

Report backs call for fourth York hospital

Health care funding should be based on population: alliance

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Staff Writers

The province needs to begin planning a health care campus in Vaughan and funding formulas for existing hospitals should be population-based, states a report released Thursday by the GTA/905 Healthcare Alliance.

Places For Care, a health care strategy for Ontario's high growth regions, offers a series of recommendations on how to maintain and improve health services in the face of increasing demand in York, Halton, Peel and Durham regions.

Planning for long-term population growth by adding a fourth York hospital in Vaughan is front and centre among the report's eight recommendations.

As Ontario's fastest growing region, York is in line for another health care facility, the report said.

The alliance points to a March consultant's study recommending a Vaughan health care campus anchored by a community hospital of 325 to 375 beds "as a good starting point for discussion...to begin planning for expanded health care services in Vaughan".

Mayor Michael Di Biase, chairperson of the city's health care foundation, welcomed the recommendation.

"It's great. The statistics, everything points to the need for a health care facility," he said, adding he will use the report as leverage when he meets with Health Minister George Smitherman.

"We'll bring it to the attention of the minister. We'll say 'Look Mr. Minister, we need to deal with this'."

Mr. Di Biase hopes to hear in the next two weeks when he will meet Mr. Smitherman.

In their March study, consultants IBM and GPC International said Vaughan is the largest and fastest growing community without its own hospital.

Residents are forced to turn to hospi-

tals in other municipalities that are already struggling to provide care to their own growing populations, the study said.

"This raises the prospect of diminished levels of service for Vaughan residents in the future," the study said.

"The lack of a local health care facility has, over the years, developed into an important community concern."

In addition to a hospital, the study suggested the campus could be home to a wellness centre, a long-term care facility, ambulance bay and specialty clinics.

Residents in the GTA/905 are underfunded on a per capita basis for hospital services.

Accordingly, the report recommends a new funding formula should take into account regional demographics.

"Catch up funding" should be made available to bring hospitals up to par with those outside the area.

The report suggests local access to the fullest range of hospital services must be ensured and enhanced and recommends increasing the number of health care professionals in the GTA/905 area.

Health care focus on culturally diverse communities and those who are socio-economically disadvantaged should be increased, the report said.

York hospital administrators welcomed the report.

Of the 106,000 people who move to the GTA/905 area annually, 40,000 make York their home, Southlake Regional Health Centre president and CEO Dan Carriere said.

"Places for Care is timely, given this spring's approval of York Central Hospital's major expansion and renovation project, the Ontario government's health system transformation agenda, the creation of local health integration networks and the (alliance's) strategy for high growth regions," York Central Hospital president and CEO Bruce Harber said.

"Government and high growth hospitals need to work together if we are going to meet the needs of the three million people currently living in the communities served by the GTA/905 Health-

care Alliance hospitals."

The GTA/905 Healthcare Alliance represents 10 acute care community hospitals and a mental health facility.

Combined, they are responsible for the delivery of acute and chronic care

to 25 per cent of Ontario's population, including one million York Region residents.

Copies of the report are available by calling 416-205-1331 or on line, www.gta905health.com

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LEAVES ARE FALLING! YARD WASTE TIPS FOR THE FALL SEASON

MULCH BEFORE YOU BAG!

Run your leaves over with your lawn mower and leave them on the lawn as mulch, or put them in a bin and use a "weed wacker" to shred them before bagging. You can get more leaves in each kraft bag or rigid container by mulching first.

KEEP BAGS DRY

Rake your leaves and place in an open rigid container such as a garbage can or bushel basket, or use kraft paper bags. Keep the filled bags in your garage or set on top of a tarp to keep them dry until collection day. Yard material in plastic bags will not be collected. Grass clippings are banned from all collections.

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Lots of leaves? Markham residents can drop off leaf and yard material in plastic bags (residents must empty bags on site) to York Region's Waste Management Centre, 100 Garfield Wright Boulevard, East Gwillimbury (near the NE corner of Davis Drive & Woodbine Avenue). Open Saturday's only 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. (from October 29, 2005 until February 28, 2006).

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Curtis MP1000 1GB MP3 Player 10058286
This product is advertised on p. 16 of our October 21st flyer with the wrong image of the red model. It is available only in black.
We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused our valued customers.

CORRECTION FOR ONTARIO HONDA DEALERS ASSOCIATION

In the promotional newspaper insert entitled "WOW", currently being distributed on behalf of the Ontario Honda Dealers Association, the following errors have occurred:

- a) the Honda Element is not equipped with Vehicle Stability Assist™ (VSA®);
- b) all 2006 Elements include Anti-Lock Brakes (ABS). This feature is "new for 2006" on Element models (YH1726PL/YH1826PL);
- c) the Honda Pilot and Ridgeline vehicles depicted as LX models are, in fact, EX models.

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