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Chinese healthcare wants Wellness: a Winnipeg Success Story

Thirty hospital executives and senior government officials from China are at Seven Oaks Hospital today to learn how its approach to health and wellness can be adapted and used in China.

The Chinese delegates will be immersed in all aspects of programming at the Wellness Institute from Wednesday July 2 to Friday July 4 as the first step toward reproducing the made-in-Winnipeg model for hospitals in China.

“We didn’t go looking for this,” said Seven Oaks President and Chief Operating Officer Carrie Solmundson. “We weren’t trying to find ways to sell our services in China, they came to us and we’re honoured that they did.”

The Chinese healthcare sector is modernizing rapidly and its decision makers have fanned out around the globe looking for the best models for healthcare delivery. The relationship with Wellness Institute started when a smaller delegation visited Seven Oaks to look at innovations in its Emergency Department. They also toured Wellness Institute and were quite taken with the way Seven Oaks has integrated a self-sufficient non-profit enterprise for illness prevention and health promotion with a publicly funded hospital.

The Chinese Hospital Association, which represents 5000 hospitals, has asked Wellness Institute to present a plan to train their personnel and consult with member hospitals to bring Wellness to China. The arrangement could put Wellness Institute in a position to offer some of the same training to healthcare systems in other countries including elsewhere in Canada.

“It’s a prestigious honour as well as an opportunity for Wellness Institute and Winnipeg,” Solmundson said.

The Wellness Institute has received previous accolades for its innovative approach to integrating lifestyle and fitness with health care to manage and prevent chronic disease but this the first time another country has asked to adapt and reproduce its program model.

The Chinese delegates will also take part in social events and meet with influential local business and government leaders while they are here.