

HURON PERTH HEALTHCARE ALLIANCE

CLINTON PUBLIC HOSPITAL EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT – REDUCED HOURS OF OPERATION



Frequently Asked Questions

When will the Emergency Department hours be reduced?

- The reduced hours of operation will go into effect Monday, December 2, 2019.
- The Clinton Public Hospital Emergency Department will accept patients daily from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, and will be closed overnight until 8:00 AM.
- After 8:00 P.M. EMS (Ambulance) will transport patients who require Emergency Department services to the nearest 24/7 Emergency Department.

Where can I go to access emergency services between 8:00 PM and 8:00 AM?

If you are in need of immediate medical attention, call 9-1-1.

The 24-hour Emergency Departments closest to Clinton are listed below.

SEAFORTH Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance – Seaforth Community Hospital 24 Centennial Dr., Seaforth 519-527-1650 15.3 KM	GODERICH Alexandra Marine & General Hospital 120 Napier St., Goderich 519-524-8323 21 KM
EXETER South Huron Hospital 24 Huron St. W. 519-235-2700 31.8 KM	WINGHAM Listowel Wingham Hospitals Alliance – Wingham & District Hospital 270 Carling Terrace, Wingham 519-357-3210 36.1 KM

Are the reduced operating hours a permanent decision?

Recruitment efforts will continue. This is a temporary reduction in service hours while the HPHA evaluates our services to ensure the right patient is cared for in the right location. Patterns of usage by the community, our available resource (including staffing) and hours of service will be part of this discussion.

Is reducing Emergency Department hours an indication that HPHA intends to close the Clinton Public Hospital Emergency Department?

No. HPHA has no intention of closing the Emergency Department on a permanent basis. A shortage of qualified and experienced healthcare staff is driving this interim measure. HPHA is committed to keeping all four of our sites strong and viable.

Why is it difficult to recruit nursing staff to the Clinton Public Hospital?

Recruitment and retention of Registered Nurses (RNs) is very challenging in rural communities. Nurses are required to develop a high degree of competency in a number of clinical areas and specialties. New graduates who have identified the need for significant orientation and mentorship are often unprepared to work in a rural setting.

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Can nurses from other HPHA sites fill the void at the Clinton Public Hospital?

Attempts have been made to fill vacant Emergency Department shifts at the Clinton Public Hospital site with nursing staff from HPHA's other three sites. However, this can only be done with a Nurse's consent per the collective agreement. The loss of an RN at any HPHA site will result in similar challenges. Historically six months to one year is required for a Nurse with no Emergency Department experience to feel prepared to work the night shift alone from 11:00 P.M. to 7:00 A.M. We are currently working to build the knowledge, skill and ability of nurses within Clinton Public Hospital to function at full scope of practice.

On average, how many Emergency Department patients in Clinton will be affected by this change?

The highest volume of patients (85%) are seen during the hours of 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM. Typically, the volume of patients seen in the Emergency Department at the Clinton Public Hospital site during the overnight hours are very low. Historical data shows that on average, five patients per day visit the Emergency Department between the hours of 8:00 P.M. and 8:00 A.M., with the majority attending before 9:00 P.M.

Is this the first step in closing the Clinton Public Hospital?

No. The HPHA is committed to providing services at our four hospital sites. As part of our Commitments to Our Communities (strategic plan) we are evaluating all services to ensure we are providing the right care to the right patient at the right time. This commitment to keep the Clinton Public Hospital site strong and viable is evidenced by the new inpatient tub and shower room along with the upcoming installation of a new state-of-the-art digital X-ray suite.

Are these decisions related to saving money?

No. This is strictly a human resources issue of not having enough experienced nurses to fill a 24/7 nursing schedule. We have had 18 unsuccessful job postings for the Clinton Public Hospital Emergency Department over the last 12 months. We require a balance of experienced and novice nurses to provide safe, quality care. There are no savings achieved with the reduction of hours.

What happens when a patient shows up at the Clinton Public Hospital Emergency Department after 8:00 P.M.?

Signage regarding the Emergency Department hours will be posted along with addresses of the closest Emergency Departments. Staff on the inpatient unit are able to respond to patients who present to the Emergency Department doors through an intercom system. Patients will be directed to the closest Emergency Department or a call to EMS (Ambulance) will be made as appropriate.

For more information please contact:

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