

Hospital buys new equipment with slots funding

Milton District Hospital (MDH) recently purchased several new pieces of equipment thanks to money it received from the Milton Community Fund.

The \$110,628 grant, which was given to Halton Healthcare Services (HHS) last year, allowed the hospital to establish a pulmonary function testing lab for respiratory services and expand its cardiac monitoring equipment in the emergency department.

The new lab allows Milton residents to receive specialized testing without having to leave the community.

"When you have difficulty breathing, for whatever reason, the last thing you should have to worry about is travelling outside of

your community for treatment," said Ellen Ireland, HHS manager of the cardio-respiratory department. "Until now, patients who required respiratory service had to be referred to Oakville-Trafalgar Memorial Hospital or clinics in the surrounding areas."

The new equipment has been up and running since February and has been providing testing one day per week, or approximately 24 patients per month, since that time. It's expected the lab will be able to expand its services in the future with increased referrals from area physicians.

The emergency department at MDH has also benefited from the upgrade of two cardiac monitors and the addition of two new

cardiac monitors that were purchased with the grant.

The monitors allow for continual observation of a patient's cardiovascular system and prompt identification and initiation of treatment.

"The ER is now able to offer cardiac monitoring in two additional stretcher bays. This represents an increase of 50 per cent, servicing an additional 1,500 patients annually," said Darlene Walsh, patient care manager of the emergency department at MDH. "Cardiac monitors are vital pieces of equipment for the emergency department."

The Milton Community Fund was established in 2001 to distribute a portion of the

funds the Town receives from the slots at Mohawk. Since that time, MDH has received a number of grants from the fund.

"We are very fortunate to have the continued support of our community including the Milton Community Fund," said Allan Halls, HHS vice president of north Halton programs and clinical support services.

"With donations from our community the hospital is able to purchase much-needed equipment that Ministry of Health and Long Term Care funding does not provide for. This additional funding is essential for us to continue to provide the highest quality of care for the residents of Milton."

Plea made for funding

The Greater Toronto and Hamilton Mayors and Chairs Committee is once again calling on the Province to provide growth funding for local hospitals.

At its recent meeting, the committee unanimously passed a resolution — which was tabled by Mayor Gord Krantz — that asks the Ontario government to address the growing gap in hospital funding for the more than three million residents living in Durham, Halton, Peel and York.

More specifically, it requests that the Province:

- Provide immediate growth funding to GTA/905 hospitals so they can meet the hospital care needs of the growing number of residents in GTA/905 communities.

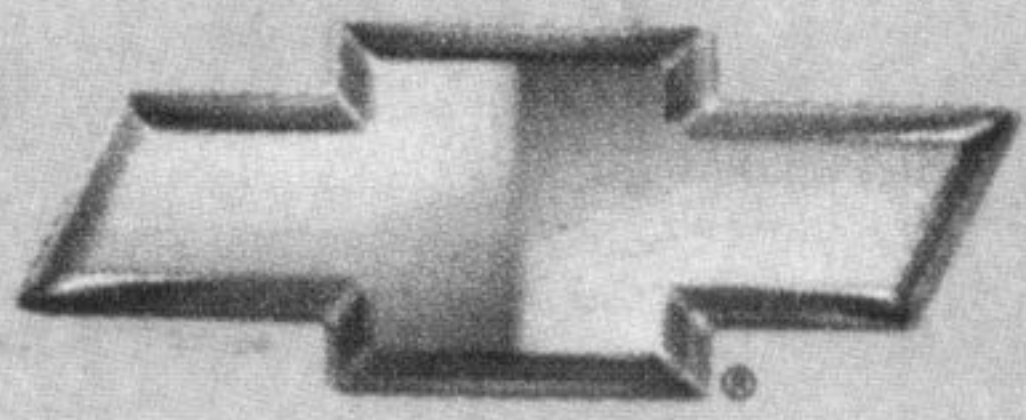
- Commit to funding new Local Health Integration Networks (LHIN) for hospital and other health-care services on the basis of LHIN population size, growth and characteristics.

- Begin developing a hospital and health services plan for Ontario's high growth regions to help build the 'complete communities' envisioned in Places to Grow.

Information shared by the GTA/905 Healthcare Alliance with the GTA/905 Mayors and Chairs showed while announcements made to expand hospital facilities across a number of GTA/905 communities mean improved access to care and some increased hospital funding three to seven years from now, hospital operating funding for local residents' care today and over the next few years continues to fall behind that of other Ontarians.

The resolution is the third passed over the past two years by GTA/905 Mayors and Chairs on the issue of hospital funding in the GTA/905.

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