

NEWS RELEASE

Vaughan Residents Demand a Hospital for their Growing Community

Poll results suggest a hospital will be an issue in the upcoming provincial election

VAUGHAN – April 12, 2007 – A new poll conducted by EKOS Research Associates confirms that a significant majority of Vaughan residents want a hospital built in their city, consider the establishment of a hospital an extremely important issue, and believe it will play an important role in determining how they vote in the upcoming provincial election.

“We have been saying for years that Vaughan desperately needs a hospital to ensure the residents have access to appropriate health care services where they live,” said Michael DeGasperis, Acting Chair and Vice President of the Vaughan Health Care Foundation. “With a rapidly growing population approaching 300,000, Vaughan is the largest city in Canada without it’s own hospital. Through this poll, our residents are telling us that we need to begin planning and development of a hospital to support the current and future population.”

Highlights from the survey of 751 adult residents of Vaughan included the following:

- 73% of residents believe that building a hospital in Vaughan is very important, with 61% stating that it is of extreme importance.
- 68% of residents feel that a hospital needs to be located in Vaughan rather than in neighbouring municipalities to adequately serve the needs of the community.
- 88% think a candidate’s position on a Vaughan hospital will play a definite role in who they decide to vote for in the upcoming provincial election.

“The data show a strong level of support for building a hospital in Vaughan,” said Ken LeClair of EKOS Research Associates. “Moreover, the numbers saying that candidate positions on the issue will influence their vote, suggest that it could play an important local role in this year’s provincial election.”

As the GTA population continues to increase, health care facilities currently serving Vaughan residents are facing the challenge of meeting the needs of residents of their own municipalities. This raises the prospect of diminished levels of service for Vaughan residents now, and especially in the future.

“We are continuing to impress upon the provincial government that a Vaughan hospital is urgently needed and is important to the residents,” said Angelo Baldassarra, President of the Foundation. “We need to start planning today so that we don’t fall into a health care crisis in the future. The provincial government needs to invest more in the health of our community. We need the support and approval of the provincial government for an acute care hospital as soon as possible.”

The Vaughan Health Care Foundation will continue to engage the community to build support for additional health care resources in Vaughan. In July 2006 the Foundation was awarded sponsorship of a new Vaughan Community Health Centre, which will provide much needed primary health care services including more physicians and nurse practitioners, and specialty areas such as chiropody, physiotherapy and diabetes education. It will respond to major areas of under-service including seniors, youth and mental health. The Vaughan CHC will commence operations in late 2007.

The Foundation is also working towards other initiatives that will bring new and expanded care to Vaughan, including ambulatory care services and urgent care.

In January 2003, a task force of community and civic leaders was struck to assess how best to bring additional health care resources to the community of Vaughan. This Task Force then formed The Vaughan Health Care Foundation, a volunteer driven charity, in early 2004. Since its inception, the Foundation has been working tirelessly towards its mission - To raise funds and obtain the necessary approvals from Government to establish and support health care facilities and services, including an acute care hospital for the City of Vaughan.

More information on the Foundation and its work can be found at www.vaughanhealthcare.com.

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