



Feb
2025

SAVE SOUTH MUSKOKA HOSPITAL COMMITTEE

South Muskoka needs “CARE CLOSE TO HOME”

With a Provincial Election on February 27, the Save South Muskoka Hospital Committee is working hard to make hospital care a priority in South Muskoka.

Our Committee continues to support the doctor’s original vision to have a minimum of 60 inpatient beds to reach the Care Close to Home Model. Our hospital currently has 67 inpatient beds and is overcapacity most days. We are concerned that 46 beds will not meet future demand, including projected population growth and an older demographic. While we have been successful in making some increase to the bed count through public pressure, we advocate that the current model must continue to be changed to ensure that equitable and accessible healthcare remains available in South Muskoka.

MAHC’s model is set up to ensure that a South Muskoka resident with a serious condition is just “another number in the system”. In addition to bed count, we are also concerned that the current model will require patient transfer of any condition that would require more than a six-day stay in South Muskoka. This assessment will be made on Day 1 of admittance – so many serious conditions will never be treated in South Muskoka with loved ones nearby. Continuity of care with your local doctor will also be challenged.

“Democracy in Action”

Our Committee assists to represent public concern on the hospital redevelopment issue and we facilitate democratic action. In 2024, our Committee submitted thousands of petition signatures gathered locally to the Ontario Legislature and also provided these directly to MPP Graydon Smith on February 23, 2024 on the hospital redevelopment, addressing the need for democratic representation on our hospital board. The District of Muskoka was also provided with a petition challenging the local taxpayer funding for the hospital given local dissatisfaction with the plans. We have encouraged members of the community to email and write the Premier and local officials with their concerns and opposition to the MAHC Made in Muskoka hospital model.

Volunteers’ Work:

The Save South Muskoka Committee has been active in advocating for the interests of the local community regarding the hospital redevelopment. Some of the key steps they’ve taken include:

1. **Public Campaigns and Advocacy:** The committee has worked to raise awareness about the hospital redevelopment plans, particularly regarding the number of beds and the importance of ensuring the facility is appropriately sized to meet the community’s healthcare needs. They’ve often used public forums, media, and outreach to communicate their concerns and objectives.
2. **Petitions:** They’ve organized petitions to gather support from local residents who are concerned about the hospital’s future. These petitions help demonstrate to government and healthcare planners that there is significant public backing for their position on issues like bed capacity.
3. **Meetings with Local Officials and Stakeholders:** The committee has engaged in discussions with local municipal leaders, healthcare administrators, and government representatives to advocate for their vision of a well-resourced, full-service hospital. These meetings are intended to influence decision-making at various stages of the redevelopment process.
4. **Public Consultations:** They have been involved in public consultations where local residents can express their views about the hospital redevelopment. By ensuring that the community’s voice is heard, the committee has pushed for a transparent and community-oriented approach to the planning process.
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(Continued from front page "Volunteers' Work")

5. **Collaboration with Other Advocacy Groups:** The committee has likely worked alongside other local organizations and groups who share similar concerns about the future of healthcare in Muskoka. This can amplify their impact and help align their efforts with broader regional healthcare initiatives.

6. **Engaging with the Province:** The Save South Muskoka Hospital Committee has also worked to directly engage with the Ontario government, urging the province to include provisions for a minimum of 60 beds in the hospital's redevelopment plan. This push is part of their larger strategy to ensure that the healthcare needs of the region are met adequately.

7. **Media Coverage:** They've sought to gain media attention for their cause, through local newspapers, radio stations, and other outlets. By doing so, they ensure that the issue stays in the public eye and continues to pressure decision-makers to address their concerns.

These actions reflect the committee's ongoing efforts to ensure the hospital redevelopment serves the best interests of the South Muskoka community, focusing on long-term sustainability and proper healthcare capacity.

