



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 16th, 2020

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Construction continues at Oak Ridges Hospice but challenges lie ahead

Port Perry, ON: Oak Ridges Hospice was conceived because it is an essential health care service desperately needed in the community. COVID-19 has intensified that need and made it all too clear why palliative care and grief support is urgently required at this time. With the older population being particularly vulnerable to the disease, families are losing loved ones and due to physical distancing, suffering the added injury of being unable to be with them or find grief support.

Rising to the call, Oak Ridges Hospice is moving forward in spite of the many challenges posed by COVID-19. Contractor J.J. McGuire and all subcontractors are following the Public Health recommendations for keeping workers safe including physical-distancing and additional on-site hygiene stations. Encouragingly, Morgan and Sidhu Home is rising above ground level. Wall panels have been installed and roof framing and trusses are going up. Site grading and earth moving will begin this month as the hospice continues to take shape.

While construction progress has been exciting, significant challenges lie ahead. Oak Ridges Hospice is sensitive to the current financial crisis facing many businesses and individuals due to COVID-19. The economic impact of the virus has severely impacted peoples' ability to donate with the result that the hospice has not yet been able to reach its final \$2 million goal.

“COVID-19 has affected charities' fundraising across Canada and, here in Durham, our capital campaign is no exception,” says Dr. Steve Russell, Oak Ridges Hospice Board Chair. “If our \$2 million fundraising goal is not reached, construction may pause later this summer. Our Board is putting together a strategy to overcome these obstacles in the face of these significant social headwinds.”

Oak Ridges Hospice is making appeals to all levels of government for assistance, given three powerful factors: (1) providing compassionate care for people who are facing their final days, (2) creating new, permanent jobs in Durham Region, and (3) being an essential component of the health system infrastructure in this area.

Dr. Russell says, “We are sensitive to the financial strains COVID-19 is bringing to many families and businesses. Some may be able to weather the storm easier than others. So, we would like to invite those who are able, to continue supporting Oak Ridges Hospice. Your support is needed now more than ever.”

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OAK RIDGES HOSPICE
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We're all in this together and that means we support each other the best we can. For those who are struggling with things like grocery shopping, dog walking or just need someone to talk to, please let us know and we will do our best to help you through our volunteer network.

Dr. Russell and other members of the campaign team are happy to talk with supporters. You can join the community movement to build Oak Ridges Hospice; a place where people facing end-of-life can be supported in their final journey, surrounded by compassionate care.

For more information or to make a donation, email info@oakridgeshospice.com or visit our website at www.oakridgeshospice.com

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Oak Ridges Hospice: Is a community-based charitable organization committed to providing - *free of charge* - a tranquil, home-like setting where a dedicated team of specially trained medical, nursing, support staff and volunteers provide compassionate care and comfort to our residents and their loved ones at the end-of-life. Oak Ridges Hospice is part of a network of future hospices in Durham Region that will include Whitby and Clarington.