

**For Immediate Release**  
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## **COVID Care at Home Program**

In response to the third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, Halton Healthcare successfully launched its **COVID Care at Home Program** at all three of its hospitals in April, 2021. This Program allows the hospital to discharge patients recovering from COVID-19 home safely where they are closely monitored and provided with care and support services customized to their needs in their recovery. The early discharge of these patients helps maintain community access to emergency services at each Halton Healthcare hospital.

The 12-week program is tailored to each patient's clinical need. Before discharge, each patient meets with their healthcare team to review their care plan and set-up enhanced support services for them at home through Mississauga-Halton Home and Community Care Services. The support may include nursing, personal care workers, physiotherapy or social work.

The COVID Care at Home Program team at Halton Healthcare checks in regularly to monitor each patient remotely. They work in tandem with the Rapid Response Nurse from Mississauga-Halton Home and Community Care Services, who assesses the patient in their environment and also follows the patient regularly. As a team they can adjust treatment and medications and arrange for support services, as needed, during the patient's recovery. Patients are also provided with a 24/7 Home and Community Care Support Care Line should their condition worsen or if they have any concerns.

"Many COVID-19 patients experience severe breathing difficulties, which can be very scary. All patients are provided with a fingertip pulse oximeter and educated about how to safely monitor their oxygen levels at home. They are instructed to know at which point they need to seek medical attention and who to call if their oxygen levels start to fall. This can be very reassuring. It gives patients a great sense of security in managing their care," explains Dr. Laurence Chau, Respiriologist and Chief of Medicine, Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital. "If the patient is being discharged on oxygen, a Respiratory Therapist from Halton Healthcare's C. Air Home Oxygen Program will ensure a seamless transition home by providing them with the proper equipment, oxygen, and education on how to self-monitor their condition. Patients requiring urgent medical assessment would be attended to by C.AIR Respiratory Therapists or after-hours by Halton or Peel Community Paramedics."

"My experience at home with all the constant care and monitoring has been excellent," explains Ishan, a patient who was sent home with the COVID Care at Home Program after spending eight days in hospital. The hospital team, especially from the Respiriology Department, is still constantly checking up on me and my case manager (from Mississauga-Halton Home and Community Care Services) has been incredibly thorough. She arranged my physiotherapy services and helped me move up my appointment with the Respiriology doctor. I am actually blown away by all the care and support – with their attention to detail, I feel supported at each stage of my rehabilitation."

“COVID positive patients are often scared and traumatized by their illness. Our goal is to ensure they are on the appropriate medical therapies and then guide their recovery until they are safe enough to go home. Some patients, while excited about going home, may also be very anxious especially if they still experience breathing difficulties or remain on oxygen,” explains Dr. Stephen Chin, Chief of Hospital Medicine, Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital. “And that is where this COVID Care at Home Program really shines – by wrapping care around patients to help them transition home seamlessly. In addition to monitoring each patient, the program is accessible through a 24/7 emergency number that patients can call and get immediate help instead of rushing back to the Emergency Department. Their COVID Care at Home team can guide their treatment inside the comfort of their own homes.”

“This program has turned out to be a win-win all round. It has helped Halton Healthcare maintain its bed capacity while ensuring that we can discharge these patients safely,” concludes Dr. Laurence Chau. “It is also unique in that it reaches beyond the traditional catchment areas of our Halton Healthcare hospitals, extending the boundaries of our care to discharged patients from our neighbouring communities.”

The COVID Care at Home Program is the result of a tremendous collaboration between Mississauga-Halton Home & Community Care Services, Halton and Peel Community Paramedics, C.AIR Home Oxygen Program, Canadian Home Healthcare and healthcare teams throughout Halton Healthcare.

#### **About Halton Healthcare**

Halton Healthcare is a healthcare organization comprised of three community hospitals - Georgetown Hospital, Milton District Hospital and Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital, along with several community programs and services. Together we provide healthcare services to nearly 400,000 residents in the communities of Halton Hills, Milton and Oakville. Halton Healthcare has been recognized for its best practices in a number of patient safety and patient care initiatives. For more information, visit [www.haltonhealthcare.com](http://www.haltonhealthcare.com). Follow us on Twitter @HaltonHlthcare, Facebook and Instagram.

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