

# Foundation eyes Education Village for Milton hospice site

*The Townsend Smith Foundation is hoping to work with Conestoga College to build a 10-bed hospice on its new Milton campus.*

**SAIRA PEESKER**

sairapeesker@metroland.com

The foundation working to build a hospice in north Halton has its eye on the Milton Education Village and a partnership with Conestoga College.

The Townsend Smith Foundation says the college's pending Milton campus would be the perfect location for the 10-bed hospice it seeks to construct, allowing it to capitalize on the institution's medical expertise.

"We've been discussing the idea of a training suite for students in the hospice," said Townsend Smith board president John Barrett on May 9. "It does seem like a very good fit."

The proposed Milton Education Village would be situated on a 400-hectare piece of land near the Mattamy National Cycling Centre in Milton's south end, which will include residential and commercial development.

Conestoga and Wilfrid Laurier University are partners in the local post-secondary campus, with shovels expected in the ground later this year or next spring.

Barrett says there are several hurdles left to cross before ensuring a space on the campus, particularly because 100 acres of the land is designated as Greenbelt and would require a variance to allow for institutional development.



Saira Peesker/Metroland

**CARP Halton chairperson Tom Carrothers (second from left) presents a \$2,500 donation to Townsend Smith Foundation board members Tish Butson, Holly Lillico and John Barrett in Milton.**

The Townsend Smith Foundation has been gathering support since 2011 toward its goal of building a hospice in Milton or Halton Hills. Barrett and two

other board members attended the meeting of the Halton chapter of the Canadian Association for Retired Persons (CARP) on May 9, when chairperson

Tom Carrothers presented them with a \$2,500 donation.

"In our opinion, it's an absolute disgrace there isn't (a hospice) here now," said Carrothers.

The Halton CARP affiliate is the longest continuously running chapter in Canada, he said, noting the area is rife with seniors who can't believe there are no hospice options nearby. Burlington's Carpenter Hospice, Caledon's Bethell Hospice and Cambridge's Lisaard House are among the closest.

Hospice care supports people at the end of their lives, combining medical support with the comfort of a homelike environment.

It is aimed at improving the quality of life for people with a life expectancy of three months or less, providing support to them and their family members.

Last fall, the provincial

government announced increased financial support for hospice care in Ontario, offering capital funding of up to \$200,000 per bed toward hospice construction costs.

Previously, the province had funded hospice staff, leaving construction of new facilities to the community.

Barrett said Townsend Smith has been meeting with the Mississauga Halton Health Integration Network (LHIN) about tapping into that funding, and believes there could be available funds for seven of the project's 10 beds, totalling \$1.4 million.

"With the silver tsunami coming, we need to be thinking about projects like this," he said, referencing Canada's aging population.

"According to a provincial study, (Mississauga-Halton has) the highest palliative care need and lowest number of beds."

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