

Markham Stouffville Hospital to Get 24-Hour Midwifery Care Unit

Over 6,700 More Expectant Families to Access Midwifery Care in Ontario

NEWS

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Ontario is expanding midwifery care to provide expectant families in the Markham area with more options for pregnancy, newborn health and wellness care closer to home.

Dr. Helena Jaczek, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, was in Markham today to announce that Markham Stouffville Hospital is receiving support to develop a new a midwife-led birth unit. The Alongside Midwifery Unit will offer labour, birth and in-hospital postpartum support for new mothers and their babies. Over the next five years, the unit will support more than 1,000 additional deliveries by allowing midwives to care for nearly twice as many families annually once the unit is fully operational.

This investment is part of a province wide expansion of midwifery care that will give expectant families more choice. These investments, which will support 6,700 more families this year, include:

- Welcoming 82 new midwifery graduates into practice this year, who will provide approximately 600 more expectant families with access midwifery services in their communities
- Supporting – for the first time – innovative models of care that will expand choice and enhance access to midwifery services in a variety of settings, such as family doctors' offices and community health centres, beginning in Hamilton, Delhi, Ottawa, Thunder Bay, Brampton, Collingwood and Toronto, improving access to midwifery care for up to 700 more expectant families each year
- Creating three new midwifery practice groups that will provide midwifery care for 655 expectant families in Peel/Halton Hills, Midland and Milton and northwest Mississauga
- Expanding the Indigenous Midwifery Program to Elliot Lake and Toronto, to provide culturally safe pregnancy, newborn and cultural programming to 190 additional expectant Indigenous families each year.

In total, 30,000 expectant families in Ontario will have access to midwifery care this year.

Ontario's plan to support care, create opportunity and make life more affordable during this period of rapid economic change includes a higher minimum wage and better working conditions, free tuition for hundreds of thousands of students, easier access to affordable child care, and free prescription drugs for everyone under 25, and 65 or over, through the biggest expansion of medicare in a generation.

QUOTES

“Our government recognizes the tremendous contributions midwives make to families and our health care system. Supporting expectant families in Markham Stouffville with more options for their care is part of our government’s commitment to make life easier for families across Ontario. ”

— Dr. Helena Jaczek, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care

“We are thrilled to be opening an Alongside Midwifery Unit at Markham Stouffville Hospital. This hospital has a longstanding history of our obstetricians and staff working closely with their midwifery colleagues. This takes our partnership to a whole new level. This model is truly transformational and puts the patient at the centre of their care.”

— Jo-anne Marr, President & CEO, Markham Stouffville Hospital

“These streams of funding for midwifery create new opportunities for midwives to meet the needs of communities across the province. Now, more Ontarians will be able to access the benefits of midwifery care, including the excellent health outcomes that come from client-centered, evidence-informed care.”

— Elizabeth Brandeis, Chair, President, Association of Ontario Midwives

QUICK FACTS

- Ontario is investing up to \$166 million in midwifery care this year.
- Markham Stouffville Hospital is receiving \$690,202 for the Alongside Midwifery Unit this year.
- In 2016-17, midwives supported approximately 24,066 births, representing 16 per cent of all births in Ontario.
- There are over 850 midwives registered and regulated by the College of Midwives of Ontario with over 700 active members practicing in 92 Midwifery Practice Groups.
- Midwifery clients receive access to 24/7 care from midwives through pregnancy, labour and birth, and post-partum care for the client and infant for six weeks.
- Midwives offer a choice in birth settings including, home, hospital or one of the two midwifery-led birth centres in Ontario – the Toronto Birth centre and the Ottawa Birth and Wellness Centre.

LEARN MORE

- [Patients First: Action Plan for Health Care](#)
- [Association of Ontario Midwives](#)
- [Markham Stouffville Hospital](#)

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