

For Immediate Release

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Halton Healthcare applies for CT Scanner for Georgetown Hospital

If Halton Healthcare's application for a CT Scanner at Georgetown Hospital is successful, residents of Halton Hills will no longer have to leave their community to receive this essential service.

In a detailed application to the Mississauga Halton Local Health Integration Network (MH LHIN), submitted on July 2, 2009, HHS cites improving clinical outcomes and equity of access as two significant reasons for moving forward with this acquisition. Halton Healthcare Services (HHS) must receive approval for a licence to operate a CT Scanner at Georgetown Hospital before it is able to make the purchase.

"This is an essential initiative for healthcare services in Halton Hills", says John Oliver, HHS President and CEO. "An on-site CT Scanner will enhance the quality of care we are able to provide to our patients through improved access and timeliness. This community needs access to these diagnostic services close to home."

"Having a CT scanner operating within Georgetown Hospital will be a great addition to our facility," says Cindy McDonell, Chief Operating Officer at Georgetown Hospital. "It will reduce the need to transfer a significant number of emergency patients and inpatients to neighbouring communities to have this diagnostic procedure done and will allow those in the community who need CT scanning to be able to access this vital service closer to home."

In 2008/09 Georgetown Hospital transferred 403 Emergency patients and 650 inpatients to Milton District Hospital or Oakville-Trafalgar Memorial Hospital for CT Scanning. The delay in accessing this service due to the logistics of arranging and receiving transfers of patients at two

hospitals not only impacts the quality of care, but significantly increases patient wait times and can negatively impact the access and care of other patients.

CT stands for Computer Tomography. Unlike conventional x-rays that create an image on only one plane, a CT scanner uses advanced computer techniques to generate three-dimensional images. A CT scanner will provide detailed, multi-dimensional pictures of any body part. CT technology will assist physicians in diagnosing and treating injuries and illnesses not always visible through general x-rays.

“The existing model of accessing CT service at Georgetown Hospital necessitates transferring emergency and inpatients to one of the other HHS hospitals for the scan. This model is currently not meeting clinical or operational needs and has a number of negative impacts,” explains Dr. Wei Chu, Georgetown Hospital’s Chief of Family Medicine. “CT Scanning has increasingly become the standard of care in diagnosing numerous medical conditions. Delayed access to this essential tool adversely impacts the Emergency Department.”

“Our Emergency department is undersized for our current patient volume, and gridlock occurs readily in periods of high patient volumes,” says Dr. Justin Busse, Georgetown Hospital’s Emergency Director. “The increasing requirement for CT Scanning results in many hours when stretchers in the ED are filled with patients waiting transfer to other facilities. During this time the stretchers are unavailable for use by the ED creating gridlock. It is becoming increasingly uncommon for hospitals such as ours to not have ready access to a CT scanner.”

The lack of an on-site CT at Georgetown Hospital has also been cited as a roadblock in physician recruitment efforts for the hospital.

“Many new medical residents have never worked in a centre without immediate access to a CT Scanner and therefore are not comfortable working at a hospital that lacks this vital tool,” continued Dr. Chu. “On-site CT scanning is increasingly considered mandatory by more and more physicians.”

The Georgetown Hospital Foundation has been asked to consider fundraising for this equipment once the application received approval.

“We are very excited about this opportunity and anxiously await the response from the Mississauga Halton LHIN. This CT scanner will be the largest single piece of equipment purchased for Georgetown Hospital and will certainly be the largest fundraising project that we have considered,” says Laurent Thibault, Chair of The Georgetown Hospital Foundation Board of Directors. “We have every confidence that the community of Halton Hills will rise to the challenge.”

“This CT scanner will be a welcomed addition to a successful Diagnostic Imaging Department at Georgetown Hospital,” concludes Mr. Oliver. “The implementation of CT scanning at GH will enhance the established high-quality diagnostic imaging practice already in place. “

DI services currently available at GH include general x-ray, ultrasound, mammography and bone densitometry.

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