

### Important Up-Date May 17, 2006

**“The Friends of Ajax/Pickering Hospital”, promised to keep you informed on our Hospital’s future.** You need the facts so you can continue to demand action from the Rouge Valley Hospital System Board, the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care and the Central East Local Health Integration Network, (LHIN).

Here are the facts and our opinions about them..

- ✓ We are extremely pleased that the long awaited redevelopment of the Ajax Pickering Hospital was approved by the Ontario Government in April 2006. They announced \$60 million in funding primarily for expanding the Emergency Department plus improvements to laboratory, diagnostic imaging, mental health and some other areas of the hospital. **However, the plan does NOT provide for more active treatment hospital beds or operating room space that will be needed with the increased Emergency Services.** These changes will take 3 years to complete and construction is not planned to start until late 2007.
- ✓ The average wait time at APH for admission to the hospital from the Emergency Dept. is 13 hours; the number of active care beds has dropped to 45. The wait time is 4 hours at Scarborough Centenary Hospital which has 90 active care beds **Can you imagine what the wait time will be once the Emergency services are expanded at APH? The sad fact is that APH has current available unused beds and operating room space that could be quickly activated.** We need the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care to provide funding to activate these beds and operating room space in order to support the planned expansion of the Emergency Services.
- ✓ **No firm assurance has been given concerning uninterrupted 24/7 Obstetrics/Pediatrics services at APH.** Based on our childbirth and caseload statistics, we should receive the same uninterrupted services as Centenary Hospital. The RVHS’s public statements fall short of assuring this level of service, an irresponsible and negligent position of the RVHS Board. Without this assurance, attracting new Obstetricians and Pediatricians is difficult and nursing staff turnover will continue to be high as a result of the uncertainty that exists.
- ✓ Furthermore, with the large and growing number of young families in our communities we believe that APH should be developed as a Regional Birthing and Women’s/Child Health Centre .
- ✓ In fact we need to have specific assurance that APH will be developed as the Major Hospital serving the growing communities of Pickering, Ajax, Whitby and West Durham. This makes sense from the stand point of delivering effective, efficient, economical health services A full service Ajax Pickering Hospital, operating as the major hospital in the area, will attract Doctors and Nurses and support staff.
- ✓ The Central East LHIN (Local Health Integration Network) is the mechanism established by the Government to **DECIDE** what health services we will receive.
  - a. The Central East LHIN has a boundary that stretches from Haliburton/Minden County to the north, Lake Ontario to the south, Northumberland/Havelock County to the east and the Scarborough cliffs to the west. The management of health services for this area will be difficult if not impossible.

- b. The 9 member Board is appointed by the Ontario Government, not elected by the people.
- c. The Central East LHIN will establish 9 Community Planning & Engagement Collaboratives. Each Collaborative will have 7 to 12 members representing a diversity of health care providers and consumers (that's us). *"Appointments and ongoing participation in the Collaboratives will be at the pleasure of the Central East LHIN."* The Durham West Zone, (Pickering, Ajax, Whitby), has only one of the nine Collaboratives.
- d. The Collaboratives, along with the health interest groups, regional Hospital Boards, etc., are to provide the Board with information required for sound decisions on the delivery of health care services. Nevertheless, **the Board quite clearly has the final say on what is best for our LHIN.**
- e. It is noteworthy that, although the Local Health Systems Integration Act, 2006 has received Royal assent, two sections allowing for public meetings and consultation do not come into force until *"a day to be named by proclamation of the Lieutenant Governor."* This means that the Central East LHIN is not required to conduct public meetings if it so decides.
- f. A document called an **Integrated Health Services Plan** will outline how and where Health services will be provided in the Central East LHIN. *"For the IHSP to be successful there must be common agreement that this is the community's plan, with shared ownership and accountability for its goals, strategies and objectives".* **The plan is scheduled for release by the fall of 2006.**  
As of May, 2006, only 6 of the 9 Central East LHIN Board members have been appointed, no Collaboratives have been established and the Zone meetings are only now being held. **It appears that the plan will have to be formulated with very little input from the community and the stakeholders.**
- g. Community representation is necessary to formulate a plan that will determine the health care services that we are entitled to receive. This can only be achieved through open involvement of the public and through an **elected** LHIN Board, not Government appointments. We have a system that works well in Education, so why not in Health care. **We are paying through our taxes. We must control how our health care system is funded, administered and delivered.**

The RVHS Board, Central East LHIN Board and the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care must listen to Pickering, Ajax, Whitby and West Durham when we demand the health care services that we deserve and are entitled to. The situation is critical. We must act together!

---

*Regarding Item "e" above – at the May 18 evening LHIN meeting with the community, Foster Loucks, Chair of the Central East LHIN, answered Bill Parish's question about public meetings by stating that our LHIN's Board meetings and committee meetings will be open to the public.*

*Representatives of The Friends will be meeting shortly with the main administrators of the Central East LHIN to discuss the other matters mentioned above. We will report to you on these meetings.*

