



Bud Bishop (second from left), last active founder of the Georgetown Rotary Club, presents John Oliver (middle), executive director of Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital, with the Bud Bishop Founder's Trophy. The trophy will be displayed in the emergency ward of the hospital. From left to right are Barry Timleck, former Rotary Club president, Neville Worsnop, current president, and Graeme Goebelle, chair of the of the hospital's foundation board. HHTW photo

Seniors, disabled health care reforms

By Stephanie Henderson
Special

Health care for Halton's seniors and its physically disabled population received a shot in the arm from Ruth Grier, Ontario's Minister of Health.

Grier has unveiled a blueprint to reform long-term care health and social services in the province, to be implemented over the next two years. The reforms will involve extensive changes in the way such services are delivered, partly through establishing non-profit, centralized agencies in each region, under the direction of the local health council. Under the plan, access to a full range of support services will be gained through a sin-

gle telephone call.

At present, Halton has one of the lowest ratios of long term care beds per person in the province, with a total of 1,161 beds, or 104 beds per thousand residents ages 75 and over. This includes chronic care beds in hospitals, extended care beds in nursing homes, and beds in homes for the aged.

"We intend to build on those services already in place. Most importantly, we hope to improve access to, and coordination of, services for seniors, the physically disabled and others in our community," said Jane Sanders, assistant executive director of the Halton District Health Council.

Halton is well positioned to begin

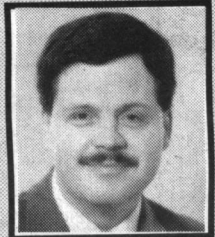
this initiative, Sanders points out. The HDHC and the region have collaborated on two strategic planning studies, one for seniors and one for the physically disabled.

The Health Minister's reforms promote keeping older adults in their homes as long as possible. These include improved support for families who care for sick relatives at home, and looking at the possibility of paying family members who provide that care.

Palliative care services will be boosted to allow gravely ill people to spend their last days at home, and to make more short-term beds available for sick relatives, giving caregivers a break from their duties.

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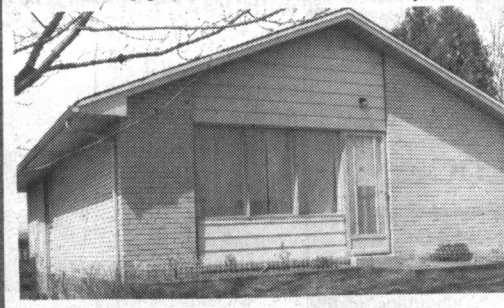
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