

Local Palliative Care Program a National Success Story *Recognized as a “choice model” in Canadian health care*

December 16, 2009 / Grimsby, Ontario – The medical professionals involved with palliative care in our community are being recognized as some of the very best in the country. The **Niagara West Share Care Model** has been chosen by national organization Canadian Partnership Against Cancer (CPAC) as a Canadian “choice model” for end-of-life health care.

Local physician Denise Marshall will be traveling to Montreal next month to accept the honour and present to a summit of her peers and medical professionals from across Canada. Dr. Marshall states that the approach to caring for patients is what makes the shared care model so special. “The core notion of the model is that a team of health care professionals will interact and collaborate to provide seamless care that is focused foremost on the patient’s individual health needs.”

Dr. Marshall explains, “Our shared care model places palliative care specialists with primary care people – family physicians, nurses, and community health service providers. This team then works together to provide the patient with his or her unique program of end-of-life care, solely dependant on the patient’s on-going needs.”

“In a shared care model the palliative experts are there in a support capacity for family doctors, bedside nurses and other primary care providers, and we all will work collaboratively to ensure the patient receives what is needed whether that is in the hospital, at community health services, or in the patient’s home,” says Dr. Marshall.

The Niagara West Shared Care Model has been the model for the palliative care program in Grimsby, Lincoln and West Lincoln for more than a decade. A palliative care team is hosted at the West Lincoln Memorial Hospital (WLMH) where it was initially funded by the Hospital and supported by the Hospital’s family physicians and nurses. Initiated in 1997, there was a partial team formed consisting of a palliative care physician and nursing resources who provided continuous support to family physicians and nurses in delivering palliative care to patients at the WLMH and in the community. Today, the Niagara West Palliative Care Team is a joint partnership with the active participation of the local Community Care Access Centre.

Dr. Gary Benson, Chief of Medical staff at WLMH, states, “The genesis of this program and why it has been so successful lies with the Hospital’s work culture and the way family physicians work so closely with the nursing staff and with health services in our community. It’s that special interaction of care providers involved with the WLMH and our recognition that, by working together, we can provide better care for those people requiring end-of-life care.”

David Bird, WLMH CEO comments, “Being nationally recognized as a choice model of care is a feather in the cap of our doctors and nurses and the whole network of medical professionals in our community. What started at WLMH is today supported by our local LHIN – in fact, it is now being used as a model of care by as many as a half-dozen LHINs in our Province.” Mr. Bird adds, “We should all be proud of this peer-reviewed, CPAC assessment that found our local palliative care program innovative and effective in providing quality health care.”

For more information, visit www.wlmh.on.ca or contact:

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