

Woman, baby endangered awaiting neo-natal care

By DOUGLAS ARMOUR
Thomson News Service

A Georgetown woman whose doctor had difficulty placing her in a neo-natal intensive care unit is another victim of the provincial government underfunding of regional neo-natal care units, says a Tory MPP.

MPP Cam Jackson (Burlington South) says the woman's doctor, Dr. Paul Zeni, tried desperately Tuesday to find a neo-natal intensive care unit capable of accepting her and her unborn child. The woman was in her thirty-third week of pregnancy in danger of hemorrhaging to death and her

child also risked dying.

After being refused admittance at the neo-natal care unit at Hamilton's Chedoke-McMaster Hospitals, Dr. Zeni called the Women College Hospital's intensive care unit in Toronto and was also turned down, Mr. Jackson told MPPs Wednesday.

The woman was finally accepted at Credit Valley Hospital and her child was delivered without serious complications, Mr. Jackson said Thursday.

A spokesperson at Chedoke-McMaster confirmed Thursday that a woman from Georgetown was turned away Tuesday because

of the hospital's shortage of neo-natal beds.

The spokesperson said the hospital has been forced to turn away about 50 per cent of the babies referred to it since it cut the budget last May.

"Dr. Zeni spent two hours on the phone before he could ever get her transferred and she was at risk at the time," Mr. Jackson said in an interview.

Mr. Jackson, Tory critic for women's issues, said Credit Valley Hospital accepted the woman though it is only funded as a Level 1 hospital, capable of giving basic neo-natal care. The hospital has

some Level 2 services, such as respirators allowing a newborn child to be incubated with forced respiration. A Level 3 hospital such as Chedoke-McMaster, provides intensive neo-natal care with 24 hour nursing attention.

Mr. Jackson said in the interview that McMaster would have been able to accept the woman had funding problems not forced it to reduce its neo-natal beds to 30 from 33 last May.

Despite extensive budget cutting which included limiting the number of hours nurses work and thus reducing the number of patients admitted, Chedoke-

McMaster still faces a \$2 million deficit for the current operating year.

With additional funding for additional beds, "this woman in Georgetown could get into a hospital... (otherwise), if there is no bed for the baby they can't accept the mother," he said.

Health Minister, Eleanor Caplan, responded in the legislature Wednesday that an advisory report on reproductive care recommends a ratio of 1.75 beds per 1000 people in Ontario and current capacity among the 13 provincial hospitals providing neo-natal

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Garth and Michael
tete-a-tete
on
taxes

Halton-Peel Progressive Conservative MP Garth Turner hosted a fundraising dinner in Hornby earlier this week where Finance Minister Michael Wilson talked taxes. The dinner was held at former transport minister James Snow's home on Trafalgar Road and featured over 200 guests. Local business owners, a few municipal politicians and assorted media attended the \$150-a-plate function. Here, Mr. Turner and Mr. Wilson see eye to eye on the budget. See full story in next Wednesday's Herald. (Herald photos by Donna Kell)

Halton toughens stand on Acton dump proposal

By DONNA KELL
Herald Staff

Halton Region will take a tough stand on an application to turn the Acton quarry site into a landfill for Metropolitan Toronto.

The Region of Halton was asked by the Ministry of the Environment to respond to an application submitted by local consortium Reclamation Systems Incorporated. RSI submitted an application to the provincial government in February, asking that the quarry site at Sideroad 22 and Fourth Line be used for landfill when quarrying is completed.

The Acton quarry could be considered as a landfill site for the Greater Toronto Area of Halton, Peel, Durham, York and Metropolitan Toronto if the ministry approves RSI's application.

After six weeks of meeting with legal advisors from Protect Our Water and Environmental Resources (POWER); the Region of Halton and the Town of Halton Hills, Regional councillors voted Wednesday to change its official position on the landfill site proposal. The letter sent to the ministry will say that the Region is not satisfied with the environmental assessment of RSI's proposal.

Originally a Regional letter prepared for the ministry says there were concerns about the landfill site, especially about potential damage to the Amabel Aquifer, which serves all of Halton Hills through a well-based system.

But the Region did not outrightly oppose RSI's application.

"It's a matter of credibility," said chief administrator John Fleming. He said the Region's stand was a "strong" one.

The latest decision amends the Region's original position - a move hailed by POWER member John Minns as a "remarkable milestone."

There was doubt before about the Region's stand on the RSI application, said Mr. Minns. He said the government could interpret the Region's lack of opposition to the landfill site as an unspoken approval.

Now, "there's no question about how the Region feels," said Mr. Minns Wednesday. He said the new letter to the Ministry of the Environment "will leave no opportunity for the ministry to misunderstand how the Region feels."

"This (decision) is the culmination of three months of hard work (and) compromise," he said.

The Region will say that RSI's environmental assessment documents are "incomplete," and they don't "satisfy all of the requirements of the Environmental Assessment Act."

Mr. Minns says this is no guarantee that the ministry will reject RSI's application. The ministry could accept the environmental assessment and still reject the landfill proposal, said Mr. Minns. The application goes to the environmental assessment branch followed by a 30-day period when the ministry could decide on a hearing.

POWER appeared several times in front of Regional councillors and recently appeared at a Halton Hills town council meeting to gain support in opposing the landfill site near Acton.

The citizens group reminded councillors of the town's \$200,000

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