



NEWS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

***Feel Better Faster* - community awareness campaign seeks to promote access to care and reduce emergency wait times**

Mississauga-Halton LHIN leads plan to help residents find the right health care in the right place at the right time

Mississauga/West Toronto/Halton Region (May 5, 2010) – Last year, one third of the 305, 956 visits made to local emergency departments were made by people with injuries or illnesses who could have been seen elsewhere. Their average time spent in the emergency department was close to six hours. It's these statistics that are behind a comprehensive community awareness campaign to reduce emergency wait times.

The *Feel Better Faster* campaign is a joint initiative sponsored by the Mississauga Halton Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) on behalf of The Credit Valley Hospital, Halton Healthcare Services, Trillium Health Centre and the Mississauga Halton Community Care Access Centre (CCAC).

“Reducing emergency wait times is an important goal for hospitals in the Mississauga-Halton area and across the province,” says Bill MacLeod, CEO of the Mississauga Halton LHIN. “We are involving a wide range of health care providers because we feel it is our responsibility to inform people in our communities about how, when and where to find the help they need.”

Of those who sought care for non-emergent illnesses and injuries in local emergency departments in 2008/09, 23.6% were parents with young children and another 11.1% were seniors and their caregivers.

“Emergency departments are designed to treat serious and life-threatening illnesses and injuries and these always take priority,” says Janet Davidson, O.C., president and CEO, Trillium Health Centre. “So when people come to us with non-emergent ailments, they often find themselves waiting for extended periods of time in the emergency department, when in fact, they likely could have been seen by another health care provider within a shorter period of time elsewhere in the community.”

The *Feel Better Faster* campaign aims to provide local residents with quick and easy access to information about local health care services including family doctors, , pharmacies, mental health services, urgent care services, walk-in/after-hours clinics and CCAC services which encompass home care, community and long-term care services. The information also features important health links to provincial services like Telehealth Ontario, Health Care Connect and Health Care Options.

The campaign roll-out features a dedicated website (www.feelbetterfaster.ca), fact sheets in emergency departments, a brochure insert in local newspapers in mid-April and posters and brochures in key health care locations throughout Mississauga, Halton and South Etobicoke.

“People quite often end up in the emergency department simply because they don’t know where else in the community to access their care,” says John Oliver, president and CEO, Halton Healthcare Services. “Our goal is to improve access to information about local health services so that residents can make informed decisions about where to access their care, including the emergency departments, when they need it.

Among the campaign materials is important information about how to find a family doctor for those people who don’t have one. All three hospitals maintain up-to-date lists of family doctors accepting new patients on their respective websites. Both The Credit Valley Hospital and Trillium Health Centre have family medicine teaching units that are accepting new patients. The CCAC can connect people with the care they need in their home or in the community, including home care and specialized support services.

“By providing people with supports in the community to meet their non-urgent needs, we can reduce wait-time in emergency departments and ensure that individuals receive necessary care,” explains Jutta Schafler Argao, interim CEO, Mississauga Halton CCAC. “Helping individuals of all ages navigate through the health care system and connecting them with the most appropriate services is crucial to building a healthy community.”

“When you’re sick or injured, the last thing you want is to wait longer than you need to for care. This campaign connects patients to the right care provider in the right location so that they *feel better faster!*” says Michelle DiEmanuele, president and CEO of The Credit Valley Hospital. “It’s a win-win for patients, their families and the health care system.”

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.

- 30 -

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