

**PRESS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE IN CRITICAL UNDERFUNDED STATE**

PETERBOROUGH, ON – Community healthcare in Ontario is in crisis as it struggles to recruit and retain health workers. The rapidly growing wage gap between primary care and other healthcare sectors is proven and the facts have been brought to light in the recent [Ontario Community Health Compensation Market Salary Review](#).

“For years, community healthcare has been ignored. There has been no wage increase for our clinical and administrative professionals in four years,” says Duff Sprague, chief executive officer of the Peterborough Family Health Team. “It is extremely detrimental to the health of Ontarians that primary care is left to fall apart. Ontarians already know about the severe and growing shortage of family doctors. They also need to know that years of frozen wages across primary care has resulted in a shrinking number of community-based healthcare professionals such as nurse practitioners, registered nurses/practical nurses, mental health clinicians, pharmacists, dietitians and physician assistants. Our community is fortunate that many of our Family Health Team professionals see primary care as their calling and have stayed with us despite the better-paying opportunities in other health settings.”

The market salary review takes an in-depth look at the most common positions working in primary care. Primary health care is the essential level of care where patients enter the healthcare system and we cannot afford to stand by and watch it collapse. The salary review shows some clinical positions as having a wage gap of 30% below market with most positions in the range of 20% below market value.

“The clinical and administrative staff at the Peterborough Family Health Team continue to go above and beyond in delivering services to our community. This, in the face of no increase in staffing and no compensation increases in over four years.” adds Sprague “I am personally grateful to the dozens of professionals on our Team, with other career options, who continue on in primary care despite falling so far behind in compensation.”

Sprague finishes with “A lot needs to change in Ontario’s healthcare system, starting with the front door to healthcare. Along with frozen wages, our base budget has not been increased in years making it increasingly difficult to cover rising overhead costs such as rent, medical supplies, IT upgrades, in short, basically keep the lights on. Family physicians and primary care teams are the foundation of our system and the first step in a person’s healthcare journey and if they’re gone, comprehensive primary healthcare is gone.”

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