

*Home Is Where The Heart Is:*

## How Georgetown Hospital Helped To Build a **Community of Care** in the Midst of a Global Pandemic



In early April, Halton Public Health declared a COVID-19 outbreak at a local retirement residence.

“Working closely with Public Health and the Local Health Integration Network (LHIN), Georgetown Hospital was invited by the Owner of the residence to be part of a small team to conduct an Infection Prevention and Control assessment of the home and individual assessments on COVID positive residents,” said Cindy McDonell, COO, Georgetown Hospital.

“This was a successful engagement and in partnership with the LHIN, we placed a team of nursing and allied health staff, overseen by a manager in the home.”

One of the leaders on that team was Jamie Holmes, Manager of Outpatient Rehabilitation Clinics for all three Halton Healthcare sites.

“It was clear immediately that we could help the residents and staff. The staff who weren’t sick were overwhelmed as they were putting all the energy they had into caring for the residents. The residence’s Owner and temporary Care Director were extremely grateful for our partnership and within 24 hours we created a needs assessment and started building a support team that included hospital nurses, physiotherapists, manager and physician staff to step in and cover both day and night care support. Many of these residents had been isolated in their rooms for weeks with no therapy, so the full-time physiotherapy support was critical in supporting the residents’ overall well-being.”

Over the four weeks that Georgetown Hospital continued to support the residence, the level and type of assistance required was

assessed on a day by day basis. “There was no shortage of staff willing to help from Halton Healthcare,” said Mrs. Holmes.

“It was incredible how many people raised their hands to help out. The Halton Healthcare team and the team at the retirement home provided emotional support to one another - the positive energy in the residence was exceptional. Everyone who volunteered to help showed up and made a huge difference to the quality and level of care we were able to provide, I am so proud to have been a part of this exceptional team.”

In addition to staff, Georgetown Hospital provided equipment to the home in order to ensure exemplary on-site healthcare, and Halton Healthcare made sure every staff member had the required PPE to stay safe and healthy.

“Although under difficult circumstances, the experience of coming together like this in the Georgetown community has been amazing,” said Mrs. Holmes. “We were able to create a mobile task force and provide the same type of aid at a variety of other retirement residences across Halton and Peel regions due to the support and encouragement from Halton Healthcare senior leadership to help our community partners.”

