

Push on to reinstate health council chairperson

BY JENNIFER BROWN
STAFF WRITER

Supporters of Newmarket physician Carter Thorne are firing off letters to the Ministry of Health, demanding to know why the popular doctor was removed as chairperson of the District Health Council.

Last week, 73 York County Hospital nurses, physiotherapists, social workers, clerical staff and occupational therapists signed a letter to Health Minister Elizabeth Witmer stating they feel Thorne is "the best qualified individual for the position as member and chair of the Simcoe York District Health Council and should have his appointment reinstated."

The letter states, "We were outraged by the recent revelation of Dr. Thorne's removal from the District Health Council through the government's decision not to renew his membership. We believe this is a disservice to the people of the region, not just the medical community, but to all of the constituents who rely on the health services in the area."

But health care professionals are not the only ones lining up to defend Thorne. At its last meeting, Newmarket council agreed to write a letter to the ministry demanding to know why Thorne was not retained in his position as chairperson.

Thorne said he is grateful for the support, but he doesn't think anyone will get any answers from the ministry. "I don't really expect a letter," he said, adding he hadn't received any calls from local MPPs trying to explain the situation either.

"I'm not trying to make this a political issue. I've had a lot of support from people who know what I do and what I stand for, and that I don't have a political agenda. I'm not into game playing — it's always been about how to help the community. I'll just go on to the next opportunity."

Acting health council chairperson Doris Shirriff said the council hasn't heard from the ministry and the plan is to continue without a permanent replacement for Thorne until they do receive an adequate explanation.

The District Health Council has been asking for an explanation of the ministry's actions, since Thorne and fellow council member Steven Mills were told Feb. 2 their services were no longer required.

Thorne and Mills learned the Ministry of Health would not be renewing their appointments as members of the Simcoe York District Health Council, which effectively put an end to Thorne's position as chairperson.



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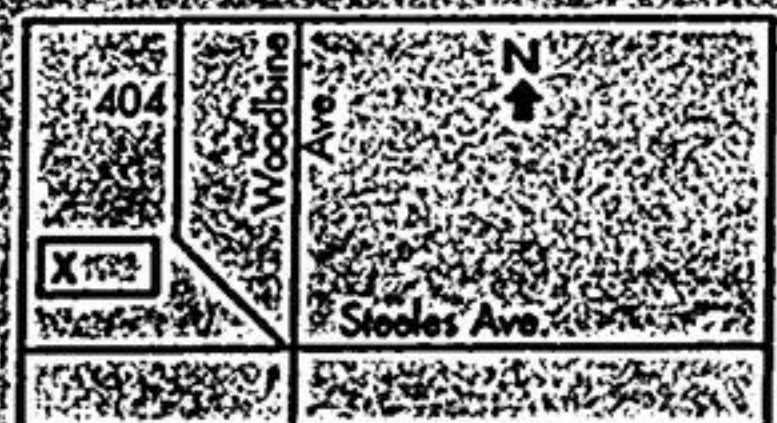
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