

MEDIA RELEASE

Monday, December 16, 2019

For Immediate Release

Mount Forest, ON...Rural Wellington health care partners have officially applied to the Ministry of Health to become an Ontario Health Team (OHT). Ontario Health Teams are groups of health care providers and organizations that are clinically and fiscally accountable for delivering a full and coordinated continuum of care to a defined geographic population.

“Over the last six months we’ve brought together 26 health and social service partners across Rural Wellington to put together an application to become an OHT”, says Dr. Sarah Gower, Chair of the Rural Wellington Ontario Health Team Steering Committee. This means that residents and those accessing care in Centre Wellington, Minto, Mapleton or Wellington North, over time, will see improved access to services and smoother transitions between service providers which will improve care and health outcomes. The Rural Wellington OHT will work to improve the way our residents navigate through our health care system, will bring electronic access for those who wish to have services available electronically, and explore what the rural-specific needs are for our patients and providers, and how we can better serve patients and improve health outcomes for the entire population.

Health Care in Rural Wellington is unique vs. health care in urban centres, in that our rural physicians provide care not only in their offices, but also in long-term care, an after-hours clinic, the Emergency Department and throughout our hospitals. The challenges in our rural area are different in that we have transportation barriers, isolation, unstable or unaffordable housing issues, food insecurity which, combined with the cost of some services and health care aids (e.g., medications) as well as a lack of high-speed internet for all residents increase the risk of poor health. The Rural Wellington OHT partners are committed to working together to improve the health care system and health outcomes for residents and individuals who provide care in Rural Wellington.

The Rural Wellington Ontario Health Team Steering Committee Partners Are:

Canadian Mental Health Association Waterloo-Wellington
County of Wellington
eHealth Centre of Excellence
Groves Memorial Community Hospital
Guelph-Wellington Paramedic Services
Home & Community Care
Louise Marshall Hospital
Minto-Mapleton Family Health Organization
Minto-Mapleton Family Health Team
Mount Forest Family Health Organization
Mount Forest Family Health Team
Palmerston & District Hospital
Patient Advisors from each Family Health Team region
Upper Grand Family Health Organization
Upper Grand Family Health Team
VON Canada.

To date, 24 Ontario Health Teams have been named across the province. In the coming weeks, the Ontario Ministry of Health will announce those who are accepted to move to full application and Rural Wellington hopes to be one of those announced to move to the next phase.

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