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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nepean Support Services Takes Final Step Towards Voluntary Integration with Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre

Today, Nepean Support Services (NSS) took the final step towards voluntary integration with the Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre (WOCRC). At a special meeting, NSS members passed a motion to dissolve the organization. As a result, NSS will merge with Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre (WOCRC) effective April 1st, 2009. This voluntary integration is groundbreaking, as we are choosing to come together to provide better service to all members of Nepean and Western Ottawa communities.

“We made the difficult decision to merge with another organization because we realized that the time was coming when we would not be able to maintain our high level of client services,” says Bob McGaraughty, NSS Board President. “I believe that the merger of NSS with WOCRC will strengthen the programs offered, so our clients will receive better care and support.”

Both organizations provide services such as Meals on Wheels, transportation and home maintenance. Their goal is to assist seniors and adults with physical disabilities to live independent, active and meaningful lives.

“The WOCRC is delighted to be welcoming the former Nepean Support Services staff and volunteers to our team,” says Cathy Jordan, WOCRC Executive Director. “Please rest assured that the integration will be gradual and our aim is to have minimal impact on clients. As we move towards full integration, we will be looking for innovative ways to deliver Community Support Services.”

The Champlain Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) has provided ongoing support to this process with funding the initial feasibility review and they will continue to support the process by funding implementation costs. A key principle of this merger is that any cost-savings will be re-invested into client services.

During the special meeting, NSS also took the time to recognize the commitment and dedication of several individuals who had a great impact on the organization over the years.

Community Support Services are an important element to our health care system. There are many key benefits including: keeping people out of hospitals/log-term care, freeing up beds for the sick; respecting personal autonomy, dignity and independence; reducing stress and lowering the burden for families and primary caregivers.

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Background



Community Support Services

Community support services assist seniors, people with disabilities and individuals with special needs to remain comfortably and safely at home in their own communities. Community support is based on a firm philosophy that values friendly, caring and personalized service, in order to enhance self esteem and promote independence.

Community support services bring healthcare where it's needed most, helping people with disabilities, illness or limitations due to aging live independently. As an essential pillar of healthcare, community support services provides daily care and assistance in day-to-day living for people throughout the province.

The Ontario Community Support Association represents health care professionals focused on providing essential services for a wide range of needs in a progressive, modern manner.



The Ottawa Community Support Coalition consists of 19 organizations mandated to provide home-based community support services to seniors and adults with physical disabilities.



Nepean Support Services History

Nepean Support Services (formerly Nepean Seniors Home Support) began in November 1986 when the four churches in Bells Corners recognized a need for assistance to seniors at a reasonable cost. Beginning as a division of the West Nepean Ecumenical Projects Inc., Nepean Seniors Home Support was later incorporated in June of 1989. In January 1996, Nepean Meals on Wheels merged with Nepean Seniors Home Support. The Agency continues to expand services to meet the growing needs of the elderly and adults with physical disabilities in our community.

Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre History

The Kanata Community Resource Centre was established in 1986 by the Kanata Inter-Church Council and soon expanded their name to include Goulbourn & West Carleton. The WOCRC is one of 14 local Community Health and Resource Centres providing a wide range of services to residents living in Ottawa. They offer confidential programs and services for individuals of all ages living in Western Ottawa. WOCRC services include: Counselling, information and referral services; Services for children, youth and their families; Services for seniors & adults with physical disabilities; Violence against women services; Ontario Early Years Centre-Carleton; and community development.

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As featured in Transformation, the Champlain Local Health Integration Network electronic monthly newsletter.

<http://www.champlainhin.on.ca/Newsletter.aspx?id=38&tr=16&LangType=4105>

**Two Health Service Providers Opt for Voluntary Integration -
Community Support Services Exemplify Spirit of Cooperation**

Two health-service providers in Ottawa West will soon merge, aiming to improve access to care, increase scope of services, and obtain efficiencies.

The Boards of Directors of Nepean Support Services and Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre, as well as the Champlain LHIN Board, have approved the change. It begins on April 1, 2009. Called a ‘voluntary integration,’ this sort of initiative results in a better coordinated health system. The Champlain LHIN provided \$50,000 to help the two providers develop their model of integration.

The Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre was incorporated in 1986 and serves clients in Goulbourn, Kanata and West Carleton. Nepean Support Services, incorporated in 1989, reaches residents in the urban and rural areas of the former City of Nepean.

“Nepean Support Services began facing service capacity issues, and integration possibilities became more attractive,” explained Bob McGaraughty, president of that organization. “It became clear that the Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre was the best fit for us. We thank the Champlain LHIN for supporting us during this intensive process.”

Both organizations provide services such as Meals on Wheels, transportation, home maintenance and friendly visiting. Such services effectively reduce the rates of hospital visits and premature admissions to long-term care homes.

“Although we have separate histories, we have always shared a common objective: to assist seniors and adults with physical disabilities to live independent, active and meaningful lives, said Darryl Kicul, past chair of Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre. “We remain dedicated to this objective now that we are merging as one.”

A key principle of this project is that any cost savings will be re-invested into client services. Overall, there will be improved access to care through one bilingual phone number. The integration will result in one Board of Directors, one executive director, a stronger infrastructure (i.e. finance, human resources, information technology), and enhanced fundraising in the long run.

Next steps are to work through details for a smooth transition and engage stakeholders along the way. An evaluation plan will also be developed to ensure benefits to clients are being realized. The new agency will be called Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre.