

Petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario Assembled

Whereas... Chesley and District Memorial Hospital, originally donated to the town with funds provided by the local Kinsmen Club, was dedicated as a tribute to those local residents injured or killed during the Second World War. This hospital has served the needs of the community of Arran-Elderslie for 79 years with strong support at all times from the residents of the town and other communities in the area as well as from the county and local municipal government.

Whereas... Three times, in 1976, 1978 and 1992, provincial governments have attempted to close the doors of this hospital. In each case local residents protested these moves and each time through their efforts the government backed down and the hospital was saved. Now with the current cancellation and/or reduction of ER services, there is yet another threat to the continued existence of our hospital.

Whereas... the ER in Chesley Hospital serves an area with a total population of 6,900 people. It delivers emergency medical care for the whole constituency of Arran-Elderslie Township including the towns of Chesley, Tara, Paisley, and Dobbinton. It also provides services for those living in the nearby villages of Desboro and Elmwood and in the former townships of Brant, Sullivan and Bentinck. A large number of the residents are seniors and the area also includes a large population of Amish and Mennonite families. Many of these residents do not have access to a private automobile and are disadvantaged in the effort to reach health centres in larger communities by the long distance and lack of a public transportation system. They require close proximity to ER and hospital services and that proximity is best provided by the Chesley Hospital.

Whereas... the Physician Recruitment committee has advised that without a fully functioning ER, it is difficult to recruit and retain doctors and nurses who are interested in maintaining and increasing their skills and who are dependent upon ER duties to support or supplement their income.

Whereas... Arran Elderslie Council sent a letter addressed to Premier Doug Ford and the Minister of Health dated October 31, 2022 requesting action to address this situation and that letter remains unacknowledged and unanswered at this time.

Therefore, we, the undersigned citizens of Arran-Elderslie and surrounding community, call on the CEO and Board of Directors of SGBHC, MPP Rick Byers, Minister of Health Sylvia Jones, and Premier Doug Ford to keep our Emergency Department at the Chesley Hospital open 24/7, by ensuring sufficient funding and fair compensation for nurses and physicians and to address the ongoing operational and labour issues that are impacting our vital emergency department service.