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Dufferin, Caledon, Headwaters Hospital put $150k towards physician recruitment

Written By **Paula Brown**

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Efforts to recruit new physicians in Dufferin and Caledon are underway as the Hills of Headwaters Collaborative Ontario Health Team (HOHC OHT) announces funding from partners.

The Hills of Headwaters Collaborative Ontario Health Team announced in a Feb. 8 press release that the County of Dufferin, Town of Caledon and Headwaters Health Care Centre (HHCC) have committed a combined $150,000 to support local physician recruitment efforts for one year.

?The Dufferin/Caledon community is in a unique situation when looking at the projected increase in population and the shortage of physicians we currently face,? said Tracy Coffin, executive director of HOHC OHT. ?This collaboration between key community partners to address the physician shortage in our community is something we are very proud to be a part of.?

According to the HOHC OHT, there are over 15,000 residents from Dufferin County and Caledon without a family physician, as of March 2022. With the population of the two communities projected to grow by 37 per cent by 2031, Dufferin and Caledon would require 43 additional family physicians to care for the population growth ? 14 for Dufferin County and 29 for Caledon.

To address physician shortages, HOHC OHT's Physician Recruitment and Retention Task Force, which includes local government representatives, family physicians, health providers and community members, has developed a strategy to attract, recruit and retain family physicians and specialists to the area.

?Collaborating between the hospital and our communities is vital for attracting and retaining family physicians and specialists. The well-being of residents is a shared responsibility and our region has so much to offer physicians and their families,? said Kim Delahunt, president and CEO of Headwaters Hospital.

As part of their recruitment strategy, the Physician Recruitment and Retention Task Force plans to hire a physician recruiter to help bring new physicians to the community. The Physician Recruitment and Retention Task Force will be involved in the hiring of a physician recruiter. The position will include an estimated start date of April 2024.

?Dufferin County's vision under our 2023 to 2026 Strategic Plan is to be a community that grows together, with a key goal being to explore opportunities to improve access to healthcare services,? said Dufferin County Warden Darren White. ?Quality, local and accessible health care will allow us to create a community where everyone can thrive.?

For more information on the work being done by HOHC OHT, visit www.hillsofheadwaterscollaborative.ca.