



For Immediate Release:  
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## **York Central Hospital Unveils New Inpatient Mental Health Unit!**

**RICHMOND HILL, ON.** – Today, York Central Hospital unveils a new and long awaited inpatient mental health unit dedicated to providing the highest possible quality of care for people with mental health and addiction issues in our community.

“Mental illness touches the lives of almost all Canadians,” says Bruce Harber, Hospital President and CEO. “Even if we are fortunate enough not be personally affected by mental illness, most of us will have a role to play in supporting a family member or friend facing the challenges of mental illness.”

### **History of Caring**

In 1970, Dr. William Shaw, a child psychiatrist, moved his community office into the hospital and began providing mental health services within the facility for the very first time. By 1977, the program had grown to operating 12 beds dedicated to mental health services. Since that time, the program has seen a great increase in demand for services and with the addition of the new space.

### **About Our New Inpatient Unit**

The hospital now boasts a 10,700 square foot, 25 in-patient mental health unit, including 4 intensive care beds with the capability of establishing and maintaining a secure environment. Numerous clinics are also provided through the Mental Health program at various community locations providing ease of access to the community.

### **New Designation**

Also new to the hospital is the recent designation of being a Schedule One Facility. This new designation enables the hospital to provide intensive mental health care short stays for people experiencing acute episodes of behaviour that are disruptive to themselves and their surroundings.

“Our care for patients, focuses on the patient and their family, and uses inter-disciplinary teams within and across organizations,” added Carla Palmer, the hospital’s Director Community Programs, Partnerships and Alliances. “Recovery means something different from cure. This model is based on the belief that recovery is possible and has the goal of promoting hope, healing, empowerment and connections.”

According to Dr. Peter Zelina, the hospital’s Chief and Clinical Director of Mental Health Services, “Roughly 3% of the population will experience a serious mental illness and that another 17% will experience mild to moderate illness. The full range of services must be available to them to address the needs of affected by these illnesses. This new unit will go a long way in providing comfortable and safe treatment environments for many of these patients.”

The mental health team is committed to providing high quality treatment, tailored to the individual needs of our patients by a team of experts including: crisis intervention workers, nurses, occupational therapists, pharmacists, psychiatrists, social workers and behavioural consultants.

Later this year, the hospital will be introducing its new Day Hospital dedicated to short-term therapy for patients in a day setting allowing clients to maintain their independence in the community and return home each evening.

### **New Day Hospital Unit Open this Spring**

- With the completion of phase One of the hospital's redevelopment project, in the spring of 2009, this unit will expand to a total of 8,710 sq. ft. which has the facilities for an Adult Daily Living (ADL) Program which accesses patients for activities of daily living.
- The program is staffed by an experienced multi-disciplinary team.
- This unit will include two urgent clinic rooms, one exam room, one conference room, one group room and staff support spaces.

"We also owe an enormous amount of thanks to the wonderful people such as the Peek family who have generously raised much needed funds to enable us to create such a spacious and welcoming new facility," says David Bannister, Hospital Board Chair. "This has truly been a community effort that will benefit us all."

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York Central Hospital ([www.yorkcentral.on.ca](http://www.yorkcentral.on.ca)) is a large, full-service community hospital with over 65,000 visits annually to its Emergency Department, serving a population of over 400,000 in Southwest York Region and beyond. Located in one of Canada's fastest growing communities, the hospital is on a Capacity Building Journey that focuses on using the best available practices, the newest technologies and innovative models of service to provide superior patient care.

The hospital has made significant progress on Phase 1 One of its major expansion which is scheduled for completion in Spring 2009, and has secured funding to proceed with the detailed planning of Phase Two of its redevelopment. Among the many new facilities already open as part of Phase One are: new family birthing centre, new partially opened Emergency Department, new breast health imaging department, new York Regional Chronic Kidney Disease Program space and new 25 bed mental health in-patient unit. In the coming months we will open a new Critical Care Unit as well as new medical imaging department, new classrooms and auditorium as well as new chemotherapy, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault care areas, new fracture, plastics and ophthalmology areas as well as a new in-patient medical/surgical unit in the hospital's new North Wing.

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