



Briefing Note: Update Hospice Palliative Care - Approved Expansions in Niagara Region

Hospice Niagara is currently underway with the provincially-approved expansion of hospice care with the addition of 20 new hospice suites within the region. In Welland, the new hospice centre, Walker House, is currently at 20% of construction completion. Willson House in Fort Erie, is in the final design stage.

Along with this increased capacity in hospice suites, expansion planning has also been submitted to provincial funders for increased capacity in palliative care to serve people in their homes and in Long-Term Care.

On behalf of the Hospice Niagara Board of Directors and our community, we thank City of Port Colborne for \$90,000.00 of capital funding to bring these much needed facilities to everyone in our region.

It is important to consider and continue planning for other opportunities in Niagara to expand hospice care to serve the Region, as ministry planning and funding cycles can take several years. Hospice Niagara is well-positioned and willing to move in this direction, given the current expansion projects are well underway.

Why it's important for ALL Municipalities to Invest Now in Hospice Palliative Care

The hospice capacity in Niagara with these new suites will increase to approximately 6 beds per 100,000 resident, (not including West Niagara). However, the Auditor General in 2014 recommended 7-10 beds per 100,000, which highlights the need for further hospice expansion in Niagara. It is also important to consider Niagara's need and capacity given our demographic trend towards an aging population.

Hospice care is delivered at a fraction of the cost of hospital care. The average cost of a hospice bed is \$500 per day, while a hospital bed costs over \$1,200 per day, saving our health care system millions of dollars each year. While end of life and dying in hospital or their home meets the needs or necessities for many people, hospices provide people and their families with individual care, input into all care decisions and most important, focuses on specialized palliative care and dignity at end-of-life.

Economical Planning

Based on recent construction cost inflation, a typical stand-alone hospice residence build falls within the range of \$600-\$700 per square foot, for specialized building features and increased infection prevention requirements.

If new hospice sites are approved in the future, the Ministry of Health potentially will provide Hospice Niagara with \$2,500,000 toward approved standard elements, with an opportunity for special circumstances grant request for exceptional circumstances. Regional funding contributions, along with all municipal support toward the current approved projects and any new projects demonstrates the importance of these projects in our region and is a strong element to the business case for provincial approval of these types of grants.

Sustainable Growth

Hospice Niagara has existing professional management and infrastructure to sustainably manage the associated administrative and professional staffing demands to expand its operations and accredited hospice services in Niagara. In addition, the organization has the community recognition and support to raise the required \$2.8M annually to operate a 10-bed facility and leverage existing volunteer recruitment, training and retention programs in place to offset operational costs.

Hospice Niagara has demonstrated and proven success to ensure that the capital builds and hospice services that are provided in its current and future model are viable and sustainable to serve Niagara's hospice needs for future generations.

Capital Campaign Contributions

Hospice Niagara's capital campaign has launched, with a target of raising \$18M toward the build costs for the Fort Erie and Welland sites. Hospice Niagara is working to secure contributions from every municipality, exempting communities in West Niagara that are served by McNally House. Hospice expansions that occur in Niagara benefit all residents of Niagara.

Improved Care for Niagara

Niagara's much needed Hospice expansion is important to every community. Provincially approved expansion models in Niagara create a template for other communities in Niagara to plan alongside Hospice Niagara for future hospice resource expansions.

Most importantly, expansion means:

- Increased local access to weekly hospice wellness programs, caregiver and bereavement support;
- Influx of palliative care professionals working within communities;
- The expansion of Francophone programs and services;
- Culturally safe programs, that focus on health equity;
- Onsite expert consultations to help people living in LTC homes throughout Niagara to avoid hospital admissions due to pain crisis and complex end-of-life care and;
- Better planning, transitions and improved quality of life for patients and families, who will have access to vital hospice and community palliative care services.

These and future projects are community and provincial investments that will maintain Hospice Niagara's proven record in providing exceptional care according to best practice standards, while ensuring sustainable expansion through partnerships and integration.

It is important for all Niagara communities to support Hospice Niagara with its existing, approved expansion plans, and equally important for Hospice Niagara to support communities to continue their efforts to expand hospice services to meet growing demands.

We thank all municipalities for their confirmed commitments to the Hospice Niagara expansion and encourage the remaining communities to consider your local contribution request.

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