

# Changes in long term health care in West Elgin

By Ruth Ferguson

A meeting was held in Dutton recently to discuss a document entitled "Partnerships in Long Term Care, A new Way to Plan, manage and Deliver Services and Community Support." The government of Ontario began a public consultation process approximately two years ago order to gain, first hand, the public's concerns and opinions about long-term health care.

The meeting was broken into three parts basically. Cate Melito, Community Development Co-ordinator from the Long-Term Care Area Manager's office in London, was one of the key speakers. The

first section was feedback on the consultations held earlier and a brief overview of the policy. The reforms that are to be taken were then discussed and the meeting ended with the explanation of how the policy framework and reforms are going to be implemented and the role of the District Health Council.

The long-term care system is currently fragmented and urgently needs reform to make it more focussed, accessible, Flexible, efficient and cost effective. The province is now starting to work on solving the inequities and filling in the gaps in essential services.

The policy framework lists several principals and goals including the goal of integrating long-

term health care and social services and ensuring finding equity across the province. The system is striving to be more accessible and to better serve the people that need and use it. Trying to keep people healthy and in their homes and independent for as long as possible is another aim of the reforms.

The study was put together by three provincial departments: the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Community and Social Services and the Ministry of Citizenship.

An Elgin County Summary was also produced from the preliminary consultation meetings. Several areas of specific needs were identified including the support to family caregivers, community

support services, long-term facilities and the funding of long term care and support services. Specific needs for West Elgin were also noted including 911, transportation, information about available service and the need for community based services. Several other needs were also listed.

Creating community-based multi-service agencies is the first step towards this goal. Currently if someone is in need of support services, several separate organizations or agencies need to be contacted in order to obtain all of the needed services. The multi-service agency will co-ordinate several services so people only have to contact one

place instead of 3,4 or more.

The need for reform for Ontario's long-term health care system is long overdue. Other provinces have been using integrated service agencies and other such policies for the last 10 or 15 years. Reform in Ontario's system won't happen overnight but change is underway.

## New transit for seniors starting in new year

Jan. 1994

A committee of dedicated individuals has been working 2 years on a project to provide bus service for the seniors and disabled in the Four Counties General Hospital service area.

Early in the new year, Four Counties Community Transportation services will begin operation of a 15-passenger paratransit to provide general transportation services including travel for appointments, shopping visits etc. between the Four Counties Communities.

Transportation service will supplement the existing voluntary transit services already in operation and will include services for people in wheelchairs who might otherwise

not be serviced by the voluntary network.

The committee of interested people first began meeting at FCGH in December of 1991 to plan development of the services. Duncan McPhail, Deputy-Reeve from Aldborough was elected the chair of the committee and has put a great deal of effort into the project. The secretary of the committee is Jean Phillips of the Senior's Day Care and Health Support Program at FCGH.

The committee met with some officials from the Ministry of Transportation who would fund from 50 % to 75 % of a transit service for the elderly and handicapped. The rest of the money would have to come from the local municipalities in-

cluding local service clubs, public spirited individuals and from fees.

Early in the project approaches were made to all the Canadian Legions operating in the area. Some branches of the Legion pledged money very early and it became apparent that they would become a major sponsor of the project. Subsequently numerous presentations were made by Duncan McPhail, and Jean Phillips. Many other clubs in the area were also anxious to see such a project get on its feet and were willing to help out financially.

In May of 1993 the group was incorporated under the name Four Counties Community Transportation Services. Duncan McPhail, of Aldborough Township is the current chairman; Brian Morris, of

Glencoe is the vice chair; Hugh Palmer of R.R.#2 Florence is treasurer; Jean Phillips of FCGH is the secretary and Pam Page of Rodney and Reverend Clements of R.R.#3 Newbury are directors. All of the committee members have worked hard on the project and are very excited at the prospect that the organization will be in operation early in 1994.

The committee was delighted when a used van from Wallaceburg became available. Prior to that, the committee had been looking at new vans with a price range from \$50,000 - \$100,000. Although the committee was able to purchase the used van for \$4,000, thus saving a considerable amount of money.

