



## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **Residents Applaud Announcement to Develop a New Hospital in Vaughan**

**VAUGHAN – April 27, 2007** – Earlier today the provincial government announced its decision to move forward with planning of new hospital services in Vaughan. Starting immediately, the Central Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) and the Vaughan Health Care Foundation will work together with the community and local health service providers, to assess how this facility can best meet the growing and future health needs of patients and their families close to home.

Ontario Health Minister George Smitherman, and Finance Minister and Vaughan-King-Aurora M.P.P. Greg Sorbara, stated that the development of a new health care facility will begin with service level planning and an assessment of capital needs for the new hospital. While the Foundation will work with the community to spearhead the development of this facility, the Central LHIN will provide advice on governance and capital planning for future hospital operations in Vaughan. This new hospital in Vaughan will be the first new greenfield hospital development in Ontario in over 25 years.

“This is an exciting day for both the residents of Vaughan and the growing communities across York Region,” said Michael DeGasperis, Acting Chair and Vice President of the Foundation. “The province has recognized the urgent need for improved health care services in Vaughan, and has responded by engaging the community to develop the right resources necessary to ensure the best access to care possible.”

Vaughan remains the largest city in Canada without its own hospital. With an estimated population of 240,000, Vaughan's population has more than doubled over the past fifteen years. Statistics Canada estimates that Vaughan's population will exceed 300,000 in the next few years. Vaughan is currently the only municipality within the top 10 most populous areas in Ontario without an acute care hospital.

*The Needs Assessment and Vision for the Future: Health Care Facility Planning Report* completed in 2005 by IBM Business Consulting Services for the Vaughan Health-Care Facility Study Task Force, justified the need for a new hospital in Vaughan. At present 56% of Vaughan residents seeking inpatient acute care services travel to Toronto to access essential health care services, combined with 36% to York Region more broadly. Over three quarters of residents seeking day procedures, and over half for emergency procedures, are also sought in Toronto. While the facilities that receive these patients are exceptional, they too are finding it difficult to keep pace with growth taking place in their own communities.

“The Foundation is dedicated to bringing the hospital to reality as quickly as possible, to improve the quality of care in Vaughan and dramatically reduce wait times for people accessing hospital services.” said Angelo Baldassarra, President of the Foundation. “We believe that the Government of Ontario understands the need in Vaughan, and we look forward to working with the Central LHIN and with everyone in our community to continue to bring our vision to life.”

The Foundation is also working towards other initiatives that will bring new and expanded care to Vaughan, including the development of a Community Health Centre slated to open later this year and additional ambulatory care services and urgent care to address health care gaps experienced by Vaughan residents.

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. The Vaughan Health Care Foundation, a volunteer driven charity, emerged from the Task Force in early 2004. Since its inception, the Foundation has been working tirelessly towards its mission – to raise funds and obtain the necessary approvals to establish and support health care facilities and services, including an acute care hospital in the City of Vaughan.

More information on the Foundation and its work can be found at [www.vaughanhealthcare.com](http://www.vaughanhealthcare.com).

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