

For Immediate Release

Greenbelt Fund honours Halton Healthcare as Local Food Champions for public sector leadership project

(Halton Hills/Milton/Oakville, ON) March 30, 2015 - Halton Healthcare Services (HHS) was recently honoured as Local Food Champions in the Broader Public Sector by the Greenbelt Fund at the 2015 Local Food Symposium in Niagara-on-the-Lake. The provincial award recognized Halton Healthcare Food Services' **Good For You, Locally Grown** project for its innovative approach to adding more local food to hospital menus and its leadership in creating systemic changes in public sector local food awareness.



Local Food Champions Award Presentation

(l-r) Anita Stewart, Author & Culinary Activist, University of Guelph; Elma Hrapovich, Director, Clinical Nutrition & Food Services, Halton Healthcare; Marianne Katusin, Manager, Operational Readiness, Food Services, Halton Healthcare; and Burkhard Mausberg, CEO, Ontario, Green Belt Fund.

In January 2014, the Greenbelt Fund provided Halton Healthcare with funding for an innovative project called *Good For You, Locally Grown*, aimed at encouraging hospitals across the province to serve local food products to their patients.

“The Ontario Greenbelt Fund provided us with the opportunity to partner with government, local producers, manufacturers and distributors to develop a local procurement philosophy, including a set of guidelines and key learnings, to share with other healthcare facilities in Ontario,” explains Marianne Katusin, Manager, Operations Readiness – Food Services, Halton Healthcare.

Over the past year, with investments from the Greenbelt Fund, Halton Healthcare participated in several initiatives to enhance staff, patient and customer awareness of both the availability and diversity of local foods in Ontario. This included hosting a number of themed menu days, educational activities and local food expos at its three community hospitals.

These efforts to promote Ontario grown foods in the community were recognized last fall when The Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers presented Halton Healthcare with their *2014 First Local Food Week Competition Award*.

“Halton Healthcare has proven their fortitude and enthusiasm for increasing local food in their facilities and across Ontario. We are pleased to celebrate their team’s determination and collaboration by recognizing them as a Local Food Champion,” says Burkhard Mausberg, CEO, Greenbelt Fund. “The result of their hard work—more delicious, local food for hospital patients and their families.”

“We believe that making good food choices is an important part of health and wellness. Our hospitals serve more than 325,000 residents in the Halton Region, and being able to provide more fresh and locally grown food options to our patients and their families while they are in our care helps enhance their hospital experience,” says Elma Hrapovich, Director of Clinical Nutrition and Food Services, Halton Healthcare.

“We have had a great year partnering with healthcare industry manufacturers to develop local products, new recipes and menu items that meet the nutritional, quality, pricing and food safety standards required in healthcare institutions,” continues Ms Hrapovich. “We look forward to sharing our ideas, innovations, and experiences with other healthcare providers.”

“This award sums up what we have learned during our *Good for You, Locally Grown Project*: that the possibilities are endless when we work together with our local producers to source local foods in public institutions. This award is a tribute to all our partners in what has been an incredibly rewarding project,” concludes Ms Hrapovich.

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About Halton Healthcare

Halton Healthcare is a progressive, multi-site healthcare organization comprised of three community hospitals - Georgetown Hospital, Milton District Hospital and Oakville-Trafalgar Memorial Hospital. Together these hospitals provide healthcare services to more than 325,000 residents in the communities of Halton Hills, Milton, and Oakville. With an outstanding reputation as a workplace of choice and a good community partner, Halton Healthcare hospitals have been recognized for their best practices in a number of patient safety and patient care initiatives. For more information, visit www.haltonhealthcare.com. Follow us on Twitter [@HaltonHlthcare](https://twitter.com/HaltonHlthcare).

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