



# NEWS RELEASE

## From Halton Healthcare

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### **Halton Healthcare Extends Support to Community Palliative Care**

To provide support to patients and families at their most vulnerable time and deliver timely access to fully integrated palliative care throughout Halton, Community Palliative Care Physician Groups (CPCP) now offer services across all three communities served by Halton Healthcare - Oakville, Milton and Halton Hills. Each of the dedicated CPCP Groups provide home-based care for patients with palliative and end-of-life care needs.

“With these programs we’ve simplified the process so patients can get the compassionate care they need and won’t have to keep retelling their story at every point in their journey,” says Dr. Tarek Kazem, Palliative Medicine Physician Lead, Halton Healthcare. Dr. Kazem has been closely involved with the project since its inception, “Our Community Palliative Care Physician Groups make it easier for end-of-life patients and their families to access seamless care at home, in hospice or hospital, thanks to their work with our partners to improve communications, streamline processes and connect community services.”

Palliative care is an approach that improves the quality of life for patients and the families of those diagnosed with a life-threatening illness. “Increasing timely access to palliative care at home is one of our highest priorities,” says Dr. Nathan Wong, Hospitalist Medical Director and Co-Lead, Milton Palliative Care Physicians.

“Patients and their families expect and depend on us to provide high quality and integrated care throughout their care journey,” adds Dr. Deborah Marshall, Hospitalist, Milton District Hospital and Co-Lead Milton Palliative Care Physicians. “Our Community Palliative Care Physicians have Halton Healthcare privileges, allowing them to see their patients and their health records, should they be admitted to the hospital.”

“This connected system gives our patients a well-coordinated community approach and puts the focus where it should be - on them,” says Dr. Meghan Daly, an Emergency Physician at Georgetown Hospital who Co-Leads the Halton Hills Palliative Care Physicians Group with Dr. Paul Zeni. Says Daly, “Physicians can refer patients from across Halton into the program through a Central Intake process. This will give their patients access to community services and in-home services from a palliative physician, if their family doctor isn’t available.”

The CPCP groups work as partners with Halton Healthcare, Home and Community Care Support Services Mississauga Halton and the Connected Care Halton Ontario Health Team. “Improving access to care for palliative patients and their families is a priority for our team and the system as a whole,” says Daniel Ball, Director, Palliative Care, Patient Flow, Rehab & Geriatrics, Halton Healthcare. “We want to provide patients with the best possible care and keep them at home where they feel more at ease, while helping them avoid a visit to the Emergency Department.”

“The goal, first and foremost of palliative care is to maximize the quality of life for patients facing a life-threatening illness,” concludes Dr. Lynne Benjamin, Palliative Care Physician, Oakville Palliative Care

Physicians. “We come into the journey of these patients at the most vulnerable time in their lives. We want to provide them with the best options for pain and symptom management and to be able to spend their final moments at home, surrounded by loved ones, if that is their wish. Not everyone has the same requests, but this incredible group of physicians and services allows patients and families to make the choices that work for them.”

Patients and families referred into the Palliative Care program also have access to a 24/7 Help Line that can connect them to confidential counselling and emotional support services, including on-call Palliative Care Nurse Practitioners.

### **About Halton Healthcare**

Halton Healthcare is an award winning 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. 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](http://www.haltonhealthcare.com).

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Palliative Care**

Palliative care is a broad approach to providing comfort and dignity for patients and families. The approach to care focuses on relieving the suffering of patients from symptoms, pain and the mental stress of a serious illness. It includes managing pain and other symptoms so patients are comfortable, as well as support and services to help cope with loss and grief.

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