

A local health care rountable at Headwaters Health Care Centre

Written by SYLVIA JONES

I had the opportunity to host our Deputy Premier and Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, Christine Elliott recently at a roundtable at Headwaters Health Care Centre (HHCC).

Minister Elliott and I had a great discussion with many health care providers, front-line workers and emergency responders working throughout Dufferin-Caledon. It is clear that our community uses a collaborative approach when assisting patients. Professionals that work with the public, and are often the first contact for help, joined in the conversation. Doctors, nurses, Personal Support Workers (PSW), Palliative and Pastoral care, Long-Term Care (LTC), the Dufferin Area Family Health Team, Dufferin County Paramedic (Ambulance) Service, the Peel-Dufferin Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), Dufferin Child and Family Services (DCAFS), Family Transition Place (FTP) and our police services were all represented at the meeting with the Minister. Each organization shared a specific example to highlight how they work together to get the necessary service for the patient, where and when they need it.

Knowing who or where to go for additional help in Dufferin-Caledon is critical to being able to help individuals, especially when they are experiencing a crisis.

When this approach is used, repeat visits to the emergency room are decreased, and most importantly, patients are better served by the entire health and social service network that operate in Dufferin-Caledon.

Whether it's Dufferin County Paramedics doing home wellness checks, or the Canadian Mental Health Association working with a client to recognize when they are in distress and giving them coping techniques on how to de-escalate their stress ? by working together we are able to help the clients sooner, and often without the need for police or hospital visits.

It is clear that by using this approach, our local service providers have the best interest of the person they are working with in mind, and want to ensure that each person is connected with the services they need, when they need it. Many of the presenters spoke about how these referrals and connections became a lifeline for families and patients and ensured help was offered before the issue became a crisis.

Our model of care in Dufferin-Caledon is not unique, but it is a great example of health and social service agencies working together and in the patient's best interest. From first responders to those who care for the final stages of life, our community organizations ensure that there is a link between the many providers who deliver frontline care in our community.

It was great to share our successes with the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care in the same week our government announced our plan to ensure patient centred-care across Ontario. It is a plan to build a renewed, connected and sustainable health care system.

The new Ontario health care plan would improve health care in Ontario by organizing health care providers to work as one coordinated team. The visit to HHCC with Minister Elliott gave her a chance to see a model that is already using patient-centred care to find solutions that work at the local level.

Bill 74, The People's Health Care Act, 2019, if passed, includes streamlining the transition between different health care providers working as one coordinated team, focused on patient specific local needs. Patients would experience a seamless move (for example between hospital to home care with one patient story, one patient record, and one care plan).

If passed, this legislation will create Ontario Health Teams that connect health care providers to patients and integrate many provincial agencies into one health agency called Ontario Health.

I would like to thank Stacey Daub, CEO at Headwaters Health Care Centre for hosting our round table and everyone involved in presenting our unique Dufferin-Caledon model. Everyone at the table offered valuable insight into how co-ordinated care works in Dufferin-Caledon.

If you have any questions about the proposed changes to health care, please contact me at: 1-800-265-1603 or email at sylvia.jonesco@pc.ola.org.