



CASE STUDY | THE CHUM

# GardaWorld: Adapting to Various Unique Needs in a Challenging Environment

**GARDAWORLD**

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Densely populated downtown Montreal is home to people with widely varied backgrounds, from the very rich to the very poor. Serving this diverse community are the three hospitals that make up the CHUM (Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal): the Hôtel-Dieu, the Notre-Dame and the Saint-Luc.

These hospitals offer general and specialized hospital care and services to ensure that their vastly different clientele get the help they need. In a typical year, the CHUM serves 115,000 emergency room patients and treats 450,000 patients in its outpatient clinics. It employs approximately 9,300 regular employees, 860 physicians, 1,300 researchers, 5,000 students and trainees as well as 670 volunteers.

## Challenge: Vast Responsibility in a Unique Work Environment

According to Security and Parking Manager Josée Rondeau, the CHUM requires security officers who can adapt to the always changing safety and security needs of the patients and visitors whom the three facilities serve.

"We're always concerned about the well-being of everyone in our hospitals and clinics," she says. "That includes not only patients and their visitors but also the thousands of people who make up our clinical, administrative and facility staffs."

Rondeau explains that the reason so many television shows are hospital dramas is because anything and everything can potentially take place in one. Areas such as emergency rooms, admissions, medical floors, surgery and intensive care units all require a particular personality and mindset to handle the different types of situations that might arise each day. And that's not to mention psychiatric wards and even hospital morgues.

"The reality of dealing with patients who are irate due to excess stress, sickness or medications can be both shocking and overwhelming at times," she says. "Our security officers must show a willingness as well as a readiness to face these different challenges."

## What hospital security often lacks.

But Rondeau's found that many people who wear security uniforms too often lack what it takes to successfully manage these varied and demanding situations in hospital settings. They also have to address such issues as appropriate responses to coded alarms, patient confidentiality and—often forgotten—the ever-rising expectations of patients and visitors to receive exceptional customer service at all times.

"In our hospitals, we need security professionals who have the right temperament, training and presence of mind for whatever they must face each day," she says. "But the fact is, most security personnel have little preparation for the realities of hospital settings, where each day poses new, different and often difficult challenges."

When Rondeau sought a professional security firm to help the CHUM, she wanted highly trained, professional security officers who could:

- Respond and communicate properly in any hospital crisis, no matter whether it's caused by medical or other factors, such as aggressive behaviours and psychotic episodes;
- Manage large diversified groups in terms of age and ethnicity;
- Administer and control all building keys and electronic accesses;
- Supervise parking lots;
- Manage video surveillance systems, which number from 40 to 70 per hospital;
- Manage CHUM's emergency communications center.



## Solution: Effective Employee Screening and In-House Training Program

For all these reasons, Rondeau turned to GardaWorld to provide CHUM's staff of over 110 professional security officers. In fact, GardaWorld has solid security expertise in healthcare across Canada, with more than 1.5 million hours of protection for providers' facilities in a typical year. Its security professionals are also backed up with support from company offices in all of Canada's major cities.

From this large reserve of healthcare security experience, GardaWorld tailored a program for CHUM's specific needs—after first learning as much as possible about the CHUM's overarching business goals and day-to-day operations.

“We appreciated how much interest GardaWorld took in understanding our issues,” Rondeau says. “It let us know that they weren't just looking to put uniforms in place and start charging us for them, but they were truly motivated to help us make us a safer and ultimately a better place to work for our staff and, for our patients, to come for their healthcare services.”

**Good staffing starts with good screening.** In staffing security professionals for a healthcare facility like the CHUM, GardaWorld starts even before hiring, by carefully screening candidates.

In addition to the usual background criminal checks, candidates are graded for their intelligence, good judgment and—especially important in hospital settings—their people skills. GardaWorld also seeks candidates who are looking for careers, not jobs, because the latter turn over more frequently.

To address the main issues present in healthcare facilities like those of the CHUM, GardaWorld developed an in-house training program for its healthcare security officers. This provides them with a thorough understanding of the types of situations they will face in clinical settings.

