

ROYAL COLUMBIAN
HOSPITAL FOUNDATION
MAGAZINE

Your Health Matters

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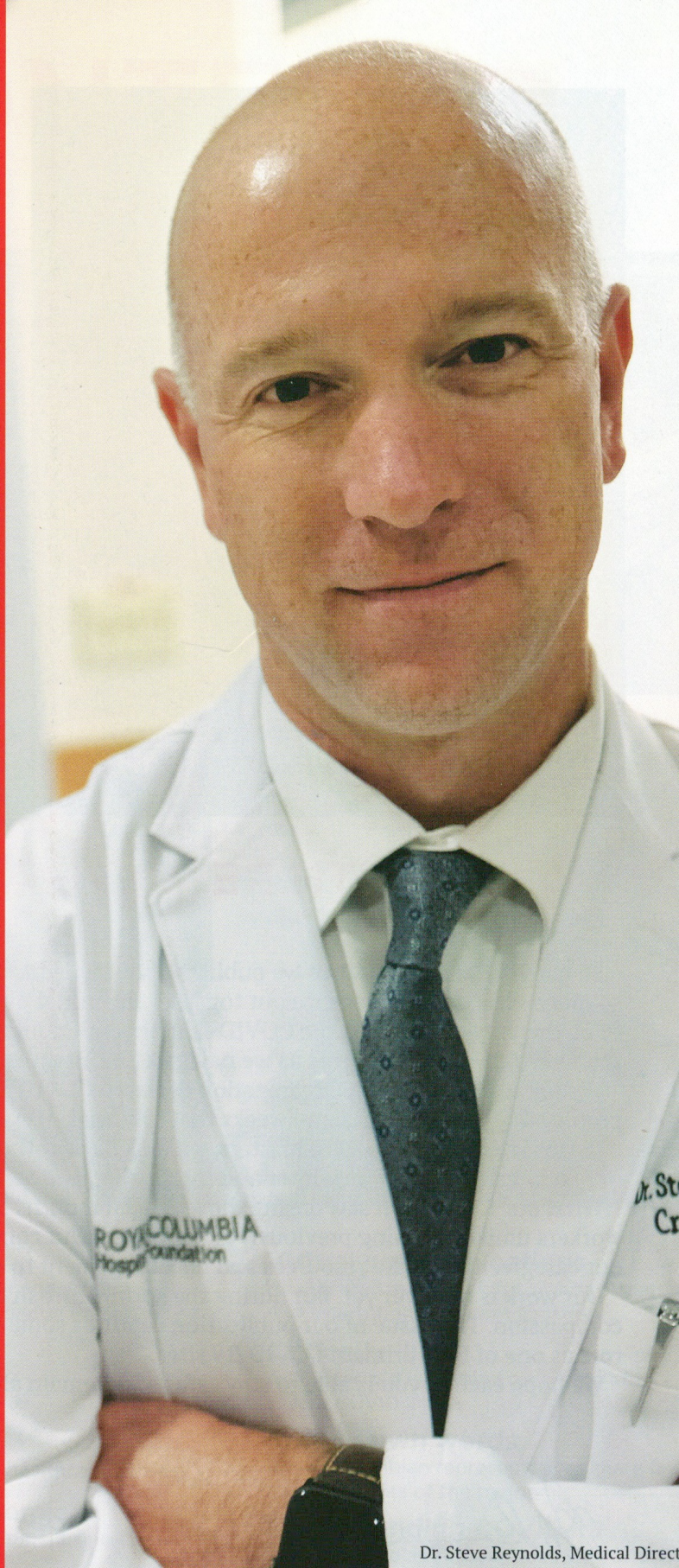
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WITH GENEROUS SUPPORT FROM



Dr. Steve Reynolds, Medical Director



ROYAL COLUMBIAN
Hospital Foundation



EMERGENCY PHYSICIAN
DR. DOUG BROWN
HELPED INTRODUCE A
COMMUNICATION SYSTEM
FOR PATIENTS AND STAFF
USING TABLETS AND
SMARTPHONES.

VIRTUAL COMMUNICATION

HEALTHCARE'S SUDDEN SHIFT
TOWARDS TABLETS AND
SMARTPHONES TO EASE ISOLATION

As news from Italy and New York foreshadowed possible worst-case scenarios for BC during the onset of the pandemic, Dr. Doug Brown contemplated how technology might help Royal Columbian cope with a sudden surge in COVID-19 cases.

The emergency department physician became an early adopter of in-hospital virtual healthcare. With the support of Abby Holder, an Emergency Nurse Educator, Dr. Brown set up a system using smartphones and tablets to make communications safer and more effective.

"Patients with COVID-19 symptoms find themselves isolated with limited contact to their families and healthcare workers," says Dr. Brown. "Having virtual tools such as tablets and smart phones in isolation rooms allow patients to call, text or video chat with their family and healthcare team".

Dr. Brown moved quickly, purchasing tablets to trial in the emergency department. RCH staff, medical staff and the Foundation immediately recognized the need for his creative solution and 50 iPads were purchased to further virtual care efforts at Royal Columbian.

Isolation

Dr. Brown recalls entering an isolation room to provide a patient with one of the devices. "Originally, she was apprehensive as I entered to room in personal protective equipment (PPE). I gave her the tablet and explained that she could now text and communicate with her nurse. It was amazing to watch her fear and anxiety dissipate".

As hospitals moved in early March to restrict visitor access due to COVID-19, technology became key for families to stay in touch with patients. In some cases, the tablets have been used to allow families to say good-bye to their loved ones during end-of-life.

The devices have also helped the healthcare system manage the use of PPE by providing caregivers the ability to communicate with patients without the need to use medical masks, gowns, and goggles.

"Having virtual tools in isolation rooms is essential to provide patients with better care and alleviate the stress of isolation in the time of COVID-19," says Dr. Brown. As the clinical team looks beyond COVID-19, tablets and smartphones may become an integral part of care at Royal Columbian Hospital.