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North Dufferin Wellness Centre offering virtual services during COVID-19 pandemic

Written By MARNI WALSH

With the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown making regular healthcare a challenge for everyone, the team at North Dufferin Wellness Centre (NDWC) on Main Street East in Shelburne, is working to support all their services ?virtually, safely and securely in the comfort of their patient's home.?

According to the NDWC team, ?the physicians and physiotherapy are still open Monday to Friday and are available to see patients virtually or in person as needed in emergency situations.?

The team says, ?Staff are answering the phones and the physicians and physiotherapists are working from home as well as seeing appropriate patients in the office. Patients are being screened and staff are wearing personal protective equipment in order to keep themselves and the patients safe.?

The North Dufferin Wellness Centre officially opened in January of 2019 with Shelburne Physiotherapy Centre, Shelburne Town Pharmacy and The North Dufferin Family Physicians at 712 Main Street East. The site now also provides Hearing Services through Hear Right Canada.

Opening with only one family physician, the NDWC now hosts three family physicians including Dr. Catania, Dr. Gill and Dr. Caruso.

Dr. Catania, a Comprehensive Family Physician in Dufferin for the past 15 years, is the current Chief of Family Practice at Headwaters, with an interest in palliative care, and provides home visits throughout the community as well as provides care at Headwaters Hospital.

Dr. Gill, is a Comprehensive Family Physician, who provides care in Shelburne, makes home visits, as well as working at Headwaters Health Care Centre.

Dr. Caruso is also a Comprehensive Family Physician, and a provider of low risk Obstetrics at Headwaters Health Care Centre, who makes home visits and performs various in-office procedures.

North Dufferin Wellness Centre's David Egbert, MSc(Hon) Kin, MScPhysiotherapy, has 27 years of experience providing specialized rehab services, and is a clinic instructor for physiotherapy and physiotherapy aide students.

Sanjay Lekhi, owner and managing pharmacist of Shelburne Town Pharmacy, says he and his staff are passionate about providing the best possible assistance to their clients during the pandemic.

?We compound hand sanitizer formula based on World Health Organization standards to help the community and sell at not-to-profit pricing. Our pharmacy delivery service has seen an increase during this time and we are glad that we are able to help customers by bringing their medications to them. We provide counselling on their medications and answer their OTC questions via telephone and video.?

David Egbert says, ?The unique part of this group is the collaboration that occurs between all the businesses in the building.

He added, ?All the providers work together to provide the best care for their patients and this community. Because we are in the same building it is easier to communicate and support our patients.?

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In addition, the Dufferin Area Family Health Team has providers that work with the physicians. In September 2019, Family Transition Place and Dufferin Child and Family Services, in collaboration with the physicians at the North Dufferin Wellness Centre, opened a weekly walk in clinic to provide counselling and crisis support for children, families and women in Shelburne.

The team at NDWC recognizes, ?these can be difficult times ? staying at home, supporting your children's schooling, and the inability to work. While it is important to practice physical distancing, we can still be social,? they say. ?Remember to be thankful for one thing each day, tell someone that you care about them, write a letter, make a phone call, get some fresh air. And look for the silver lining.? For more information visit: https://dafht.ca/clinics/view/north_dufferin_wellness_centre or call 226-259-9000.