
HALDIMAND COUNTY

Memorandum CSS-M01-2021 Haldimand Health Team Update

For Consideration by Council on November 22, 2021



To: Mayor Hewitt and Members of Council

From: Cathy Case, General Manager of Corporate and Social Services
Mike Evers, General Manager of Community and Development Services

In 2019 the provincial government introduced a system of healthcare reform and created a “superagency” called Ontario Health. The reform centered on consolidating health care oversight agencies into this central agency along with the development of Ontario Health Teams (OHT) to integrate health and social service organizations at a local level for improved delivery of services. This new model of patient-focused care is intended to bring health care providers together to work as one coordinated team to improve patient outcomes.

The province accepted applications from various regions across Ontario to be considered as stand alone OHT’s. In the early stages, Hamilton area organizations submitted a proposal which was one of the first approved. At approximately the same time, a Haldimand Health Team proposal was submitted however it was placed in a category called “in development”. In early 2021 the Ministry advised the Haldimand Health Team and the Hamilton Health Team that they were to explore partnership as one singular OHT. Since then, the two teams have been collaborating and are moving forward as partners with the financial support of the province in providing dedicated positions to make integration successful. Most notably an Integration Lead has recently been hired to assist with the merger of the two groups. The overarching Health Team has now been renamed to the Greater Hamilton Healthcare Network (GHHN) and includes the catchment area of Hamilton, Haldimand and Niagara Northwest. Hamilton, with their earlier approval, had become fairly well established as a health team while Haldimand was in its initial stages so there have been challenges to overcome in that regard but overall the Hamilton team has welcomed Haldimand and sees the value the partnership brings due to Haldimand’s focus on rural healthcare which was a gap on the Hamilton team. The Haldimand team has representation on various working groups and sub-committees within the GHHN such as the governance sub-committee, digital health working group and primary care working group. The Haldimand team also has representation at the executive table. The GHHN is in the process of developing Stakeholder Councils and have committed to establishing a Haldimand specific committee that will encourage and allow for Haldimand stakeholders to address local and regional concerns.

Haldimand County currently continues to formally participate on the local team through the Haldimand Health Executive Leadership Team meetings (Mike Evers and Cathy Case) as approved by Council in February 2021. Additionally various staff are, or will be, participating in relevant working groups (Communications, Grandview Lodge and the Paramedic Service). Going forward, there is a likelihood that specific Haldimand staff will have a role in the GHHN working groups as well. The County’s participation is mutually beneficial in that it lends the support of the local municipality to discussions taking place and it also provides Haldimand County with a degree of influence over future decisions related to the health care spectrum in the community; in particular, regarding Emergency Services and Long Term Care.

Other Haldimand based member organizations currently participating are:

- West Haldimand General Hospital
- Haldimand War Memorial Hospital
- Haldimand County
- Alzheimer Society of Brant, Haldimand, Norfolk, Hamilton, Halton
- Canadian Mental Health Association, Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk Branch
- Community & Mental Health Services of Haldimand and Norfolk
- Edgewater Gardens Long Term Care
- Haldimand Family Health Team
- Midwives of East Erie
- Thrive Group (Capability Support Services)
- True Experience Supportive Housing & Community Work Program
- Young Caregivers

To date, Haldimand and Norfolk Public Health is not a participant at the table. From a County staff perspective, it is important that public health have a voice at the table, especially now that the Haldimand team has merged with the Hamilton team, to ensure the rural public health needs of our community are adequately discussed and considered. Staff are suggesting that Council provide direction to correspond with the Board of Health to request future participation on the Haldimand Health Executive Leadership Team. If agreeable, staff will prepare and send a written request.

Staff will continue participation on the above noted groups and report back to Council with relevant updates as necessary.

Attachments:

1. Haldimand Health Team Update to Member Organization Boards of Directors – October 2021.
2. GHHN and Haldimand Health Team – Frequently Asked Questions and Background Information for Partners.