Individuals that will be served by this new transportation are generally people who have difficulty boarding or operating regular vehicles. From studies from the Ministry of Transportation indicate that 3-5 % of the population is eligible to use this type of service in the Four Counties area. In total that would represent about 600 people. In the first year of operation, it is expected that the service will be used by approximately 200 passengers.

The service will be offered within the four county catchment area including the municipalities of Aldborough, Ekfrid, Glencoe, Mosa, Newbury, Wardsville, West Lorne, Rodney, Zone, Bothwell, Orford and Highgate.

Grand Opening Saturday, July 3, 1993.

## Dr. Rogers comes to West Lorne

By Ruth Ferguson

On July 5, the doors to the office of West Lorne's newest doctor's office will officially open.

Dr. Anna Rogers will be opening the Rogers Family Medical Clinic and has invited the public to stop by for coffee and donuts on Saturday, July 3, during the open house.

Dr. Rogers and her husband, Robert, began looking for a rural community where Anna could set up her practice. After checking out several different communities, they finally settled on West Lorne. Robert's grandmother grew up in this area and the Rogers' declared this the prettiest area that they looked at.

It took some time for them to find the right house where they would be able to live upstairs and have the practice on the main floor, and have enough room for people to park but they were able to find what they needed on Walker Street. While Anna looks after the patients, Robert will be running the office, and taking care of the administrative side of the business. She has applied for admitting privileges at Four Counties General Hospital.

Dr. Rogers has previously studied Journalism at Humber College in Toronto and did freelance work for the Globe and Mail. She then decided to pursue a medical degree and earned her honours degree in Microbiology and Biochemistry for the University of Toronto. Dr. Rogers did her internship at Victoria Hospital in London and has been

filling in at St. Joseph's Hospital for a few weeks because they were understaffed.

The Rogers' are really excited about moving to West Lorne and are planning on becoming a permanent part of the community.





#### The New Board of Directors

Heather Campbell, Rev. Ralph Fluit, Lori Withenshaw, Hazel Stalker, Charlie Black, Graham Warwick, Diane Reno-Prezeau, Martin Joldersma, Maria Olivera, Jim Smith, Linda Armstrong, Albert Ford.

## NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTED FOR CHC

West Elgin Community Health Centre held its first Annual General Meeting at the Elgin International Club on November 29, 1993. It was attended by 56 people.

James A. Smith, Chairman of the Board, called the meeting to order and appointed Charles I. Black to Chair the meeting. The first major item of business was the approval, ratification and confirmation of the bylaws of the Corporation. Mr. Black explained that there are two bylaws. One provides for the organizational structure and general administrative and operational procedures of West Elgin CHC while the other

permits the CHC to borrow money.

Once the meeting was duly constituted, Mr. Smith presented his report. Copies of it can be obtained from the CHC office. This was followed by a presentation to retiring directors, Betty Johnston and Harry Mezenberg. Mrs. Johnston and Mr. Mezenberg were both on the initial Steering Committee for the CHC. Certificates of appreciation were also presented to John Asidak, former Secretary and Treasurer of the Board and Pan Page, former Chair of the board.

Martin Joldersma presented the Treasurer's Report.

The firm of Gordon Hardcastle Chartered Accountants was reappointed as auditors of the Corporation of West Elgin Community Centre.

Harry Mezenberg presented the Building Committee Report. He stated that the renovation plans for the CHC have been submitted to the Ministry of Health for approval. In the mean time, the architect is proceeding with the prequalification of contractors. Mr. Mezenberg said he looks forward to opening the renovated building next spring.

Heather Anne Campbell presented the report of the Executive Director. She

highlighted many of CHC's recent accomplishments and thanked the Board and her staff for their support, commitment and assistance. She stated that the Ministry of Health has recently approved the budget of the CHC and that the Board is very pleased with the outcome of the budget negotiation process.

One of the highlights of the evening was the presentation of the Report of the Nominating Committee by Lorne Carroll. Five Directors were returned for a one year term including: Charles I. Black, Martin Joldersma, James A. Smith, Hazel Stalker and Graham Warwick.

