

Obstetrics unit officially born again

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Photos by BARRIE ERSKINE

The official re-opening of the obstetrics unit at Milton District Hospital is celebrated with a ribbon-cutting ceremony (right). At left, mom Lori Bourassa holds daughter Shaelyn, the first baby born since the unit re-opened.

By FANNIE SUNSHINE

The Champion

Nine months after closing, the obstetrics unit at Milton District Hospital (MDH) has re-born.

Although the unit re-opened July 22 with the arrival of Dr. Glen Hunter, the official opening was held Wednesday with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

With the exception of a new paint job, the unit is physically the same as when it closed last October.

A nursing staff of 12 looks after the unit, which is equipped with five private rooms and 12 postpartum beds.

"Now women don't have to travel to other hospitals to deliver," said Lynn Aplin, patient care manager, adding high-risk births will continue to be referred to hospitals out of town.

The unit will be closed on weekends until the beginning of September when it's then expected to be open seven days a week. Expectant mothers will be redirected to Oakville-Trafalgar Memorial Hospital (OTMH) during weekends.

However, that's not to say women who go into labour on Fridays will be forced to leave the Milton site on Saturdays, Ms Aplin said, adding the mothers-to-be will still receive care at MDH.

John Oliver, Halton Healthcare Services (HHS) president and CEO, said there was tremendous anxiety felt among staff when the obstetrics unit closed last year.

"What a wonderful day today is," he told the crowd of about 30 during the ceremony. "It's a great time to be in Milton because of the change and growth. There was a lot of work behind the scenes to get the unit back up and working. I hope we never ever have to close the unit ever again."

Barbara Burton, chair of the HHS board, said a second obstetrician is scheduled to come on board next summer.

Dr. Hunter told the crowd he felt great to be back in Milton.

"There are lots of women due in September—bring it on."

Mayor Gord Krantz, along with hospital officials and Shaelyn Bourassa, the first baby born in the obstetrics unit this year, officially opened the department by cutting the blue and pink ribbon.

Visitors toured the unit following the ceremony.

Since last October, patients had to travel to OTMH for obstetric and gynecological care due to the departure of Dr. Sandy Sharma.



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