

Memorandum

To: City Council
From: Chief Administrator Officer
Date: June 13, 2023
Re: Resolution – Port Colborne Urgent Care Centre

On May 31, 2023, Niagara Health announced it would be reducing hours at the Port Colborne and Fort Erie Urgent Care Centres due to a physician shortage. Beginning July 5, 2023, both centres will be reduced from a 24-hour per day service down to 12 hours per day, from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Following the announcement, Mayor Steele issued a statement on behalf of Port Colborne City Council expressing concern for the decision. His statement recognized the challenges Niagara Health and other health systems across Canada are facing, but noted that the changes put Port Colborne residents at a disadvantage to other residents in the Niagara region.

Mayor Steele has been in regular contact with Mayor Redekop in Fort Erie to discuss the difficulties residents of the two communities face when trying to access reliable health services. Thousands of residents in both Port Colborne and Fort Erie do not have a family doctor and therefore rely on the Urgent Care Centres as their first point of healthcare contact.

On June 5, 2023, the Town of Fort Erie held a Special Council Meeting to discuss a motion regarding the partial closure at their Urgent Care Centre. During the meeting, Fort Erie Council passed a motion that calls on Niagara Health to reverse its decision to reduce hours at their Urgent Care Centre and to work with the Town to secure the necessary resources to continue to operate the Urgent Care Centre on a full -time basis. The Town of Fort Erie's resolution is included in the June 13, 2023 Council package as a Correspondence Item.

In a unified approach with the Town of Fort Erie, Mayor Steele has requested Port Colborne City Council consider a similar motion. Staff have created a resolution for Port Colborne's use based on the approved Fort Erie resolution. It is attached for Council's consideration.

Staff recommend that the attached resolution be moved and seconded by Council members and adopted, and distributed as described in the resolution.