were able to contain most of it to that one area," Moore said.

According to hospital president and chief executive officer Maureen Solecki, an additional 11 patients on the unit below Unit 4-1, the women and child unit on the third floor, were also evacuated because of water damage in that area.

"There's extensive water damage on the third and fourth floors and we have moved all of the patients to other nursing units in the hospital," said Solecki.

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"Thankfully we have the capacity within the Owen Sound facility to do that right now."

The hospital's incident command unit was activated Saturday when the fire broke out.

The extent of the fire, smoke and water damage was not known on the weekend, but insurance investigators were there by the afternoon assessing the situation.

Police are also investigating to determine if there was any criminal wrongdoing. According to Acting Sgt. George Suchomel of the Owen Sound police service, that investigation continues.

Visiting hours for all areas of the hospital were cancelled Saturday while crews worked to bring the situation under control.

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