



Office of the Mayor

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May 1, 2024

Jim Bagshaw, Chair
South Bruce Grey Health Centre Board
21 McGivern St. W., Box 1300
Walkerton, ON N0G 2V0

RE: Transfer of Durham Hospital Acute In-Patient Care Beds

Dear Jim Bagshaw,

I am writing to you to express my concerns regarding the proposed plan to transfer acute in-patient care beds out of the Durham hospital and into other facilities. While I understand that this move might be part of a broader strategy to streamline services or cut costs, I believe it poses significant risks to patient care, hospital efficiency, and the overall stability of our hospital. In fact, transferring these beds could contribute to the eventual closure of our hospital, affecting not only healthcare services but also our community as a whole.

Hospital-based acute in-patient care beds play a crucial role in providing immediate and comprehensive care to patients with varying levels of need. These beds are often utilized by individuals who require close monitoring and quick access to specialized services that only a hospital can offer. Transferring these beds out of the Durham hospital and into other hospitals may result in delayed treatment, longer response times to emergencies, and an overall decrease in the quality of care.

Hospitals are designed to offer a cohesive network of services, allowing for a seamless transition between different types of care. By moving acute in-patient care beds to other hospitals, you risk fragmenting this network. Patients requiring additional specialized care might face transportation delays or other logistical challenges, complicating their treatment and potentially leading to worse outcomes.

A hospital is a centralized location where patients and their families can access various services and support in one place. By transferring acute in-patient care beds elsewhere, you would be increasing the burden on patients and their families, who may need to travel longer distances for care. This could lead to additional stress, higher costs, and decreased patient satisfaction.

The presence of acute in-patient care beds is a vital component of the Durham hospital's operations. If these beds are transferred to other hospitals, it could lead to a reduction in the Durham hospital's revenue and patient flow. This reduced capacity might force the hospital to downsize or cut other services, creating a cascading effect that could ultimately result in the Durham hospital's closure. The loss of our hospital would be a significant blow to the West Grey community and surrounding areas, reducing local healthcare options and forcing patients to seek care elsewhere.

Hospitals are often seen as community pillars, providing essential healthcare services to local residents. A decision to transfer acute in-patient care beds out of our hospital is likely to erode public trust, as it could be perceived as a move away from community-based care. This loss of trust can have long-term negative effects on the regulated provision of healthcare services in the province of Ontario.

Additionally, the Rockwood Terrace long-term care home is located in Durham and is currently in the process of being reconstructed. With the Durham hospital being nearby, it allows for quick emergency response. Residents in long-term care facilities often face health emergencies, and the ability to get to a hospital quickly can be life-saving. Having a hospital nearby also reduces stress for both residents and their families. Long-distance travel for medical care can be stressful, especially for those with mobility issues. A close hospital minimizes the travel burden and allows family members to be more actively involved in their loved one's care, fostering a sense of comfort and support.

Given these concerns, I urge you to reconsider the decision to transfer acute in-patient care beds out of our hospital. The impact of this change could be far-reaching, affecting not only the quality of care but also the sustainability of the Durham hospital and the health of our community.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I look forward to hearing your thoughts on how we can best address these concerns.

Sincerely,



Mayor Kevin Eccles
Municipality of West Grey

CC: Ontario Central Local Health Coalition, Grey-Bruce Region
Rick Byers, MPP, Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound
Lisa Thompson, MPP, Huron-Bruce
Hon. Sylvia Jones, Minister of Health
Hon. Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
All Grey and Bruce County municipalities