

One for the scrapbook

Here's a photo flashback we invite you to cut out and paste down in your Penetanguishene Centennial Scrapbook. It shows the family of Charles Beck, former mayor of Penetanguishene and the owner of the Beck Lumber Company, one of Penetanguishene's leading industries at the turn of the century. Look for another picture next week to cut out and paste down in your scrapbook... you could win a cash prize for your efforts.



Health Council: *taking shape*

by Adrienne
Graham Gardner
Simcoe County is one of only two areas with significant population in Ontario without a health council, according to Earl Coulson, Area Planning Coordinator for Central Eastern Ontario at the Ministry of Health. (The other area without a health council is the Region of York.)

Appointees to the steering committee for the health council were referred to the Ministry through the Warden of Simcoe County, the Health Unit and the medical society.

Individuals are chosen for their interest, knowledge and willingness to commit their time. They are volunteers, although their expenses connected to the job are paid by the Ministry.

The Ministry spokesman explained that "the committee will assess the question of a health council for their area, and provide advice to the Ministry."

Members of the committee were chosen to provide as wide a representation as possible of geographical, profes-

sional and political segments of the community, and hold differing views on the topic to be studied.

The possible Health Council "would be a body appointed under the Health Act to advise the Minister on health matters within the district."

A Ministry information sheet describes the responsibilities of a health council as "identifying health care needs and exploring alternatives which will meet those needs and coordinating health care activities within a district."

Although the proposed health council is viewed by some area politicians and health professionals as a precursor of regional government and another layer of bureaucracy, the Ministry says this is not the case.

In fact, the Ministry argues that the District Health Council is an example of the effort by the Ministry to decentralize planning. "It is the Ministry's belief and experience that no one is better able to assess and coordinate the health care resources of a com-

munity than the people who live and work there. Thus, a system of DHC's has been developed to examine available resources and needs and to make recommendations on the health priorities for their communities."

The Ministry spokesman acknowledged that "health care providers, especially hospitals seem to be the most concerned" by the proposed DHC.

However, he suggested "the needs of the whole county, and not just the hospitals have to be considered." Lines of communication between hospitals and the Ministry would remain intact following

the implementation of a DHC, according to the Ministry.

The Ministry literature sets out the following objectives of a DHC:

1. To identify district health needs and consider alternative methods of meeting those needs that are consistent with provincial guidelines.
2. To plan a comprehensive health care services program and establish short-term priorities consistent with long term goals.
3. To coordinate all health activities and ensure a balanced effective and economical service.

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