

Pembroke Regional Hospital Is Excited To Work With Others As Part Of System-Wide Health Care Transformation

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The Pembroke Regional Hospital is excited to be one of 15 health care agencies who have come together with a view to forming one of the province's first Ontario Health Teams beginning this fall.

Earlier this year, the provincial government announced the creation of Ontario Health Teams (OHT) after conducting a review of the existing delivery model. This revealed, among other things, that patients and families have difficulty navigating the healthcare system and are waiting too long for care.

The new Ontario Health Teams will be part of a coordinated healthcare system that ensures patients are cared for by a single group of providers without any gap in service. They will provide care based on the needs of their communities and provide patients, families and caregivers the help they need to navigate the public healthcare system when they need it.

The *Upper Ottawa Valley Ontario Health Team (OHT)*, comprised of our family physician groups, community and home care providers, long term care homes, mental health services, paramedic services, and PRH has submitted a readiness assessment plan to the province for consideration. A patient advisor provided additional input on the plan prior to submission.

"Since early April, our group has met weekly to develop a vision for the future, develop first-year goals and prepare the initial proposal," said PRH President and CEO Pierre Noel. "Our expectation is that some of the teams may be asked to resubmit with a larger geography, and if this is the case we would be pleased to collaborate with additional partners."

Dr. Declan Rowan said the *Upper Ottawa Valley Ontario Health Team* is designed to improve how patients receive care. "The vision of our OHT ensures that all persons in our catchment area receive the majority of their care from a team of family physicians who are supported in their practice by other health care professionals. This will give patients increased access to a full range of services including health education and social work. We will work hard to make it much easier for care to be accessed in all other sectors like hospital, home care, community care, long term care, mental health and addictions and many more who support patients through their health care journey," Dr. Rowan said, adding that the goal is to connect care for patients and have these services work more closely together; always with the patients' interests at the forefront.

In its first year, the Ontario Health Team is committed to addressing patients with the highest care needs such as those who have multiple health problems, or those who are

frail or palliative, by ensuring that appropriate, coordinated resources are put in place for them.

The Ontario Health Team is also committed to helping those who don't have a family physician as well as those who may have one, but don't have access to broader services or resources for their care.

"Renfrew County has a long history of working together to improve county-wide services which will help make this a success," Mr. Noel said. "Those at the table are partners who want to participate and we are very fortunate to have such strong support from family physicians in our region."

He added that, whether or not the *Upper Ottawa Valley OHT* is selected to move forward in this first phase, the group will continue to meet and explore opportunities to work towards some or all of our one-year commitments.

"Regardless of whether we are identified as an early adopter or not, the work we are doing through greater collaboration with our partners can only mean better care for our patients," Mr. Noel said.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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