



## Town of The Blue Mountains

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September 9, 2021

The Hon. Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health  
438 University Avenue, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Toronto, ON

**RE: AMO Delegation; Virtual and In-Person NP/MD Led Pilot Project to Expand Access to Primary Care in the South Georgian Bay area**

Dear Minister,

On behalf of the Town of The Blue Mountains, thank you for listening intently to our presentation during the 2021 AMO delegations. This letter is a follow-up to one of our requests regarding improving access to primary care in the South Georgian Bay region.

As we mentioned in our meeting, several municipalities in the South Georgian Bay region have joined the Joint Municipal Physician Recruitment and Retention Committee. The Committee was formed by the Town of The Blue Mountains Council with the mandate of identifying solutions to address the severe lack of primary care access in the local area.

The South Georgian Bay region has approximately 71,070 full-time residents, spread over 2,352 square kilometres. The population is expected to increase 16% by 2023, and of that, there will be a 73% increase in those over 60 years of age. The region has one of the highest provincial rates of chronic physical and mental health issues. These geographic and determinants of health are further exacerbated by the shortfall of primary care providers in the region.

As detailed during our meeting, we are proposing to implement a fully integrated virtual and in-person care pilot that blends the best features of both types of care to realize clinical appropriateness, convenience, and cost-effectiveness. Our pilot will build upon the successful deployment of virtual care in Ontario during the COVID-19 pandemic and is an enhanced version of the recently successful Renfrew County Virtual Triage and Assessment pilot.

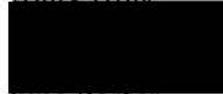
The pilot will focus on the large percentage of South Georgian Bay residents, especially seniors and youth with mental health issues and chronic illnesses, that have limited to no access to local primary care. We will work with your Ministry to establish sound and verifiable outcome measures to confirm the deliverables we believe the pilot will achieve.

Minister, we are asking for Provincial support and funding for our pilot. We are also prepared to consider the level of Municipal support required.

We have attached a brief presentation to further outline our thoughts and are asking to work with you and your Ministry staff to further define the pilot and outcome measures with the goal of implementation starting as soon as possible.

May we suggest that a follow-up meeting be arranged to advance this idea.

Yours Truly



June Porter

Chair, The Town of The Blue Mountains Joint Municipal Physician Retention and Recruitment Committee



Rob Sampson

Councillor and Member of the Town of The Blue Mountains Joint Municipal Physician Retention and Recruitment Committee



Alar Soever

Mayor

The Town of The Blue Mountains

Cc Heather Watt, Chief of Staff for the Minister

