

# Long-term care solution promised

By Oksana Buhel

At Thursday evening's Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital annual general meeting, Michael Ennis, assistant Deputy Minister for the Population Health and Community Services, insisted he was fully supportive of community-based servicing and promised to provide Halton Hills with the requested 57 long-term care beds.

Ennis admitted rising expenditures and falling revenues have created fiscal restraints, but added "we are

shifting resources within the budget to put more focus on our reform priorities." One such reform is the construction of a community-based, consumer centered health system in Halton Hills.

"The seniors issue is very critical," Ennis admitted. "District health councils (DHC) have been instrumental in aiding the Ministry. They advise us which issues are of greatest concern, and we act accordingly." He added DHCs are currently establishing new mandates to design long-term care ser-

vices, through re-structured committees focusing solely on this concern.

These long-term care committees will become multi-service agencies, co-ordinating and delivering in-home health and personal care, such as physiotherapy, nursing and homemaking. The committees will also provide case management and determine eligibility for long-term care facilities. "We will finally introduce one-stop shopping which Ontario seniors have been advocating for years," Ennis said.

Ennis promised a Long-Term Implementation paper will be released, "very soon," which will provide detailed information on roles for various partners and time-lines for action. "We will show how the government intends to implement its not-for-profit preference in community services.

The Ministry's commitment to a more community-based and health-promotion-oriented health system will also be reflected in tobacco, substance abuse and mental health education projects.

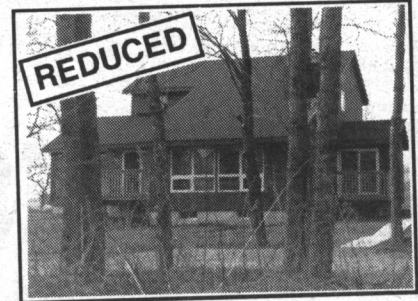


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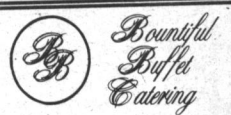
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