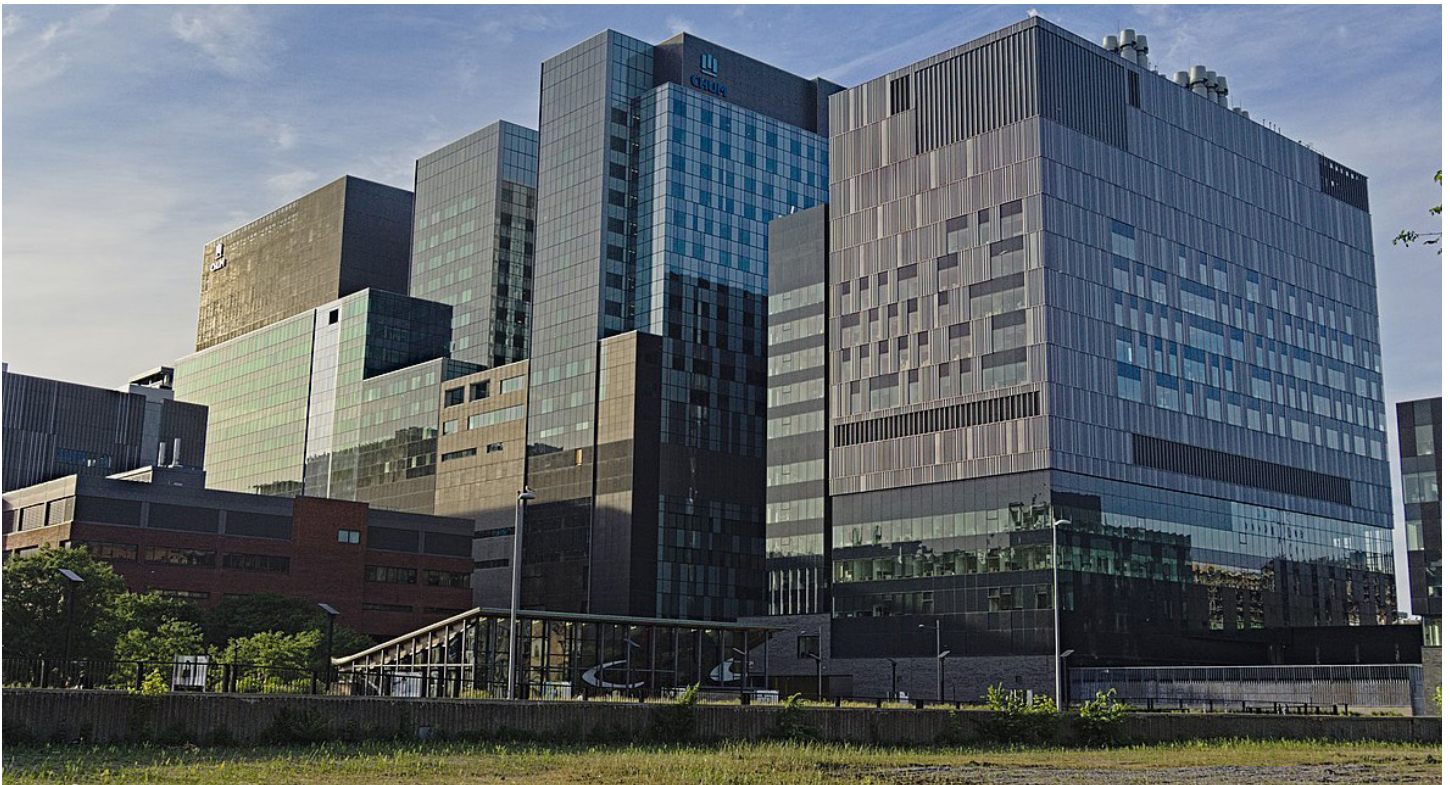
For example, the training gives them vital knowledge about how to adapt to different patient situations. They also learn how to best respond to the colour-coded alerts that most hospitals use, such as the “code-blue” that signals a patient's heart has stopped and requires immediate resuscitation. And they go through role-playing scenarios to test their comprehension of this subject matter and ability to respond.

**Saving on-site training time.** The fact that this service is offered in-house allows GardaWorld healthcare clients like the CHUM to reduce the number of on-site training hours needed to properly prepare guards. The only portion of training remaining is site-specific and allows the client to interact with and get to know GardaWorld's security officers on the CHUM's own premises.

With all this training, GardaWorld security officers assigned to the CHUM are able to deal with high-risk patients and unruly visitors while avoiding exposing medical staff, other patients and themselves to any further danger. They are also able to remain in control of a situation no matter what it is.

In addition to providing highly trained security officers to the CHUM, GardaWorld's comprehensive security solution package includes:

- A dedicated team always available onsite, including a captain, a lieutenant, a sergeant plus security officers – approximately 12 people per shift, 24/7 year-round;
- Additional staff, as needed, who can manage new needs, such as pandemics like the H1N1, the swine flu;
- A dedicated account manager who has strong relationships and regular follow-up meetings with Rondeau and key members of her team as well as with the GardaWorld security officers and their supervisors.



## Benefits: Reduced On-Site Training and Enhanced Guard Professionalism

Rondeau used to spend an enormous amount of time training other company's guards after they started working at one of her three CHUM hospitals. She agrees that GardaWorld's in-house, healthcare-specific security training for her security officers will significantly reduce this time.

"For us," she says, "it's really important that our security officers are fully prepared with the training necessary not only to prevent and respond to incidents in our hospitals, but also to show a higher level of courtesy towards patients and visitors alike, while working well with our other staff personnel."

**More than guards.** GardaWorld's healthcare security solution—carefully selected security professionals plus industry-specific training—has helped the CHUM be always ready to respond to the ever-changing issues that can arise within its three hospitals in downtown Montreal.

### This has provided three key benefits:

- Security officers are better prepared, so they can deliver more alert and responsive performance as soon as they start working in the CHUM's demanding hospital settings;
- Security officers are trained in the skills necessary to help the CHUM provide its patients and visitors with consistently good service and positive experiences that can help build its brand reputation in the community;
- Security officers have a lower turnover rate—thanks to their rigorous screening and training—enabling them to develop closer working relationships with other hospital staff members, which improves collaboration and teamwork.

Rondeau reports that GardaWorld's security officers are indeed considered critically important members of the hospital team.

**"Thanks to the quality of the security professionals and services provided by GardaWorld, we are able to respond efficiently to our clients' needs and ensure a safe environment for everyone. They're not just guards but security professionals in every sense of those words."**

**— Josée Rondeau,**  
Security and Parking Manager

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