Six new Directors were also elected for two year terms including: Linda Armstrong, Albert Ford, Rev. Ralph Fluit, Maria Oliveira, Diana Reno-Prezeau and Lori Withenshaw. There were no nominations from the floor.

The formal part of the business was concluded with a presentation of the CHC concept by Executive Director Heather A. Campbell. She talked about the four principles that govern CHCs--accessibility, a comprehensive approach to health care, an emphasis on wellness, health promotion and disease prevention and empowerment of individuals and communities.





The West Elgin Community Health Centre is scheduled to open for business on August 2, 1994. Staff members include, front row, left to right: Dawn Maziak, Social Worker; Heather Anne Campbell, Executive Director; and Donna Lunn, Health Promotion Coordinator. Middle row, left to right: Paula Alves, Receptionist/Records Clerk; Rob Taylor, Chiroprapist (Foot Specialist); Joy Scafe, Registered Practical Nurse; and Anita Hazelwood, Administrative Assistant. Back row, left to right: Bob Logan, Reception/Records Clerk; Shirley Kosky, Dietician; Joanne Opsteen, Nurse Practitioner; and Stephen Jones, Family Physician. Rob Taylor works at Parkwood Hospital in London and will be at the Health Centre on a part time basis. Shirley Kosky works with the Elgin-St. Thomas Health Unit and will also be at the Health Centre on a part time basis. *(Mercury-Sun photo)*

*Congratulations*

*Best Wishes  
to*

 **West Elgin COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE**



The logo for West Elgin Community Health Centre was created by Mr. Graham Warwick, Vice-Chairman, Board of Directors.

It features a simple circle of people which symbolizes family, community and caring. The circle is open reflecting a reaching out and acceptance of others. The schematics, while simple, convey immediately the Community Health Centre's emphasis on people, the importance of balance and the interdependence of all facets of health and well being.



by Jerry Morrow

The new West Elgin Community Health Centre that opened in West Lorne this week may become a model for similar centres in the rest of the province.

While there are 53 community health centres in Ontario, most are located in urban areas to meet urban problems. The new centre here is one of five being developed with a specific mandate to serve the needs of the rural population.

"It's exciting that we can develop a model here to provide service to rural areas and be able to provide leadership to others,"

Executive Director Heather Anne Campbell says.

The community health centre concept is something new to this part of the province. It's a doctor's office "with a twist. We believe that a person doesn't always need to see a physician - that other health professionals are equally skilled at diagnosis and treatment," she explains.

Health and social needs can be intermixed, Campbell says. She uses as an example a young, single mother who is having trouble sleeping. Rather than a doctor prescribing sleeping pills, a discussion determines she

is having trouble making ends meet.

The woman can't sleep because by the time she pays her rent, there isn't enough money left for food and clothing for her children. This is where the centre's social worker could step in to help find food, look for less expensive housing and other assistance.

"We look at the whole person, not just the symptoms," Campbell says. "We look for the underlying reasons for the symptoms."

While the centre has one doctor on staff, it also has a nurse-practitioner and other health professionals. The

staff will take a team approach to problems and Campbell expects a number available.

of other related agencies to operate out of the center on a part-time basis.

"There are still people who are not sure what we're about," she says. That's why the public was invited in for an open house tour last week. A grand opening won't be held until later this fall.

It's taken more than two years to get the centre up and running. The concept was suggested by the Ministry of Health when the area was "struggling to more than \$250,000 began

in March to convert the former PUC office and warehouse into the centre attract primary care physicians," Campbell says.

Major renovations that cost that exists today. The staff began working even before that, offering a variety of programs ranging from dealing with grief to CPR training that started in January.

One of the centre's ideas that may take getting used to is empowerment. Rather than being at the mercy of the professionals, they will give you the information you need to make an informed decision for yourself.

The centre will offer

programs, but they will be programs people want and ask for. "This is their community health centre. Their opinions and ideas count," Campbell says.

The executive director believes in the ideas behind the health centre concept and she took the job here because "the people on the board genuinely want to make a difference." In urban areas, she says board membership can be useful on a resume.

"It's been exciting to take this from a concept on paper to what you see today," she says. "It's given me a chance to put my money where my mouth is."