

Acton's Nurse Practitioner: Just what over-worked doctors and patients needed

Ten years after the province began funding Nurse Practitioner (NP) programs in Ontario, Roger Firsoff, Acton's first and only NP, continues to provide better health care access to patients at the Acton Medical and Urgent Care Centre.

Firsoff began seeing patients in Acton in 2005 when Acton was deemed "under-serviced" for family physicians by the province. Acton's three doctors were often triple booked, and one limited office visits to just one issue because so many people needed to be seen. That's in sharp contrast to today's provincial health care model with NPs, like Firsoff, doing physical exams, ordering tests for diagnosis and recommendations for a wide range of acute and chronic diseases, and providing treatment,

including prescribing medications.

Firsoff sees approximately 2,000 patients annually; all who are "rostered" to one of the four doctors in a Family Health Organization at the Acton facility. At least once a day, a patient thanks him for taking so much time during their visit, which often last 30 minutes.

"Sometimes it's tempting to maybe reduce the time spent with patients that I see – more volume – but when you get those comments, you appreciate the time you spend with each patient," Firsoff said last Tuesday.

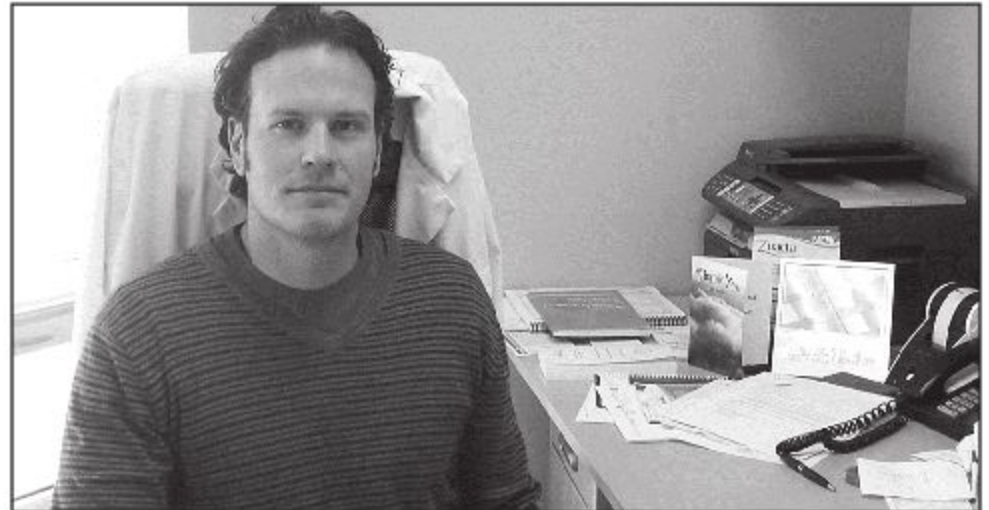
He said if he is presented with a medical issue that he doesn't have the knowledge, skill or judgement to deal with, he consults with the doctors, and can transfer patients to a doctor's if

required, and can refer patients to specialists.

As an independent contractor, Firsoff is paid by the Ministry of Health which provides \$120,000 annually, an amount frozen for the past four years. Firsoff said if it weren't for Halton's Physician Recruitment Officer, Angela Sugden-Praysner, and the Town's Economic Development Officer Doug Penrice, Acton would not have a Nurse Practitioner, as they helped secure an additional \$7,500 annually for his practice from both Halton Region and Halton Hills.

Halton Physician Recruitment Officer Angela Sugden-Praysner said Firsoff offers "value added" health care, including home visits and education programs.

While it was "hard" at



the beginning of the NP program because it required a new relationship between doctors and NPs, Sugden-Praysner said the position has "evolved because Acton is kind of a unique setting, and the need to have some extra help in that clinic, he's been able to do a number of different things to help

the patient population," she said.

Sugden-Praysner said the program's success in Acton is due to the collaboration – and acceptance – of the new model of family medicine by Acton's doctors, including Dr. Nather Alshakarji. "The (Nurse Practitioner) program helps patients,

staff and doctors, when we are away and busy. The (patient) load in the Town is too much," Dr. Alshakarji said, adding that will ease with the recent arrival of Dr. Nina Nahab who will be seeing patients and walk-ins by the end of the month at the Acton Medical and Urgent Care Centre.

Suspect search

Halton police are looking for a tall, white man driving a grey mini-van – possibly a Dodge Caravan – in con-

nection with the unprovoked attack on an Acton senior on Victoria Day Monday at 3 p.m.

The suspect is white, 35 to 40 years old, 6-feet tall, 190-pounds with black shoulder-length hair. The attack on the senior, who suffered cuts, bruises and muscle damage, came after he and his dog were too slow crossing the street. After verbally berating the man, who police said went into a store for safety, the suspect followed the man into the store and violently pushed him to the floor.

At least two good Samaritans helped the victim

following the assault, and police want to speak with them, and anyone else with information that may be helpful.

The attack was recorded on the store's video surveillance camera and can be viewed at <http://youtu.be/oHfdGn-Knv8>

Anyone with information is asked to call 905-825-4747 ext. 2415, or Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477, through the web at www.haltoncrimestoppers.com or by texting Tip201 with your message to 274637 (crimes.)



TOWN OF HALTON HILLS

NOTICE OF COUNCIL DECISION UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT

IN THE MATTER OF THE *ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT* AND IN THE MATTER OF the lands in the Town of Halton Hills known municipally as 99 River Drive in the community of Georgetown,

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Council of Halton Hills, at its meeting of May 6, 2013, consented to the application to allow the demolition of Blocks Nos. 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20A, 20B, and 21 (portions of the Barber Mill property) at the property municipally known as 99 River Drive, Georgetown.

NOTICE IS GIVEN pursuant to section 34 (2) of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Dated at the Town of Halton Hills this 17th day of May, 2013.

Suzanne Jones, Town Clerk,
The Corporation of the Town of Halton Hills,
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L7G 5G2

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