

Media Advisory

McMaster University program focused on well-being of older adults coming to Niagara-on-the-Lake

December 11, 2017 – Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON: McMaster University Department of Family Medicine, the Canadian Red Cross and the Niagara North Family Health Team are working together to bring the Health TAPESTRY program to older adults in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Leaders of Health TAPESTRY will appear as a delegation before Niagara-on-the-Lake Town Council on December 11, 2017 to share information about the Health TAPESTRY program.

Health TAPESTRY was developed by McMaster University's Department of Family Medicine. The program helps to shift the focus of health care to prevention by reducing hospitalizations and deepening contact with primary care. Older adults who have previously participated in the program spent less time sitting, walked more, and tended to fall less. Results from Health TAPESTRY will help the Niagara North Family Health Team and the community better define health care requirements for seniors and contribute to the goal of optimal aging in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

In Health TAPESTRY, volunteers from Niagara-on-the-Lake, trained by the Canadian Red Cross, visit people in their homes to learn about what matters most to them and their life and health goals. This information is sent by the volunteer to the client's primary health care team using secure technology. This information helps the client's interprofessional team know more about how they can help that person stay healthy longer. The health care team may also connect with community organizations to help the person access supports and resources in their community.

Niagara North Family Health Team is one of six primary care sites across Ontario that will be implementing Health TAPESTRY through an investment by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. As well, Hamilton businessman David Braley has provided additional funding for continued research to learn how the Health TAPESTRY program can be implemented and adapted in different community settings.

Starting in January 2018, the program will be offered to residents of Niagara-on-the-Lake who are 70 years of age or older and whose family doctor is part of the Niagara-on-the-Lake site of the Niagara North Family Health Team.

Volunteers will be screened, trained, and coordinated by the Canadian Red Cross, which is encouraging anyone interested in becoming a Health TAPESTRY volunteer to contact Nelson Ruiz Blanco at 905-522-8485 or Nelson.RuizBlanco@redcross.ca. For more information about Health TAPESTRY, visit www.healthtapestry.ca.

Quotes

"Health TAPESTRY is about identifying a person's health concerns before those concerns impact on their quality of life, which in severe situations, may result in hospitalisation. Patients, volunteers, and the health care team all benefit from this program which is a cost-effective way to improve the health care people receive. Health TAPESTRY is helping people stay healthy where they live, in a way that fits their personal health goals for living as well as possible."

David Price

Chair and Professor, Department of Family Medicine, McMaster University

"The information trained volunteers gather by visiting and listening to people at home will be invaluable to our interprofessional health care team as they plan care for patients. We are so excited about the potential this program has for supporting the health of older adults in our community."

Mary Keith

Executive Director, Niagara North Family Health Team

"Volunteers are at the heart of the work we do across the country. Supporting the Health TAPESTRY project as a Red Cross volunteer is a meaningful way to make a real difference in the lives of people living in your own community."

Tanya Elliott

Vice President, Ontario, Canadian Red Cross

Interview Opportunity

Date: Monday, December 11, 2017

Time: 6 p.m.

Location: Town Municipal Office, Council Chambers, 1593 Four Mile Creek Road, Niagara-on-the-Lake

- **Dr. David Price**, Chair and Professor, Department of Family Medicine, McMaster University
- **Tanya Elliott**, Vice President, Ontario, Canadian Red Cross
- **Mary Keith**, Executive Director, Niagara North Family Health Team

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