



## Media Release

Monday, Sept. 26, 2022

# Ontario Health Minister Praises Innovative Community Health Care Programs in Windsor-Essex

ESSEX, ON — Sylvia Jones, Ontario’s Minister of Health and Deputy Premier, met with health care workers in Essex County Monday to learn more about new and innovative programs and to cut the ribbon on a multi-purpose medical vehicle that will better enable members of the Windsor-Essex Ontario Health Team to provide responsive, mobile care to residents when and where they need it most.

## Mental Health and Addictions Response Team (MHART)

Jones met with members of the Mental Health and Addictions Response Team (MHART), which includes an Essex-Windsor EMS Paramedic and a Hôtel-Dieu Grace Healthcare Social Worker who respond to 911 calls in an EMS SUV, to better address the demand for non-critical, low to moderate acuity mental health and addictions services in real time. The team helps ensure residents are receiving the right care at the right time by the right provider in alignment with Ontario’s Roadmap to Wellness building on a health-centered approach to strengthen mental health crisis prevention and response.

“The importance and impact of collaborative teams such as MHART cannot be understated. They are another step forward in improving access, breaking down silos and defining mental health and addiction care in our community,” said Bill Marra, President & CEO, Hôtel-Dieu Grace Healthcare. “As a provincially recognized Centre of Excellence, Hôtel-Dieu Grace Healthcare is committed to our role as Windsor-Essex’s Hospital leader in Mental Health and Addiction care. Together, with our partners, we will continue to create a stronger, more seamless system for generations to come. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to

Health Minister Jones for her visit today and recognition of the good work being done in Windsor-Essex.”

### **Mobile Medical Unit**

The mobile medical unit that was also unveiled Monday will be used by the Windsor-Essex Ontario Health Team to bring services and care to the neighborhoods in Windsor and Essex County that need it most. It will build on the success of the Community Health Fair held in July in Leamington, which saw wide range of health care professionals provide care and support to more than 200 people. The mobile medical unit is an evolution of the former Community Response and Stabilization Team, a partnership between Erie Shores HealthCare, Essex-Windsor EMS and in conjunction with High Priority Community initiatives. The mobile unit provides the same services with significantly less set-up and will travel around the county, setting up for about a week at a time in high-priority locations. The mobile medical unit was secured utilizing high-priority community funding.

“This is a good day for Windsor-Essex as we officially transition Mobile Medical Support to the Windsor-Essex OHT, a partnership of 45 local healthcare providers,” said Erie Shores HealthCare CEO and WEOHT Co-Chair Kristin Kennedy. “The mobile medical unit will enhance access to care in high-priority communities and marginalized populations, alleviating pressures across the healthcare continuum in Windsor and Essex County.”

Minister Jones praised regional health care providers for putting patient-care first and working together to alleviate systemic pressures.

“The mobile health care services being provided by Essex-Windsor EMS Paramedics in partnership with Hotel-Dieu Grace Healthcare along with a wide range of other health care providers is proof of the amazing work that can happen when we all work together,” said Jones. “This innovative model of community health care puts the patient first by bringing the services to them and reduces systemic pressures by diverting emergency calls before they happen.”

“The MHART team and the- mobile medical unit will enable us to provide care and treatment to Essex County residents when and where they need it, helping to alleviate demands in the community and at hospital emergency departments by

providing preventative care and diverting patients to the most appropriate point of contact and level of care,” said Essex-Windsor EMS Chief Bruce Krauter. “Now, more than ever, we must do everything we can to reach people before they are in crisis.”

MHART and the Windsor-Essex Ontario Health Team are just two examples of groundbreaking, community-based programs that are being offered to Windsor-Essex residents thanks to the support of the province and the ongoing, collaborative efforts of regional health care partners dedicated to providing residents the right care at the right place at the right time.

“Health care agencies in Windsor and Essex County are working together for the good of residents in our region, removing longstanding silos and offering wholistic care that will ultimately reduce systemic pressures,” said Essex County Warden Gary McNamara. “Thank you to the provincial government for investing in these innovative programs and empowering our health care partners to provide optimal care to our residents.”

-30-

### **Additional Quotes**

“Essex-Windsor EMS shines in its commitment to innovation in health care with the Mental Health and Addictions Response Team (MHART). The MHART framework keeps our ambulances accessible in the community and directs the delivery of treatment to where it’s most needed.” – Andrew Dowie, MPP, Windsor-Tecumseh

"It's important for us to provide the right kind of care for people. The MHART program will deliver the right kind of care for people experiencing mental health issues or addiction issues." -- Anthony Leardi, MPP, Essex

"Every person in Ontario deserves safe and easily accessible mental health and addictions care. Our government will continue to support communities like Windsor-Essex and providers as they collaborate to address and improve mental health and addictions care in our province."

Michael Tibollo Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions

**For more information, contact:**

Donald McArthur, Manager, Communications & Organizational Development

County of Essex

[dmcArthur@countyofessex.ca](mailto:dmcArthur@countyofessex.ca)

519-791-6551

Nicole Crozer, Director, Communications and Mission

Hôtel-Dieu Grace Healthcare

[Nicole.Crozier@hdgh.org](mailto:Nicole.Crozier@hdgh.org)

226-345-9710

Kevin Black, Communications & Public Relations Specialist

Erie Shores Healthcare

[Kevin.Black@eshc.org](mailto:Kevin.Black@eshc.org)

519-326-233, ext. 4535