

North Simcoe Muskoka LHIN Hospices Receive Green Light

Funding Provided for Residential Hospices in Barrie and Huntsville

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MIDLAND, ON – North Simcoe Muskoka LHIN CEO, Bernie Blais, speaking at the 7th Annual Fall Palliative Care Conference today, announced funding for two residential hospices in North Simcoe Muskoka. Hospice Huntsville, a proposed 5-bed residential hospice will begin operation in spring 2010 while Hospice Simcoe, a 10-bed hospice located in Barrie, 7 of which will be residential, will begin operation on December 1, 2009.

Residential hospices provide people with a life threatening illness, alternatives to acute care settings. These home-like facilities prevent individuals from spending their last months in a hospital, and at the same time provide more appropriate care for palliative patients.

The North Simcoe Muskoka LHIN is continuing to build and expand community services to more appropriately service our population. Hospice Simcoe will receive \$627,000 annually and Hospice Huntsville \$465,000 annually to operate these valuable community resources.

QUOTES

“It is with great pleasure that I congratulate Hospice Simcoe on the impending opening of their new facility in Barrie. Advocating to secure \$2.6 million from my government to help build this facility was one of my first priorities”, said Aileen Carroll, MPP Barrie. “As a former volunteer in the early years of Hospice Simcoe, I have great respect for the exceptional work this dedicated group accomplishes in palliative care.”

“This is great news! North Simcoe Muskoka is the only LHIN in the province that currently has no residential hospice beds”, said Bernie Blais. “These 12 residential hospice beds will help address a major gap in our continuum of health service.”

“The majority of us would like to die at home, in our own beds, surrounded by those we love. Sometimes this isn’t possible”, noted Cate Root, CEO, North Simcoe Muskoka Palliative Care Network. “Although complex symptom management may require hospital care, for most, having access to the specialized care and homelike setting of a Hospice is the best alternative. We want to thank our NSM LHIN for all their support in bringing these dreams to a reality”.

“The development of residential hospice beds in Huntsville will allow us to care for terminally ill individuals in the most appropriate setting”, states Dr. Deb Harrold who works with Hospice Huntsville. “We are very pleased that the NSM LHIN has placed an emphasis on hospice care. We would also like to thank the many people and organizations in our local community who have been working, and continue to work, tirelessly supporting the initiative to build a 5-bed residential hospice in Huntsville.”

“We are enormously pleased to be opening the doors and are sincerely grateful to all those who have played a part in bringing residential hospice care to fruition”, said Jan Janssen, Executive Director, Hospice Simcoe. “At Hospice Simcoe, residents and loved ones will receive compassionate care and support. Our home-like environment will bring hope and comfort, allowing families to focus on spending quality time together. No-one facing end of life needs to do it alone. “

QUICK FACTS

As one of 14 LHINs across Ontario, the North Simcoe Muskoka LHIN plans, integrates and funds local health services, including hospitals, community care access centres, community health centres, long-term care homes, mental health and addiction programs and a variety of community support services agencies. The LHINs oversee half of the \$40 billion health care budget in Ontario.

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For further information on the North Simcoe Muskoka LHIN, visit www.nsmlhin.on.ca .

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