

Health & Social Services

Does our community have sufficient access to health and social services?

We could do much better. Access to services was identified as one of the top three concerns in HCIA’s 2008 citizen survey. And evidence shows that Dufferin and Caledon are underfunded or underserved in some key health and social service areas.

As our population expands and as it ages, demand for such services is likely to increase. When health services are not readily available, either in terms of geographic access or within reasonable time frames, an individual’s ability to contribute economically and socially to community life is limited.

Successful Together. The Greater Dufferin Area Physician Search Committee and The Town of Caledon worked together to tackle physician shortages. In 2009, they were successfully awarded permission by the province for a 44% increase in the number of physicians allocated to the region as well as access to incentive programs to support recruitment efforts. Since then, Caledon has attracted five new doctors and Dufferin five new doctors.

Dufferin and Caledon fall within the Central West Local Health Integration Network (CWLHIN) – the lowest ranking LHIN in terms of per capita health spending overall. The Central West LHIN–Environmental Scan: Service Utilization Analysis, Sept. 2009, Appendix B

LHIN	Hospital	Community Mental Health	Addiction Services	Community Care Access Centre	Long Term Care
Central West (Dufferin/Caledon)	\$515.33	\$33.78	\$4.06	\$90.37	\$156.59
Waterloo Wellington	\$708.22	\$36.73	\$10.57	\$126.66	\$182.70
Toronto Central	\$2,732.37	\$75.32	\$19.15	\$150.53	\$190.69

Mental Health Dufferin and Caledon are among the most poorly funded areas for mental health and addiction services in Ontario¹, and lack psychiatric services. This is a significant problem given that nearly one in five Canadian adults will experience a mental illness in any given year² - the equivalent to 20,000 Headwaters residents.

Distribution of Physicians in 2011 - 28 doctors in Orangeville & South Dufferin, only 3 in North Dufferin (Shelburne, Melancthon, Amaranth, North Mono) - 25 doctors in Bolton, only 3 for the remainder of Caledon

Ratio of Physicians to Population		Medical Specialists (per 100,000)	
Provincial Standard	1:1380	Central West LHIN	43
Caledon	1:2037	Waterloo-Wellington	58
Dufferin	1:2231	Ontario	97

Supply, Distribution and Migration of Canadian Physicians, 2009, Dec 2010

¹Central West LHIN, Environmental Scan: Service Utilization Analysis, September 2009
²Health Canada. A Report on Mental Illnesses in Canada, 2002

Transportation Connected to the issue of access to services is the limited availability of public transportation in the Headwaters, a concern cited by many respondents to HCIA’s 2008 survey. In a rural community such as the Headwaters, getting to services, community events, or even the grocery store can be a real challenge for the elderly, youth, and those who do not have a vehicle. Transportation services are a deciding factor in whether individuals can remain in their home community when they lose access to a vehicle or the ability to drive.

>>If you want capacity, accessibility has to be in place; otherwise, it matters not what you build if the people who need the service cannot get to it. << Monty Laskin, Executive Director of Caledon Community Services



Attending to our Diversity Services that are available are not always used, especially when people don’t feel that their unique needs will be understood. Attending to diversity, such as language, culture, and sexual orientation, is important. The numbers of people living in our community who speak English as their second language, are part of a visible minority or are newly immigrated are steadily increasing, particularly in Caledon.

In Appreciation of Differences The Dufferin Diversity Network (DDN) is a network of organizations committed to building awareness and fostering inclusive practices that contribute to a cohesive and vibrant community. One of their awareness activities is the **Human-Living Library**. People of various diverse cultures or circumstances volunteer to be “living books”. Community members “sign out” a book of interest and – through conversation -- find out things about people from different cultures and life circumstances. Visit diversitydufferin.com to learn more.

Competing with the needs of larger urban centres to our south, Headwaters is at a disadvantage in accessing funds for health and social services, and the small pool available is divided by our municipal boundaries. Working together across organizations has resulted in creative solutions and strengthening the voice of our regional community.

- Orangeville is the only community in the Headwaters that supports a viable public transit system.
- Caledon Community Services (CCS) and Dufferin County Community Support Services provide transportation services to seniors and people with disabilities who rely heavily on volunteer drivers. In 2010, CCS provided 30,168 rides and Dufferin County Community Support Services provided 8,776 rides.

In what other ways can the health and social services within Dufferin and Caledon work together to fill service gaps? How can citizens make a difference?