



Corporation of the County of Bruce
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December 23, 2021

Via email: Christine.elliott@pc.ola.org

The Honourable Christine Elliott
Minister of Health
5th Floor, 777 Bay Street
Toronto ON M7A 2J3

Dear Minister Elliott:

At the December 23, 2021 Bruce County Executive Committee meeting the following recommendation from the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie was supported:

That Whereas, on December 20, 2021, the South Bruce Grey Health Centre (SBGHC) released an announcement regarding the reduction in hospital services due to nursing shortages; and,

Whereas, due to workplace demands as a result of the ongoing COVID 19 pandemic there continues to be an overall shortage of available registered nurses in the Province of Ontario; and,

Whereas the Province of Ontario is responsible for the provision of Health Care Services in Ontario; and,

Whereas the rural health care system is even more strained due to the shortage of doctors and nurses and other medical professionals; and,

Whereas, due to recent nursing departures in SBGHC, the Centre will be faced with even more challenges during the holiday season; and,

Whereas, SBGHC has determined that alternatives related to staffing shortages needs to be considered to address the health care crisis; and,

Whereas, upon review it was recommended that two measures be implemented: the first being the reduction of the Emergency Room

hours at Walkerton Hospital and the second being the modifications to the Chesley inpatient unit; and,

Whereas the Chesley Hospital Emergency Room hours have been reduced for over 2 years and the reduction in Walkerton may result in difficulties for patients to attend alternative hospitals if emergency care is needed overnight; and,

Whereas these reductions continue to put a health care strain on rural communities such as Brockton, Hanover, Chatsworth and the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie; and,

Whereas, it has been recommended that the province be requested to undertake a third-party review of these recommendations to ensure that other alternatives be considered rather than reducing services; and,

Whereas, during the third-party review of these proposed health service reductions the province provide applicable emergency funding to the SBGHC while the third-party review is being undertaken and final recommendations are implemented; and,

Whereas the Province should be requested as part of the third-party review to consider the provision of additional funding and incentives for training, education and recruitment of registered nurses to support rural health care; and,

Whereas the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie strongly opposes any reduction in service levels at the facilities in Chesley and Walkerton and further request that the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care for the Province of Ontario intervene to find an immediate solution for the staffing shortages and ensure consistent service levels for residents of Arran-Elderslie, Chatsworth, Brockton and South Bruce; and,

And further that the Council of the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie opposes the negative impacts on first responders including the OPP, paramedics and local fire departments, and,

Now therefore, Be It Resolved, that Council support the request for the province to consider conducting a third-party review at their own expense of these local health crisis measures and send a copy of this motion to MPP Bill Walker Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, MPP Lisa Thompson Huron-Bruce, MP Alex Ruff and Ontario Health Minister Christine

Elliott, County of Bruce, County of Grey and the Municipalities of Brockton, South Bruce, Chatsworth and Hanover.

Yours sincerely,



Donna Van Wyck
Clerk

- c. Mr. Bill Walker, MPP, Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound
(Via email: bill.walkerco@pc.ola.org)
- Ms. Lisa Thompson, MPP, Huron-Bruce
(Via email: lisa.thompsonco@pc.ola.org)
- Mr. Alex Ruff, MP, Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound
(Via email: Alex.Ruff@parl.gc.ca)
- Municipality of Brockton
- Municipality of Arran-Elderslie
- Municipality of South Bruce
- Township of Chatsworth
- Town of Hanover
- County of Grey

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

January 4, 2021

Resolution No. 01-22

Moved by COUNCILLOR FITZSIMMONS

Seconded by COUNCILLOR HOCKING

WHEREAS, in 2020, Ontario had the lowest nurse-per-capita ratio in Canada, with 665 registered nurses (RNs) for every 100,000 people; and

WHEREAS, Ontario would require 22,003 more working RNs just to reach the national average; and

WHEREAS, the nursing shortage in Ontario is well documented and had reached crisis proportions even before the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the Ontario COVID-19 Science Advisory Table's recent report Burnout in Hospital-Based Healthcare Workers during COVID-19 says that more than 60 per cent of health-care workers surveyed in multiple Canadian studies have experienced severe emotional exhaustion; and

WHEREAS, Ontario nurses are leaving the workforce in droves because of retirement, burnout, change of occupations, and more attractive opportunities in the United States and elsewhere; and

WHEREAS, The South Bruce Grey Health Centre has stated they do not have enough staff to continue to operate at their current level of service and announced the closure of the emergency department at the Walkerton Hospital from 8 p.m. to 8 a.m. effective December 27, 2021; and

WHEREAS, This closure will have sweeping effects on workloads for local first responders, including police, firefighters and paramedics; and

WHEREAS, This closure will add significant workload pressures to neighbouring health care services and facilities, and particularly Hanover and District Hospital; and

WHEREAS, The council of the Municipality of Brockton has formally requested the County of Bruce to consider retaining a health services expert to examine nursing staff shortages in southern Bruce County and that the County of Bruce consider financial contributions up to \$10,000 for impacted municipalities to assist in addressing this shortage; and

WHEREAS, South Bruce Grey Health Centre has determined that alternatives related to staffing shortages need to be considered to address the health care crisis;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, The council of the Town of Hanover formally requests the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care work with the South Bruce Grey Health Centre to find an immediate solution to its staffing shortages; and

FURTHER THAT, The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care continue to work on strategies not only designed to recruit nurses to rural Ontario, but also focus on retaining experienced nurses who are essential to critical and emergency care units.

CARRIED DEFEATED TABLED



MAYOR