



# Alexandra Hospital Ingersoll Tillsonburg District Memorial Hospital

*Partnering to keep healthcare close to home.*

FINAL

Media Release

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## **Exciting Changes at Our Hospitals**

**Ingersoll/Tillsonburg** – There are some very exciting changes happening at our local hospitals, Alexandra Hospital, Ingersoll (AHI) and Tillsonburg District Memorial Hospital (TDMH).

Sandy Jansen, President and CEO, announced today two program moves that will allow our hospitals to not only survive in the post-COVID healthcare world but to thrive. “At AHI, we are taking the first step toward opening a new wing focused on providing “one-stop” healthcare for those in our communities living with chronic diseases like diabetes and heart disease,” said Jansen. “This innovative centre will be located on the second floor of the hospital and will build on the success of the Oxford County Cardiac Rehab Program.” As our baby boomer population ages, there is growing need to ensure we are providing support for people living with these common chronic illnesses, keeping them healthier and living at home longer. In support of this new program, we will be moving the Regional Diabetes Education Program currently located at TDMH to AHI. This program currently sees over 2,800 patients per year. The community will see a number of changes coming to AHI including a significant renovation of the second floor and expanded parking. The program will continue to serve the entire area, including Tillsonburg, through local and virtual programs.

Another exciting change coming to the hospitals is the expansion of the surgical program at TDMH to a full time service with 7 day a week coverage. Several years ago, the surgical program at TDMH was cut as a savings strategy. “We recognized there were several unintended consequences of cutting the surgical program at TDMH, including reducing healthcare options for the people living in our communities,” said Mike Bastow, Chief Operating Officer at the two hospitals. “We have reinstated this full program through the implementation of savings strategies, the introduction of new revenue generating programs and the movement of cataract surgeries from AHI.”

“We recognize that some in our communities may, at first glance, see these moves as a loss however this couldn’t be farther from the truth,” said Jansen. “By making these moves, both hospitals and more importantly our communities win as we are providing more services close to home. Further we are able to make these incredible changes within our budgets and without any job losses. In fact, as the programs continue to grow, we will undoubtedly be hiring more people,” said Jansen.

The budget increase at AHI associated with this expansion is well over \$500,000 and patient visits to the hospitals will at minimum triple in the early days. This program will continue to grow and expand over the years to come. “Our leadership team continues to focus on growing AHI and TDMH to play a key role in healthcare in the region,” said Jennifer Row, Chief of Program Development and System Transformation. Earlier this year, AHI announced the addition of two new clinics. Dr. Gary Tithecott is now offering outpatient pediatric services at AHI and the new Oxford County Specialty Wound Care and Diabetic Foot Ulcer Offloading Clinic opened in January 2020. “All of these changes are aligned with our vision of providing high quality healthcare in our communities. Prior to these opening of these clinics at AHI, patients in our communities had to travel to London or other communities. The expansion of the surgical program means people living in our communities will be able to access

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surgical care 7 days a week in our local community,” said Row. Currently patients who require emergency surgery on the weekend or overnight are transferred to London or Woodstock. “Additionally, through the efficiencies of having a full time program at TDMH, we anticipate completing more cataract surgeries than before, whittling down our wait list”, said Row.

“At our hospitals, we are constantly seeking ways to provide the highest quality and safest healthcare for our communities and COVID-19 has added pressures to our system that none of us would have imagined just 3 months ago,” said Jansen. “I am so proud of our team and grateful to Ontario Health West and the Ministry of Health for ensuring that we could make these changes in a timely way to address these additional pressures.”

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