

Halton Healthcare Services to be put to the test in June

By IRENE GENTLE
The Champion

Halton Healthcare Services is getting ready to be put to the test. For the first time, HHS, which operates Oakville Trafalgar Memorial and Milton District hospitals, will be seeking a joint accreditation next June.

The voluntary program will measure the hospitals against national standards as one unit, explained HHS Ombud Lisa Droppo.

Both are currently certified from the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation.

But the 2000 test will determine how well the hospitals have integrated their services, said Ms Droppo following a recent HHS board meeting.

"Because we are functioning that way, it makes sense to do the accreditation this way," she said

Eight internal teams are currently examining what challenges need to be addressed, said Ms Droppo.

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LISA DROPPA

"There are different degrees of integration across sites. This gives us a good opportunity to improve that," she said. "We see this as a real opportunity to support that integration."

Things don't need to be in perfect working order to achieve accreditation. What is needed are working plans on how to tackle outstanding issues.

"They want to know that if we have something we need to address, that we have a plan to fix it," said Ms Droppo.

Though it is too early to know which areas are most in need of fine-tuning, team reports should be filed by the end of the year.

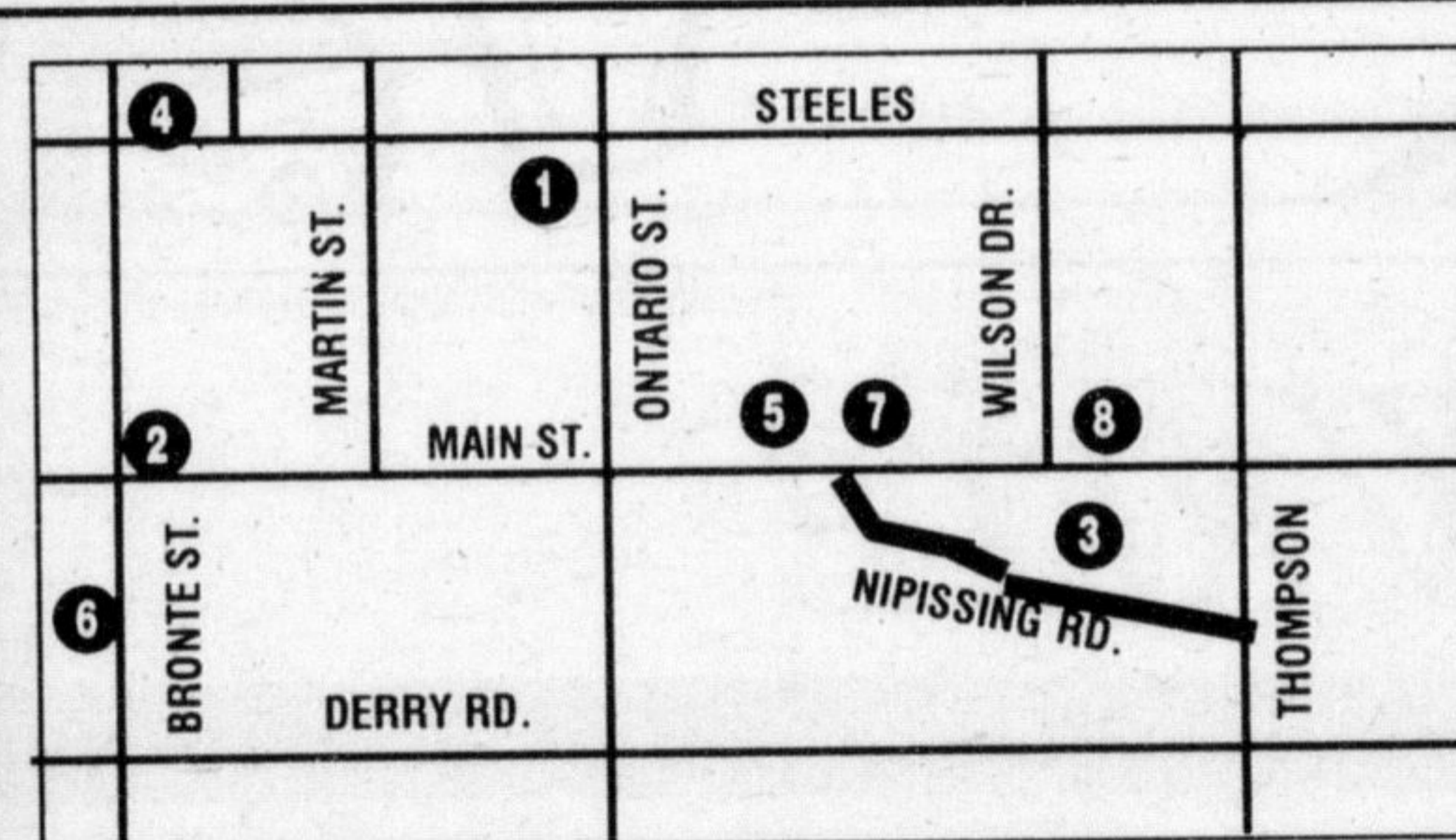
HHS Y2K compliant

In other board news, HHS has assured residents that it is Y2K compliant. But since the hospitals can't guarantee that all outside systems affecting them are equally ready, back-up plans have been devised to ensure that there will not be a drop in service January 1, 2000.

Also, the search is on for more anesthetists in Milton.

A critical shortage of anesthetists has led to the recruitment of medical headhunters Medfall Inc. A joint position between HHS's two hospitals has been suggested to sweeten the offer for potential recruits.

Medfall is the company that found Milton's new OB-GYN Dr. Sandy Sharma.



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