

Ministry Responds to MAHC Pre-Capital Submission

(Friday, January 29, 2016, Muskoka, ON) – The Capital Planning Branch of the Ministry of Health & Long-Term Care has officially responded to the Pre-Capital Submission from Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare (MAHC).

MAHC's [Pre-Capital Submission](#) formalizes the unanimous direction of the MAHC Board of Directors to pursue one hospital, centrally located as the preferred model to ensure safe, high-quality services and sustainable hospital care in the future.

In May 2015, the Board endorsed the one-hospital model because it best meets the objective of providing high-quality, safe patient care that meets health care standards and protects the viability of core services with flexibility for growth. One hospital eliminates costly duplication of services within a financially sustainable model to build and operate. It creates a stable environment that attracts and retains doctors and sub-specialties and offers optimal working conditions that help to recruit the best staff.

MAHC's Pre-Capital Submission was endorsed by North Simcoe Muskoka LHIN (NSM LHIN) in October 2015 and was subsequently forwarded to the Ministry's Capital Planning Branch for review.

"In their written response, the Ministry raises some questions that we are responding to. They are requesting additional information around some of the utilization data in our submission and the proposed future changes or variances in patient volumes," says Natalie Bubela, Chief Executive Officer at MAHC. "With the clarification we are providing, we anticipate we will get their support to move into the Stage 1 planning phase."

The Ministry letter also references an expectation that MAHC's Stage 1 Submission will explore and evaluate both the option of a one-site model or continued operation on two sites, and a new build versus the renovation of the existing sites.

The Stage 1 Submission is the next step in the Ministry's capital redevelopment process where more detailed planning is required, such as a human resources plan, site selection and the local share plan detailing how the community portion of the capital build will be fundraised. The Stage 1 Submission also reflects components of the [Master Program and Master Plan](#), which MAHC has just completed in January 2016.

Bubela says MAHC is committed to continued engagement throughout the planning stages, in addition to the NSM LHIN-led task force of which MAHC is an active participant.

"We will continue to update our communities on our progress and look forward to more opportunities to engage with our staff, physicians and volunteers, our political leaders and our communities to refine the future model," she adds.

Once MAHC has received approval from the Ministry to proceed to next phase of planning, a steering committee will be formed to develop the Stage 1 Submission for review by the NSM LHIN and the Ministry's Capital Planning Branch.

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Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare (MAHC) is a multi-site health care organization providing acute care services at the Huntsville District Memorial Hospital and South Muskoka Memorial Hospital in Bracebridge. Find out more about Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare by visiting www.mahc.ca.

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