

April 10, 2017

To the attention of the Community Development and Recreation Committee,

I understand that your committee will be reviewing an item (CD19.14) at your April 13 meeting regarding North York General Hospital's Branson Ambulatory Care centre. I wanted to make you aware of information that may be helpful during your discussions.

North York General Hospital's mission is to provide exceptional health care to our diverse communities. To do so, we must continue to assess how, why and where we provide the services we do, and adapt to the needs of our patients.

The Branson location is leased space and the lease will expire in March 2019. Continued operation of Branson Ambulatory Care Centre is not sustainable. The ongoing investments needed to upgrade the infrastructure to meet current standards are prohibitive. In addition, the operating costs are high and we use less than half of the building to deliver our services.

We fully intend to maintain access to our high quality services. We are working with our staff, physicians, patient advisors and other local health care providers and community groups to determine next steps for transitioning our programs, either to our General site (at 4001 Leslie Street) or into other locations within the Branson community.

The item before you deals specifically with the closure of the Urgent Care Centre (UCC) which provides non-emergency care during daytime hours. Volumes at the centre have been steadily decreasing over the past five years. Based on our analysis, we know that 99% of patients have family physicians, and most visits are better suited for family physicians. The UCC essentially functions very similar to a walk-in-clinic, and there are already several walk-in clinics in the area. For those people with more urgent needs, it is safer, more efficient and timely for them to present directly to the Emergency Department (ED). We will be expanding the capacity of our ED to accommodate all local residents.

Community outreach continues to be a top priority and activities include:

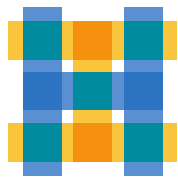
- Telephone survey to capture residents' feedback to determine health care needs and perspectives in 2016
- Point of care surveys at Branson in 2016
- Engagement with local municipal and provincial political leaders
- Engagement with community news outlets
- Dedicated web space established March 1, 2017
- Dedicated Q & A email
- Community telephone town hall planned for April 20, 2017
- Mail drop and posters to promote care options in May 2017

Along with this letter, I am including a copy of our message to the community from March 1, 2017 announcing the transition plans. I hope this additional information is helpful in your discussions.

Sincerely,

Tim

Dr. Tim Rutledge
President and CEO



March 1, 2017

A message to our community:

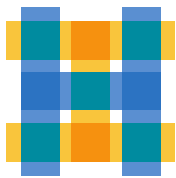
North York General Hospital's mission is to provide exceptional health care to our diverse communities. To do so, we must continue to assess how, why and where we provide the services we do, and adapt to our dynamic health care environment. As such, we have determined that we will not be renewing our lease at the Branson Ambulatory Care Centre in 2019, and we will begin to transition services from that site.

There are several reasons for us to transition out of the Branson site. Buildings of this vintage require ongoing investment to upgrade infrastructure and meet new standards. North York General Hospital does not own the Branson facility. Rather, we lease the facility from the Advent Corporation, a lease that expires in 2019. Given that we do not own this building, and Advent has extensive redevelopment plans for the site, it would not be prudent for us to use public dollars to continue to invest in this building.

A primary concern in coming to this decision was to ensure the residents of the local community have the health care services they need. In order to ascertain whether our services met the needs of the Branson community, North York General recently conducted a telephone survey within the catchment area. Through the survey, we learned that the hospital's General site was the health care facility most visited among the catchment residents. We also know that the majority of patients who visit the specialized clinics such as the Gale and Graham Wright Prostate Centre and the Cataract High Volume Centre do not reside in the catchment area. The Branson Ambulatory Care Centre is therefore not an optimal location for all of those we serve and so we are exploring other places to provide these services.

In light of the need for ongoing redevelopment, the expiration of the lease, and our community's health care needs, we have therefore begun to plan for the transfer of services over the next two years. In the short term, you will see the following changes:

- As of June 1, 2017, we will be closing the Urgent Care Centre and transitioning our staff to the General site's Charlotte & Lewis Steinberg Emergency. Any patients seeking care for urgent medical concerns or injuries should visit our Charlotte & Lewis Steinberg Emergency at the General site. Any other primary care needs are well-served by a number of community physicians and walk-in clinics. We are also encouraging patients and families to learn more about health care in their community by visiting the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's [Health Care Options](#) or by visiting the Central Local Health Integration Network's Centralhealthline.ca
- Closure of the retail pharmacy in March 2017, which is underused with low prescription volumes and high operating costs. Patient and families are encouraged to use one of the many drug stores nearby or the Outpatient Pharmacy located at the General site (4001 Leslie Street) to fill prescriptions.



**NORTH
YORK
GENERAL**

General Site
4001 Leslie Street
Toronto, ON M2K 1E1
T 416.756.6000
nygh.on.ca

NYGH is appreciative of the lease arrangement we have had with Advent for the last 19 years. We understand they are committed to continuing to provide a venue for care and partnering with quality health care service providers to meet the needs of the community as they develop their campus into a seniors' living and care community.

We understand you may have more questions about the transition. Please visit our website to find out the [latest information about Branson](#) or feel free to send an email to question@nygh.on.ca. We will do our best to respond in a timely manner. Please note that this email is to address questions related to Branson Ambulatory Care Centre. To provide feedback about your experiences at NYGH including compliments, concerns, questions and suggestions, please contact patientexperience@nygh.on.ca.

In closing, I would like to assure the members of the communities we serve, and our patients and families that their best health care interests are foremost in our decision-making. We remain committed to providing exceptional health care throughout the transition and will put our patients and families first in everything we do.

Best regards,

Tim Rutledge
President & CEO