

# Patients give Milton District Hospital four out of five on quality scale in recent report

*Findings show that local facilities rate among best in the province in terms of overall healthcare*

By **HOWARD MOZEL**

Special to The Champion

Patients of Milton District and Oakville-Trafalgar Memorial hospitals have given the facilities four out of five on a recently released satisfaction scale.

The findings are part of a report on the hospitals, collectively known as Halton Healthcare Services (HHS).

"The results confirm that during busy times we continue to provide quality patient care in a fiscally-sound manner," said John Oliver, president and CEO for HHS.

"Our performance in this report is a credit to the efforts of all staff, medical staff and volunteers at HHS."

In 'Hospital Report 2001: Acute Care', released Monday by the Ontario Hospital Association and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, HHS received an overall opinion score of four stars out of five — among the highest in the GTA/905 areas.

"This indicator measures a patient's overall perception of their hospital stay," said Mr. Oliver, who helped pass out cake on Monday to staff members and the public as a token of appreciation.

"It also takes into account whether they would return and whether they would recommend the hospital."

#### Among Ontario's best

HHS finished behind the Hospital for Sick Children (five stars overall) and tied with Markham Stouffville Hospital with four stars.

For each hospital, the report looked at four areas of their performance: patient satisfaction, clinical utilization and outcomes; financial performance and condition; system integration; and change. Rather than give each facility one overall score in each area, a total of 39 various indicators were assessed.

While HHS' results vary, Mr. Oliver said the report card when taken as a whole is very encouraging.

"We are extremely proud of our overall opinion score," he said. "Patient satisfaction is first and foremost. To me, that's the most important one."

HHS scored above the three-star average in seven indicators, including asthma re-admission (five stars), cholecystectomy complications (five stars) and strategies for alternate level of care patients (five stars) plus the collection, dissemination and use of clinical data (five stars).

"You have to perform quite well to move out of the (average) box," said Mr. Oliver.

#### Scored low in nursing care hours

The lone category in which HHS received only two stars was nursing care hours, which reflects the amount of inpatient time spent on direct patient care as a per cent of total inpatient nursing hours. This includes everything from nursing management and educational time to vacation and maternity leave.

Once HHS administration wades through the detailed technical report, said Mr.

Oliver, one priority will be to seek ways to improve nursing time spent on the front lines.

Because no accepted targets or standards exist to rate each indicator, every hospital's performance is compared instead to its peers across Ontario.

Due to the many variables involved, statistical factors are employed to adjust each scorecard. As a result, the results are seen as an initial tool in a quality assessment

process which requires more detailed analysis.

"In the days and weeks to come we will be reviewing the technical report and the indicators to ensure we have an understanding of all our scores," remarked Mr. Oliver.

"These results are positive and encouraging and perhaps, more importantly, they provide us with valuable information which will help us enhance patient care

and direct quality improvements."

Mr. Oliver explained that the technical report contains a wealth of data broken down hospital by hospital and unit by unit that will be thoroughly examined by staff.

"We will take the time to improve and get even better," he said.

HHS was one of 121 Ontario acute care organizations, representing 185 hospital sites, which voluntarily agreed to participate in Hospital Report 2001.

Be sure to check out our Lifestyles section in next Friday's Champion. Lifestyles appears every second Friday.



## BEACH BUNNIES TOY DRIVE

**JULY 16 - 28**

Make a splash this summer. Bring a new or gently used stuffed toy to the beach scene in the mall and warm a child's heart.

All toys will be donated to the Good Bears of Canada.

# It's Better to Give than to Receive

## MILTON MALL

*friendly & familiar*

Escarpment Country™ Tourism Partner

Shopping Hours: Mon. to Fri. 9:30 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. Saturday 9:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Sunday Noon to 5:00 p.m.

Corner of Main & Ontario  
905-878-3900