

Dr. Bob Kemp Hospice, Additional Information

Dr. Bob Kemp Hospice Foundation Inc. (DBKH) is a recognized leader in the provision of excellence in compassionate care, having operated 10 beds in the community for 15 years but whose service legacy spans three decades.

DBKH proposes to build a minimum 10-bed pediatric hospice in Hamilton, serving infants, children and youth with life limiting conditions and their families.

Hospice operations address an existing regional gap in services for children including standard of care offerings also provided by other provincial pediatric hospices such as:

- End-of life admissions
- Respite admissions (planned and urgent)
- Pain and symptom management admissions
- Day and outreach programming

The hospice will be operated by DBKH, with medical and other specialized support from McMaster Children’s Hospital. Other tertiary partnerships or relationships will be explored and considered as appropriate.

The proposed hospice will provide compassionate hospice palliative care services to a large, currently underserved population. McMaster’s service catchment is large and fast growing, currently 2.5 million Ontarians representing 500,000 infants, children, and youth. In other terms, this project will be impactful in over 29 ridings in the province.

At any given time at least 500 young people in this catchment could benefit from this hospice and related services. The Greater Hamilton region is one of the only communities in Canada which houses an elite pediatric hospital without corresponding pediatric specific hospice care.

Leading-edge work has taken place at McMaster Children’s Hospital and in the community during the past decade to develop a comprehensive pediatric palliative care service offering. In 2015, the hospital established the Quality of Life & Advanced Care program, the region’s specialist pediatric palliative care program. But still, even with this work, significant gaps remain. Children and families must often face an impossible decision, death in the home or in the hospital.

Both organizations have spent years in the planning and investment stage, and in the past year, trailblazing work has been undertaken in terms of governance and the pursuit of innovation, synergy, cost-efficiencies, and more equitable service to one of Ontario’s most vulnerable populations.