"Within a two-hospital regional model, under the current plan, the smaller 46-bed hospital in South Muskoka will face administrative pressure against future growth. I am concerned that the sustainability of healthcare in South Muskoka will be tested and unassured under the current unbalanced and inequitable regional hospital model"

Dr. William Caughey, MD, FRCP(C) (February 3, 2025)



Candidates will be invited to a Public Meeting on February 22 @ 10 am at the Norwood Theatre on Manitoba Street in Bracebridge. Come out and show support for our hospital.



Graydon Smith
Conservative Party



Matt Richter
Green Party



Jim Ronholm
New Democratic Party

LIBERAL

A Liberal Party candidate has not been elected at the point of printing this document

ONTARIO VOTES 2025:

We have 4 questions to raise with all candidates with respect to the hospital redevelopment in South Muskoka. We will post answers on the website ssmh.ca:

1. Will you advocate for a minimum of 60 beds at the South Muskoka Hospital as supported in the Care Close to Home model prepared by our local physicians?
2. Are you aware of the public's particular concerns about the MAHC Made in Muskoka healthcare model? What do you identify these concerns to be and how would you plan to address this with the Ministry of Health and MAHC, if at all?
3. Will you engage in the current provincial review process to ensure that the hospital model is re-evaluated to attain sustainable and equitable healthcare in South Muskoka?
4. The MAHC Hospital Board is not publicly elected therefore does not have fair representation of the community it serves. How would you advocate a change to ensure the acute healthcare needs of Muskoka are met?

Visit Candidates at the Norwood Theatre, February 22 at 10 am.



OCTOBER 18, 2024
LET'S BE CLEAR: 46 BEDS AT SMMH STILL NOT GOOD ENOUGH, SAY SSMHC SUPPORTERS
Mark Clairmont | MuskokaTODAY.com



CARE CLOSE TO HOME V2
Total Beds = 157

	Program Classification	Huntsville Site	Bracebridge Site
Acute Care	Acute/Sub Acute*	50	53
	Obstetrics	2	1
	ICU (level 3)	8	
	ICU (level 2)		6
Restorative Care	Rehabilitaiton / Reactivation	37	
Total Beds		97	60

*subacute care is provided on an inpatient basis for those patients needing services that are more intensive than those typically received in skilled nursing facilities but less intensive than acute care.

Keep promise for two complete hospitals, Muskoka council
District asked to hold off funding until motion is accepted
By: Brent Cooper - MuskokaRegion.com
Number: April 15, 2024 | © 1 min to read
Article was updated Jul 4, 2024

DECEMBER 6, 2024
UPDATE: NEW HOSPITAL TALKS, PLANS ARE ALREADY UNDERWAY BETWEEN MAHC, MINISTRY OF HEALTH
Mark Clairmont | MuskokaTODAY.com
MUSKOKA – MAHC and the Ministry of Health are already well in to talks about plans and a submission for Muskoka's two new hospitals. During this morning's Alexander transitional care beds announced we caught up with Cheryl Harrison, Muskoka Algonquin president and CEO, for an update on last month's 1.3 stage [...]



Save South Muskoka Hospital Committee

MAHC
CAPITAL REDEVELOPMENT

CARE CLOSE TO HOME PROPOSAL

Save South Muskoka Hospital Committee Urges 60 Acute Care Beds At Future South Muskoka...
By: Save South Muskoka Hospital Committee (SSMHC) has completed a comprehensive assessment on the healthcare delivery models proposed for...
Muskoka411 staff - September 4, 2024 1:13 pm

Save South Muskoka Hospital: The Courage Of Leadership And Graciousness Of Support
By: MuskokaTODAY.com - July 1, 2024 10:08 am

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR | OPINION

Save South Muskoka Hospital Committee applauds doctors' pitch for close to home hospital solution

'We are encouraging all citizens to continue sending their letters of objection to our political leaders at provincial, district, and municipal levels.'

Tuesday, April 2, 2024 | © 1 min to read
©Article was updated Jul 19, 2024



Protesters concerned about their Bracebridge hospital losing beds in a redevelopment plan were among thousands protesting the Ontario government's health-care changes on May 30, 2024 at Queen's Park in Toronto.
Rob Ferguson/Toronto Star