

November 29, 2021

To the City of Hamilton's Truck Route Sub-Committee,

On behalf of staff, physicians, patients, families, volunteers and vendors accessing Hamilton General Hospital (HGH), I am writing in support of Environment Hamilton's delegation pertaining to heavy truck traffic along the Victoria Ave and Wellington St corridor.

Our hospital, as part of Hamilton Health Sciences (HHS), appreciates the City of Hamilton's ongoing engagement regarding safety matters within the HGH hospital zone and all of our sites. Throughout this dialogue, our message has been clear and consistent: the safety of patients, families, staff, physicians and other visitors to HGH is our top priority. Equally important is unrestricted access to the site in emergency situations, particularly for EMS vehicles.

HGH is the regional trauma centre and the busiest emergency department serving our community. Patients very often present in critical condition and every minute counts when it comes to their health outcomes. Increasingly, heavy truck traffic along these routes is presenting challenges to patients and partners accessing the site. All vehicle traffic contributes to this situation, but the sheer size of trucks impede maneuverability and often result in vehicles being stuck in place for more than one traffic light change. This challenges patients, but also our staff who are en route to the hospital to relieve other frontline health-care workers at the end of their shifts. Traffic back-ups along Victoria also restrict staff, physicians, patients and visitors from exiting the Victoria garage, causing delays and frustration for vehicles trying to merge onto the street.

Heavy truck traffic also presents a pedestrian and cyclist safety concern. Many of our staff and physicians park in hospital and municipal lots around the hospital zone, requiring them to cross either Wellington or Victoria, and Barton St. Heavy trucks understandably take extended periods to stop and require wide turning circles. It's not uncommon for a cluster of people heading to or from the hospital to be standing at these intersections, presenting endless opportunity for vehicle-related injury. This also pertains to cyclists accessing the bike path along Victoria Ave. Additionally, across Wellington from HGH, is the Ron Joyce Children's Health Centre, which is home to pediatric developmental programs serving children with autism, mental health concerns and rehabilitation needs. Families are often accessing the facility with children utilizing various mobility assistance devices which can result in slower reaction times to situations. The risk to these young people's safety when simply crossing the street is an ongoing concern expressed by many families.

Finally, heavy truck traffic adds noticeable discomfort for patients recovering in the hospital. Many patient rooms overlook Wellington St. The noise disseminating from heavy trucks driving, stopping and releasing air brakes is disruptive to patients resting

following procedures or those receiving treatments. Patients and their family members have also submitted complaints of diesel exhaust fumes in this area of the hospital. Our goal is to provide the best environment for patient recovery as well as the highest level of patient and family experience while in our care. These factors, which are beyond our control, limit our ability to achieve these goals for our patients.

Once again, we appreciate your engagement in this discussion and understand the many competing concerns and considerations the City must weigh in making its decision for heavy truck traffic in the HGH hospital zone. As always, HHS is open to further discussion and working together with the City and other stakeholders to find the best, safest solution to this situation.

Sincerely,



Vice-President, Adult Regional Care  
Hamilton Health Sciences