

Hospitals must change with the times says OHA president

By DIANNE CORNISH

Financial constraints and an increasingly aging population have made it necessary for hospitals across Ontario to change the way they operate, Dennis Timbrell, president of the Ontario Hospital Association (OHA), said last week in Georgetown.

Speaking at the annual meeting of the Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital at the North Halton Golf and Country Club, the former Ontario health Minister told a group of about 40 people, "Ontario's health care system is at a crossroads."

Rising costs and growing demands in health care continue to present challenges to hospitals faced with reduced funding from the government, he said. As a result, hospitals have been forced to adopt their own set of three R's, namely, "reorganization, refocusing and restructuring," Timbrell said.

While stressing that downsizing and capping of health care costs isn't "anything new", having been part of the scene since the 1970's, the OHA president said "the health care system has clearly changed in response to fiscal imperatives."

He mentioned Georgetown

hospital's recent introduction of a Same Day Surgery Unit as one of the outgrowths of dealing with financial constraints, as well as trends to provide more out-patient health care services. The new Unit enables more patients requiring routine surgery to be admitted and discharged on the same day.

Timbrell also commended the local hospital board for its recent decision to open board meetings to the public and media.

"Open board meetings have become the norm across Ontario," he said, adding that it's important that such a step be taken "so the public can see we have nothing to hide."

"Reform and redirection of longterm health care is a top priority" with the current Ontario government, Timbrell said. While acknowledging that change is needed in this area, he charged that proposals being put forward by the NDP "have not been fully thought through."

In an interview following his speech, he elaborated, saying the government report makes "no mention of chronic care hospitals" and is characterized — in his view — by "an anti-hospital bias."

Government proposals, which focus on alternatives to institutional care, stress community-

based health support programs which will enable people to live independently in their homes for as long as possible before hospitalization or entry into a nursing home.

Timbrell told *Halton Hills This Week* that the proposals are "one-sided" and the OHA recognizes the "need for a balance" which would see a mix of community-based programs and hospital-based health care services to fully meet the needs of people in Ontario.

Earlier in the evening while speaking at the annual meeting, Timbrell pledged: "The OHA is committed to change that does not compromise quality of care."

He later hinted that while some of the proposals, like additional responsibilities for district health councils might sound good in principle, "it remains to be seen whether they will have the resources (for example, staff) to fulfill their new mandate."

When asked about the possibility of a breakdown of Ontario's Hospital Insurance Plan (OHIP) as a result of fiscal pressures, Timbrell said "reports of the impending death of medicare have been greatly exaggerated." Changes in its makeup are inevitable, he added, "but the Canadian people will never let medicare die."



Ontario Hospital Association president and former health minister Dennis Timbrell (standing) addresses the annual meeting of Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital last Thursday. Looking on are the hospital's executive director John Oliver, far left, and the retiring chairman of the hospital's board of directors Graeme Goebelle.

Timbrell also predicted that the future in Ontario's health care scene will include "fewer hospitals, fewer employees, more out-patient services, and more community-based agencies (in health care)." He said Ontario "will continue to provide the finest health care system in the world."

The former health minister be-

came president of the OHA 10 months ago. The OHA represents Ontario's 223 hospitals to the Ontario and Canadian governments, it carries out bargaining with hospital unions, acts as a central purchasing body for Ontario hospitals and organizes educational programs for hospital personnel.

Fireworks - What is law?



Low hazard fireworks for recreational use, often called family fireworks, may be sold to persons 18 years of age or over for their own use and enjoyment provided that he/she bears the responsibility for their safe use. Family fireworks include fireworks, showers, fountains, golden rain, lawn lights, pin-wheels, roman candles, volcanoes and sparklers.

"Firecrackers" on the other hand, are prohibited in the Town of Halton Hills. They are not allowed to be sold within the Municipality, nor are they allowed to be discharged, fired or set off. Firecrackers constitute a unique hazard. The market for firecrackers is primarily directed at children and they are not always aware of the inherent hazards. Historically, their use has caused extensive property damage and severe - occasionally fatal - burns. The setting off of family fireworks is restricted to Victoria Day and Dominion Day and the two days immediately preceding and following these designated holidays. An adult may hold a display of family fireworks on any

land belonging to him/her or any other privately owned land where the owner has given permission.

The main risk associated with approved family fireworks is from a fire starting elsewhere. They do not explode violently; rather, they function individually and may spread the fire and contribute dense smoke. Nevertheless, extra caution should always be exercised when enjoying fireworks. They should be set off in a safe place away from all buildings, automobiles and other combustibles. In addition, the manufacturer's instructions for safe use, enjoyment and disposal must always be followed.

For additional information on fireworks, their safe use and enjoyment, contact the Halton Hills Fire Department, Fire Prevention Division at 873-2600 Ext. 207.

ALL-SEAL

RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL

Driveways
Foundations
Oil Spot Treatment
Free Estimates
Work Guaranteed

873-3500

Steak EXPRESS

877-0721

BOXED MEAT FROZEN FOOD

Jumbo All Beef Burgers Boneless Pork Chops
Hot Dogs Sausage Scallops
Chicken Wings
Shrimp Bacon Wrap Filet Mignon Coho Salmon Steaks
Chicken Breasts

BBQ HEADQUARTERS

877-0721

Delrex & Guelph Sts.
Georgetown

Sawdust blaze

Acton firefighters worked for almost an hour to extinguish a blaze in the sawdust collection system at a Main St., Acton business Friday. The fire started at about 10:25 p.m. but caused no damage to the building housing the pallet-making company.

Burning truck

Acton firefighters found that an "unknown fire" turned out to be a burning truck Saturday. Firefighters were dispatched to St. Helena Rd. off Highway 25 at 8:45 p.m., Saturday to investigate the mystery and found a truck stuck in the mud, burning. The fire was quickly extinguished and police are now investigating where the truck came from, a fire official said. No cause for the blaze nor damage estimate was available at press time.

POLICE BEAT

Candy Taken

Approximately \$50 worth of candy was removed from the concession booth at Hornby Park sometime Thursday night. Police believe the culprit may have entered the booth using a key. A refrigerator was knocked over and the candy taken. Police are continuing their investigation.

Truck Found

A truck containing computer supplies was found abandoned with the wheels removed south of Georgetown Sunday. According to police, an officer on patrol found the truck parked on an unmarked laneway at the intersection of 10 Sideroad and the Tenth Line. Inside the officer found "numerous boxes of computer equipment".

The truck was later reported stolen from a Scarborough company. Halton Regional Police and Metro Toronto Police are continuing their investigation.

Lawnmower Lifted

A red Yardman lawnmower worth an estimated \$320 was removed from a Cleaveholm Dr., Georgetown residence sometime last week. The machine was taken from a shed at the rear of the residence.

Window Smashed

A pair of plate glass windows worth an estimated \$500 were smashed at Guelph St., Georgetown restaurant sometime Sunday night. Police found several "palm-sized" rocks inside the restaurant.



VISIT OUR BEAUTIFUL NEW SHOWROOM FOR THE AREA'S BEST SELECTION OF

- Grandfather's Clocks
- Curio Cabinets
- Hall Trees
- Paintings
- Roll Top Desks
- Collectors Cabinets

THIS WEEK'S FEATURE

Curved End Picture Frame Collector's Cabinet

Brittany finish on pecan veneers and selected hardwood solids

- Beveled front glass
- Two side entry doors with curved glass
- Four glass shelves
- Mirrored back
- Lighted interior



CLOCKS & CURIOS Plus
5 MILL ST. EAST, ACTON (519) 853-5062