Barrie-area health partners vying to become Ontario Health Team

Following months of collaboration and consultation, healthcare, community and municipal partners in the Barrie-area submitted a comprehensive application to the Ministry of Health today to become an Ontario Health Team (OHT).

The Barrie-area Ontario Health Team (BAOHT) submission, co-led by the Barrie Family Health Organization and Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre (RVH), is signed by 19 partners, including, physicians and nurse practitioners, RVH, community health centre, hospice, home and community care, community agencies and municipalities. Patients and families were also involved in drafting the submission.

“The Barrie-area OHT partners have a long track record of working together to deliver patient-centred care and seamless transitions of care,” says Dr. Chris Tebbutt, BAOHT co-chair and RVH vice president Academic and Medical Affairs. “But we need to do better. Our focus is on improving the links between our services to make it easier for patients to get exceptional healthcare care whenever and wherever they need it.”

The Ontario Health Team model is part of the government’s sweeping changes to Ontario’s healthcare system and are designed to ensure healthcare providers work as one coordinated team, no matter where they provide care, to better connect patients with the services they need. People will still access the health system in the usual ways – with a visit to their family doctor, nurse practitioner or the emergency department – but the next steps in their healthcare journey should be coordinated, seamless and easy to navigate. Of the 150 Ontario Health team self-assessments submitted in the spring, only 31 were invited to move forward with a full application, including the Barrie-area OHT.

As it evolves the Barrie-area OHT will coordinate care for almost 200,000 people in Barrie, Innisfil, Springwater, Oro-Medonte and Essa. Through a series of planning workshops the Barrie-area OHT partners analysed data, identified the gaps in our local healthcare system and determined that the OHT’s focus in the first year will be on improving care for frail seniors and adult palliative care patients.

“Frail elderly and palliative patients have very complex health needs and it’s often very challenging and frustrating for them to navigate our healthcare system,” explains Dr. John McKee, lead physician for the Barrie Family Health Organization and BAOHT co-chair. “The initiatives we develop to improve care for them are strategies we can build on to provide better, more connected, efficient care for the entire population of the Barrie-area.”

The government is expected to announce the first cohort of Ontario Health Teams later this year.

For more information:
Kimberly Vickers
Executive Director
Barrie & Community Family Health Team
705-721-0370 ext. 2303

Jane Cocking
Manager, Corporate Communications
Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre
705-728-9090 ext. 41611

BAOHT signing partners include:

- Alzheimer Society of Simcoe County
- Barrie & Community Family Health Team
- Barrie Family Health Organization
- Barrie Community Health Centre
- Bayshore Healthcare
- CBI Health Group
- City of Barrie
- Closing the Gap Healthcare
- County of Simcoe
- Entité 4
- Georgian Nurse Practitioner-led Clinic
- Hospice Simcoe
- Long-Term Care Committee
- New Path Youth and Family Services
- Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre
- Saint Elizabeth Health Care
- Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit
- Town of Innisfil
- Victoria Village