

News Release

For Immediate Release

December 20, 2012

Patients Spending Less Time in Emergency Departments

The Mississauga Halton LHIN is working hand in hand with partners to improve emergency department performance, reduce wait times this holiday season and help people feel better faster.

NEWS

Mississauga Halton (December 20, 2012) – The [Mississauga Halton Local Health Integration Network](#) (LHIN) and health service partners are helping patients spend less time in emergency departments (ED), allowing them to receive treatment faster and return home sooner, freeing up hospital time to treat other patients.

Supporting hospitals facing the biggest ED challenges and building on the province's success of its ED performance improvement program, this year, through the Mississauga Halton LHIN, Ontario is supporting Trillium Health Partners and Halton Healthcare Services with \$7,986,400 to improve emergency department performance. Helping patients receive treatment faster in the emergency department is part of Ontario's Action Plan for Health Care.

“The emergency departments at Trillium Health Partners are under a tremendous amount of pressure; receiving over 180,000 visits every year. We need innovative strategies and strong community partnerships to address this demand. This funding will provide some much needed support in helping us achieve that,” said Michelle DiEmanuele, President and CEO, Trillium Health Partners.

Recognizing the increased number of ED visits during the holidays, the Mississauga Halton LHIN is also launching its 2012/13 Holiday Surge Protocol – a pilot project developed in collaboration with primary care providers, community services, acute care hospitals and the LHIN – which will be key to managing and influencing the increased number of patients that find themselves in emergency departments at this time of year. Working together, these health service providers have taken a regional approach to planning for service availability and coverage over the holidays in order to improve patients' access to the most appropriate type of care, based on their needs and location in our region. The protocol is designed to enhance coordination and use of health care providers within the LHIN, thereby maintaining timely access to ED care for patients who need it most.

Dr. Eric Letovsky, Co-chair of the Surge Protocol Working Group said, ***“This was a true collaborative effort between our partners. Through proactive planning, we want to ensure we are working together so patients continue to receive the best possible care, close to home.”***

In conjunction with the protocol, the Feel Better Faster campaign is helping patients reduce their wait time this holiday season, providing them with options so they can access the right care, at the right time and in the right place. Ads, posters, fact sheets and radio spots are critical to building awareness for feelbetterfaster.ca where

residents can quickly access valuable listings from walk-in clinics, pharmacies, labs and many other community services, identifying health care programs and services that are open during the holiday season in their local communities – from December 22, 2012 to January 6, 2013.

Health service providers within the LHIN have also received the Mississauga Halton Holiday Planning Toolkit, so they can better inform patients and clients about what is available if they are not feeling well or need certain health care services.

“The holiday season is busy and people often don’t know what health care services are available during this time. When over 85,000 residents of our community are visiting emergency departments for illnesses or injuries that don’t require emergency care, we know we have a disconnect and an opportunity to educate, because no one wants to be in emergency if they don’t have to be. Making sure people know all their options: what programs and services are available, where they can go if they are sick and what is open to them, is crucial,” said Board Chair Graeme Goebelle of the Mississauga Halton LHIN .

The [Feel Better Faster](#) campaign is sponsored by the Mississauga Halton LHIN on behalf of [Trillium Health Partners](#), [Halton Healthcare Services](#) and the [Mississauga Halton Community Care Access Centre \(CCAC\)](#).

QUOTES

“Investment in Emergency Departments is exactly what we need in Mississauga and Halton in order to treat patients better and faster. I am proud that our government is investing almost \$8 million to help emergency departments so patients receive the best quality care.”

— **Dipika Damerla, MPP Mississauga East-Cooksville**

“Halton Healthcare Services is always seeking ways to improve on the quality care we provide, and as a result we continue to excel year after year in reducing our Emergency Department wait times. This additional funding from the Ministry will help us communicate the other healthcare options that are available this Holiday Season. Through the Holiday Surge Protocol, we are able to educate the public about the various healthcare options that exist and make it easier for them to access care over the Holiday Season – helping to ensure the healthcare needs of the community are met.”

— **John Oliver, President & CEO, Halton Healthcare Services**

“Every day of the year, the Mississauga Halton CCAC provides care to 14,000 clients in their homes or within the community. Anticipating care needs during the winter holiday period will ensure that clients and their families have the vital care they need and that the community has access to emergency care when needed. This will ensure that everyone can enjoy a safe holiday season.”

— **Caroline Brereton, CEO, Mississauga Halton CCAC**

“Ontario’s emergency rooms are reducing wait times and treating more patients. That means Ontarians requiring medical attention are now being seen faster and spending less time in emergency rooms – which is part of our commitment in the Action Plan for Health Care to ensure people receive the right care, in the right place, at the right time.”

— **Deb Matthews, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care**

QUICK FACTS

Emergency Department Performance and Funding

- Time spent in the ED has decreased by 1.2 hours over the last four years — with approximately 86 per cent of people receiving treatment within target time frames
- In February 2009, Ontario set ED length of stay targets of four hours for patients with minor conditions and eight hours for patients with complex conditions
- Emergency departments have seen a steady increase in complex patients, with the most serious cases increasing by over 35 per cent since April 2008 – despite this increase, patients are spending less time waiting to receive care
- Total ED funding within the Mississauga Halton LHIN: \$7,986,400
 - Trillium Health Partners – **Credit Valley Hospital**: \$2,354,900
 - Trillium Health Partners – **Mississauga Hospital**: \$1,599,300
 - Halton Healthcare Services – **Georgetown Hospital**: \$730,400
 - Halton Healthcare Services – **Oakville-Trafalgar Memorial Hospital**: \$2,302,000
 - Halton Healthcare Services – **Milton District Hospital**: \$999,800

The Mississauga Halton LHIN 2012/13 Holiday Surge Protocol

The primary objectives of the protocol are as follows:

- Coordinate community care provider coverage during the holiday period
- Create transparency and clarity on local surge protocols (with respect to holiday planning)
- ‘Near’ real time capacity planning during the winter holiday surge period
- Clear roles and communication framework
- Clear and shared understanding of provider capacity AND scope of practice across LHIN providers
- Focus on proactive planning for low acuity, non-admitted patients during the winter holiday season

Feel Better Faster Community Awareness Campaign

- The Feel Better Faster community awareness campaign seeks to promote access to care and reduce emergency wait times. Messages emphasizing options are:
 - If you have a serious illness or injury go to your closest emergency department or dial 911
 - If you need non-emergency health care this holiday season – reduce your wait time and discover other health care options close to home
 - Be prepared! Know your options for care over the holidays

LEARN MORE

Read more about the Mississauga Halton LHIN at: www.mississaugahaltonlhin.on.ca

Learn about your health care options in Mississauga Halton: www.feelbetterfaster.ca

Media Contacts

For more information or to arrange interviews with representatives from your local hospital, Mississauga Halton LHIN and Mississauga Halton CCAC, please call or email the media contacts below:

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