



MEDIA RELEASE
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Promoting Kidney Health Through Early Screening – A Collaborative Hospital and Community Joint Venture

Chronic kidney disease is on the rise in Canada. In the Greater Toronto Area, it is estimated that end stage renal disease is increasing by 12 percent per year. The Scarborough Regional Dialysis Centre of the Scarborough Hospital is dialyzing over 700 patients and also following 3000 patients with chronic kidney disease. Considering the costly dialysis treatment of the disease, it adds heavily to the burden of the Ontario Health Care System.

Among the fourteen Local Health Integration Networks' (LHINs), Chronic Disease Prevention and Maintenance is identified as one of the top priority areas in their Integrated Health Service Plans. To that end, Central East LHIN has taken a leadership role in supporting and funding innovative collaborative project to pursue and mature the Chronic Kidney Disease Early Intervention and Outreach directional plan for implementation within its LHIN's boundary.

"We're excited about this project and the difference it is going to make in the lives of the health care professionals who deliver the services in the Central East LHIN and the local residents who are receiving these services," said Foster Loucks, Chair of the Central East LHIN Board of Directors. "We said that Chronic Disease Prevention and Management was a priority, and we are delivering on our promise through these types of trend setting initiatives."

Building on their expertise in serving the kidney patients and their experience in health promotion, The Scarborough Hospital, Carefirst Seniors and Community Services Association and The Kidney Foundation of Canada came together to form the Scarborough Collaborative Group to offer the Kidney Health Initiative for the communities in Scarborough. This initiative has a focus on an outreach component with a cultural competence to serve the diverse communities and a prevention strategy to tackle chronic kidney disease through the setting up of community screening mobile clinics to identify people at risk.

Dr Paul Tam, Medical Director of the Scarborough Regional Dialysis Program, said that the project would expect to identify about 6 to 8% of the screened participants who will be caught at stage 1 or stage 2 at its early onset of the renal function failure.

"This high risk group will be linked to proper resources for better management as to avoid fast deterioration of their renal function. Reaching out to the new immigrant community will be the project's priority as many of whom may not have access to family physicians and miss the opportunity of proper health screening," explained Tam.

The Collaborative announces the commencement of the Scarborough Kidney Health Initiative in a press conference today. Helen Leung, Executive Director of Carefirst highlighted that the project aims at screening about 1,500 to 2,000 persons per year through the set up of regular

screening clinics at five sites and other mobile clinics in various community locations in Scarborough. The screening will consist of a blood pressure and BMI measurements, a simple urine dip stick test, and a risk assessment questionnaire survey for the participants. Follow up measures are also being set up for those without family physicians.

“Bringing together the expertise of these three organizations, this project will help to prevent complex kidney disease,” explains Leung. “This benefits the patients, who will have better health through early management, and reduces costs to the healthcare system. We’re thrilled to be able to bring this program to our community.”

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"Engaged Communities. Healthy Communities"

Organization Information:

The Scarborough Hospital

The Scarborough Hospital (TSH), Canada’s largest urban community hospital, delivers innovative, high quality patient care, advocates for our community’s health and wellness issues, and is a leader in research, teaching and learning. TSH is a regional treatment centre for dialysis and is renowned for its sexual assault care centre and mental health programs. Affiliated with the University of Toronto, TSH is also a referral centre for vascular surgery, pacemakers and corneal implants.

Carefirst Seniors and Community Services Association

Carefirst is a charitable, not-for-profit social services organization with 32 years of history in providing quality community support services in the Greater Toronto Area and York Region. Carefirst has supported over 6,500 seniors and needy persons to live enriched, quality and independent life in the community every year through its comprehensive range of social, health care and community support services.

Carefirst’s services include a Family Health Team providing primary physician care and health education in Richmond Hill, York Region since 2007.

The Kidney Foundation of Canada

Since its creation in 1964, The Kidney Foundation of Canada has developed a roster of patient programs and invested more than \$80 million in kidney-related research. The Foundation assists those living with kidney disease, transplant and related medical disorders such as hypertension, diabetes, urinary tract infections and kidney stones. The Foundation’s services include a *Living with Kidney Disease* patient manual, Kidney CONNECT Peer Support Program, information and referral services and educational symposia.