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For Immediate Release:
Friday, April 29, 2011

Media Release

Poll Reveals Overwhelming Community Support for York Central Hospital to Build New Hospital in Vaughan and Expand Current Hospital Facility in Richmond Hill

Richmond Hill, ON – According to a recent public opinion poll, 97% of those Southwest York Region residents asked said that York Central Hospital's vision to build a new hospital in Vaughan and further expand the existing York Central Hospital site is very important to the health and well being of people of our community. These findings came from a POLLARA telephone survey of 500 people who expressed strong support for the hospital's vision to create a major regional health system as outlined in York Central Hospital's Stage One Planning Submission submitted today to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and Central LHIN.

"Survey findings showed that 9 out of 10 residents agree that the hospital's proposal to build a new hospital in Vaughan and further expand York Central Hospital is compelling and urgent. This shows residents strongly support our vision to create a major regional health system to better meet the health care needs of the people of Southwest York Region," said Altaf Stationwala, President and CEO, York Central Hospital.

Among those surveyed, 95% agreed that the population growth in the community supports the need for additional health care capacity over the next 10 to 20 years. Ninety percent of respondents agreed that reducing emergency room wait times and 93% agreed that increasing access to services should be top priorities for York Central Hospital's development project.

Hospital Reaches Major Milestone with Support from City of Vaughan and Region of York

With the Region of York providing York Central Hospital with \$117 million for the Vaughan hospital site and \$35.36 million for the existing Richmond Hill site, and the support of the City of Vaughan in allocating 40 acres of land at Major Mackenzie and Jane Street to York Central Hospital, the hospital's Stage One proposal has strong regional and municipal support.

"Submitting our Stage One Planning Submission is a major milestone that brings us closer than ever before to the building of a new hospital in Vaughan. We hope to receive government approval and funding as soon as possible to begin Stage Two of the government mandated planning process. We are excited about our vision to create a major regional health system and the positive impact it will have on our community," said Mr. Stationwala.

In October of 2009, York Central Hospital received a \$7 million planning grant from the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care to develop its Stage One Planning Submission in support of its expanded mandate to plan future hospital services for all of Southwest York Region including a new hospital in Vaughan and further expansion of its existing hospital in Richmond Hill.

The hospital's project theme: *Connecting you with tomorrow's health care*, has helped to guide the planning process and reflects what the hospital will bring to the community – a patient-centred health care system that will use the latest technologies and new models of care to help cater to the needs of patients. York Central Hospital's proposed plans feature innovative facility design to create hospital environments that facilitate healing, promote wellness and connect the two hospitals to the broader community in a way that will benefit patients, visitors and staff.

New Vision based on Strong Community Participation and Support

Over 1600 people from Southwest York Region participated in York Central Hospital's planning process, enabling the hospital to gain a wide variety of perspectives on its proposed plans. Survey opportunities, community open houses and the recent telephone survey were among the many ways that local residents shared their thoughts and ideas on the future health needs of the community.

"Thank you to all residents who took the time to participate in the planning process. Through the strong support and participation of our community, and tremendous effort and dedication from our hospital team, we have developed a strong Stage One Planning Submission that we hope will lead to a timely approval to move to the next stage in the planning process," said Dina Palozzi, Chair of York Central Hospital's Board of Trustees.

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Backgrounder

- York Central Hospital serves a half million people in one of Canada's fastest growing communities which is forecasted to increase to well over one million people by 2029
- Based on population growth and aging projections, over the next 15 years both Richmond Hill and Vaughan will see increased demands for services that are significantly above projected provincial averages including a 97% increase in residents aged 60 to 74 years and a 113% increase in residents aged 75 years+
- Over the past two years York Central Hospital has seen an increase of 15,000 additional Emergency Department visits moving from 65,000 to over 80,000 Emergency Department visits per year