

HART Hub Dufferin opens satellite location in Shelburne to better serve local residents

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LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

A new support hub has opened in Shelburne, bringing a comprehensive range of social, health, and housing services directly to local residents.

Operating from the Mel Lloyd Centre, the Shelburne site is an extension of the HART Hub Dufferin model, which is designed to support people facing housing instability, mental health and addiction challenges, food insecurity, and difficulty navigating existing systems.

Lisa Neuman, director of supportive housing with Services and Housing In the Province (SHIP), said that at first, the hub will have limited days of operation but will expand or adapt as they learn more about the community's needs.

"It's opening effective today (Jan. 29), and we are starting with Tuesdays and Thursdays," she said. "We'll then evaluate what works best as we see people coming through and see what they're looking for."

At its core, the hub offers service navigation, helping individuals connect with the right supports without being bounced between multiple agencies.

"It's really about focusing on individuals with housing instability, mental health and addictions concerns, and just those that have really had challenges connecting effectively to services," Neuman said. "Welcoming people to come in, drop in, connect, really identify what would be most beneficial to them, be it food security, or a need of shelter?"

The hub will help people access food security resources, addiction assessment, trauma counselling, dialectical behaviour therapy, employment support, and peer support from people with lived experience.

The Dufferin HART Hub location at the Edelbrock Centre in Orangeville is up and running. It operates as a low-barrier, welcoming drop-in space where people can come in, ask questions, get to know staff, and learn about available supports without pressure.

The Orangeville hub serves as the program's anchor site, coordinating services across multiple partner organizations to create a more integrated system of care throughout the county.

Despite the Shelburne hub being considered a satellite location, Neuman said it won't affect the services it offers.

"We hope to have the same services at both locations, it's just going to take some initial organizing," she said. "Having mental health navigation and addictions as a starting point, but definitely want to have the whole spectrum of services available to all communities."

Looking ahead, a mobile clinic is being developed to reach rural and underserved areas across Dufferin County.

This vehicle-based service will include a clinic space with nursing capacity and a small counselling area, enabling a small team to travel to identified hotspots of need. Using data from community feedback and partners such as the Grand Valley Food Bank, the mobile unit will focus on hidden homelessness, transportation barriers, and areas where residents have struggled to access consistent support.

At the core of this initiative, Neuman said that they encourage everyone who needs help to take the first step and ask ? support is available and willing.

?We really just want to encourage people to come and meet us,? she said. ?Just ask a question, just come and have a look. We really welcome that so that people can get to know what is available, and not feel that pressure? if you want to come and have a snack, have a drink and just have a chat with someone that's very much welcome.?

The new hub at the Mel Lloyd Centre in Shelburne is the next step in bringing together more social support services across the county, making it easier than ever to get in contact with the right help when it's needed.

The Mel Lloyd Centre is located at 167 Centre St., Shelburne.