



Too many patients in hallways: Markham Stouffville

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The need at Southlake is dire, vice-president of medicine and emergency services Gary Ryan said.

Ensuring 90 per cent of patients, arriving by ambulance, are admitted to hospital within 30 minutes is a widely accepted target, Mr. Ryan said.

At the moment, however, Southlake is hitting that mark just 10 to 20 per cent

of the time.

"That's very poor. With growth and demand, the impact has been tremendous," Mr. Ryan said.

While Markham Stouffville did not have figures indicating wait times for patients arriving by ambulance, it's a regional and provincial problem, chief of staff Dr. Dave Austin said.

"It's clear, at this time, all of York Region's hospitals are facing similar issues where patients are waiting in

hallways for a bed. That's the central issue," he said.

At York Central, the problem is exacerbated by ambulances arriving from Toronto, Halton and Durham regions along with York, operations director of emergency medicine Mary Neill said.

It's a stop-gap measure, but it's an important one until more systemic change in the health care system is realized, Ms Neill added.

The new nursing positions are also

welcome news to York's front-line paramedics, who wait with patients up to two hours for a hospital bed at peak time, York's emergency medical services performance and development manager Steve Darling said.

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"Our paramedics are very encouraged by this. It means they can focus more of their time providing emergency care," Mr. Darling said.

York Region's portion of the funding will carry the program to at least March 2009.

The province is taking a wait-and-see attitude before any final decisions are made.

BY THE NUMBERS

- ▶ 85 — the average percentage of patients arriving by ambulance at Southlake Regional Health Centre who wait more than 30 minutes to be admitted;
- ▶ 11,000 — the number of people transported to York Central Hospital by ambulance last year from Toronto, York, Durham and Halton regions;
- ▶ 62,666 — the average number of emergency rooms visits per year to York Region's three hospitals.

Candidates meeting Wednesday at Seneca's King Campus

Whitchurch-Stouffville, you can meet your candidates in the Oct. 14 federal election Wednesday.

Seneca College is holding a meeting of federal political candidates in the Oak Ridges-Markham Riding. Candidates from all parties have been invited to participate.

The candidates will field questions from three panelists, moderated by Seneca journalism instructor Jim Craig, who has four decades of experience in Canadian broadcasting.

Karen Cashin, chairperson of the Whitchurch-Stouffville Chamber of Commerce, will be on the panel.

The event begins at 7:30 p.m. at Seneca's King Campus at 13990 Dufferin St. in King City, north of 15th Side Road.

For more on the candidates, go to yorkregion.com



On Tuesday, October 14, vote.

A federal general election is taking place on October 14, 2008.

Did you receive this card?



Keep the voter information card you received by mail from Elections Canada. It tells you where and when to vote. You'll get through the voting process more quickly if you have it with you.

If you haven't received it, or if you found an error in your name or address, please phone your local Elections Canada office. You'll find the number at www.elections.ca by clicking on "Voter Information Service".

Where and when to vote?

Advance voting

You can vote before election day. Advance voting will be held Friday, October 3, Saturday, October 4 and Monday, October 6, from noon to 8:00 p.m. Locations of advance polling stations appear on the back of the voter information card.

You can vote by mail or at your local Elections Canada office using the special ballot if you make the request by 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 7.

To download the registration form, go to www.elections.ca and click on "I'm Mailing My Vote!", or call Elections Canada to obtain the form and information.

Do you know the new identification rules to vote?

When you vote, you must prove your identity and address.

For the list of acceptable pieces of identification authorized by the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada, please see the pamphlet you received by mail from Elections Canada or visit www.elections.ca and click on "Voter Identification at the Polls".

To vote, you must:

- be a Canadian citizen
- be at least 18 years old on election day
- prove your identity and address

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