

Southlake Run crosses half-million mark as Hospital looks to future



It was a milestone 48 hours for Southlake Health as the annual Nature's Emporium Run for Southlake achieved its long-held goal of raising \$500,000 for local health care, while plans for a new hospital campus in East Gwillimbury were formalized by the Province.

The Provincial Government announced a \$10 million investment to advance plans for Southlake's new acute care hospital in East Gwillimbury, located near Queensville.

Services at the new campus are projected to include expanded acute and post-acute care, including medicine, surgery, orthopedics, rehabilitation, maternal and child health, paediatric mental health, increased inpatient capacity, and a new emergency department.

The current Southlake campus in Newmarket, which provided a backdrop to Sunday's exceptional fundraising run, which had raised \$507,229.78 and counting at press time this week, will be renovated and modernized, according to the Province, with a plan that includes more inpatient and emergency capacity.

"Today marks a defining moment for Southlake Health as we take a major step forward in transforming care across northern York Region and southern Simcoe County," said Paul Woods, President & CEO of Southlake Health in a statement. "The Government of Ontario's investment and endorsement of our vision to build a Distributed Health Network will create a more integrated, sustainable local healthcare system for generations to come. We are grateful to Premier Ford, Minister Jones, and all our Provincial and municipal partners for their leadership. Together, we will continue to deliver leading-edge care close to home."

In turn, Premier Doug Ford said the investment in Southlake's future is part of a \$64 billion plan to build and upgrade more than 50 hospitals Ontario-wide.

"With today's announcement of a new, state-of-the-art hospital in East Gwillimbury and the redevelopment of Southlake Health in Newmarket, we're ensuring that people in York Region and Simcoe County have reliable access to world-class care for generations to come."

Added Minister of Health Sylvia Jones: "Our government is making historic investments to protect Ontario's health care system, ensuring people of all ages can connect to the care they need, no matter where they live. This investment for a new hospital and redeveloped facilities at Southlake Health is another important step in building a stronger health care system in York Region and Simcoe County that will connect more people and families to the care they need."

The Ministry of Health will continue to work with Southlake to complete early planning for the new hospital campus, including determining bed numbers and square footage.

The latest chapter in Southlake's story, which is more than a century-long, was received enthusiastically by local leaders at all levels of government.

"Southlake Health has long been a pillar of our community ? providing compassionate, high-quality care to families across Newmarket, Aurora, and the broader York Region and South Simcoe area," said Newmarket-Aurora MPP Dawn Gallagher Murphy. "Today's announcement is the result of years of strong local advocacy and I am proud to see that work translate into real progress for our residents. With this new hospital in East Gwillimbury and the redevelopment of Southlake Health, we are ensuring that patients across the Region will have better access to modern, state-of-the-art [facilities] to provide that care closer to home. This investment will allow Southlake to continue growing and delivering for our community and its entire catchment area ? now and for generations to come."

Added King-Vaughan MPP Stephen Lecce: "After opening the state-of-the-art Cortellucci Vaughan Hospital, our government is investing in another net-new hospital for families in King and Vaughan. This new hospital, along with redevelopment of existing Southlake infrastructure, will deliver better health care closer to home."

The history of care Southlake has provided to the community over nearly 104 years was recognized by York Region Chair Eric Jolliffe, who said he was "pleased to see the longstanding commitment to health and wellbeing continue and now expand into the Town of East Gwillimbury, reflecting our shared dedication to ensuring families and patients ? today and for generations to come ? have access to the care they need, close to home."

The future will reflect the rapid growth that continues to be seen in York Region and South Simcoe. Aurora Mayor Tom Mrakas said more access to high-quality care was "long needed" and Monday's announcement was a "huge step forward" for healthcare.

"I want to thank the Government of Ontario, the dedicated and compassionate team at Southlake Health, and the generous community members who have been critical in this process," he said. "You're helping deliver the healthcare people need closer to where they are."

Added King Township Mayor Steve Pellegrini: "Access to health care touches every family, and growing pressure on our health system means we must plan regionally and proactively. King Township is appreciative that the nearby Town of East Gwillimbury has been selected as the second hospital site for Southlake Health, and we thank the Provincial government for investing in solutions that address capacity and overflow across northern York Region. Southlake is internationally-recognized and a leader in cardiac and cancer care, providing advanced, life-saving treatments close to home. This expansion will ease pressure on emergency departments, improve access to care and deliver real healthcare benefits for King Township residents and neighbouring communities."

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