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Three leading paediatric health-care centres launch Kids Health Alliance

New partnership created by SickKids, Holland Bloorview and CHEO – OCTC aims to provide better access to high quality, coordinated care for children and youth

TORONTO – Three of Ontario’s largest paediatric health-care providers launched a new partnership called Kids Health Alliance, today. Founded by The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids), Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital (Holland Bloorview) and the Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario – Ottawa Children’s Treatment Centre (CHEO – OCTC), the partnership aims to strengthen our regions’ paediatric health system by improving access to more coordinated, consistent, high-quality care for children, youth and their families.

“Kids who face illness, injury or disability rely on a complex network of providers that involve hospitals, home and school environments, as well as a spectrum of publicly funded and unfunded community services,” says Dr. Michael Apkon, president and CEO of SickKids. “Kids Health Alliance will help facilitate a coordinated approach to care and support a holistic view of each patient’s needs and experiences.”

Over time, Kids Health Alliance will evolve to include other paediatric health-care providers, including community hospitals, paediatricians, rehabilitation services, home health agencies, mental health services, and other service providers, who all share a common goal of improving the health of children and youth in Ontario. Markham Stouffville Hospital is the first community hospital to join Kids Health Alliance. President and CEO, Jo-anne Marr participated in the launch this morning.

Kids Health Alliance will benefit families like that of Ottawa’s Matthew Paravan, 10, who has spent time in all three hospitals. Matthew’s story is a complicated one in which a neurological condition rapidly progressed from the time of his first seizures when he was six. It took him from his life as an active healthy little boy playing hockey to one where he can’t walk or speak but is clearly aware of and engaged in the world around him.

“What I hope for from Kids Health Alliance is a true collaboration between facilities, families, physicians and other professionals involved in children’s care,” says Stephanie Paravan, Matthew’s mother. “This partnership can be so helpful, not only in the amount of time it will save parents, but also for the safety of our children and knowing, for example, that accurate information is being shared quickly and directly with the people who are making major decisions for our children’s care.”

Kids Health Alliance will not only benefit patients with complex needs like Matthew. In Ontario, the number of children and youth under 18 is projected to increase by 600,000 by 2041. Due to illness or injury, many of these children and youth may at some point need to see more than one health-care provider. Ensuring timely access to health care and improving the short- and long-term health of children and youth are priorities for Kids Health Alliance.

“In the coming months, we’re excited to bring together our teams and stakeholders in children’s health care to explore what we can achieve as partners,” says Julia Hanigsberg, president and CEO of Holland Bloorview. “Early opportunities include developing and deploying best practices in clinical care, and sharing specialized paediatric resources and expertise across our regions.”

Areas of potential collaboration include:

- Improving quality of care and safety by embedding best clinical practices and principles of high reliability organizations
- Improving access to quality care closer to home by building and distributing capacity across Kids Health Alliance
- Enhance the coordination of health-care delivery by creating consistent approaches to connecting along the continuum of care.
- Making transitions easier when patients are transferred from one health-care provider to another
- Improving access to health records through shared technology platforms
- Driving innovation through collaborative research and education

“As three of Ontario’s biggest providers of specialized care for children and teens, it only makes sense that we join together to drive the kind of real change that will advance the health of kids in this province,” says Alex Munter, president and CEO of CHEO – OCTC. “The impact will be seen in real terms: healthier kids and a better overall healthcare experience for families.”

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care is supporting Kids Health Alliance with \$1.3 million to extend our expertise into the community, by funding specialized doctor and nurse educators who will work with participating community hospitals to enhance the delivery of paediatric care. “The Kids Health Alliance is Patients First in action. We want a system where repetition is avoided, pathways are streamlined, navigation is simple, care is coordinated and consistent,

and patients always feel like their needs are the top priority. That’s exactly what SickKids, CHEO – OCTC and Holland Bloorview are doing with Kids Health Alliance and that’s why we’re happy to support this partnership,” says Dr. Eric Hoskins, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

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About Kids Health Alliance

Kids Health Alliance is a network founded by The Hospital for Sick Children, Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital and the Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario – Ottawa Children’s Treatment Centre to achieve a more coordinated, consistent, high-quality system of care for children, youth and their families.

Over time, Kids Health Alliance will evolve to include other paediatric health-care providers, including community hospitals, paediatricians, rehabilitation services, home health agencies, mental health services, and other service providers, who share a common goal to build a stronger, more coordinated health-care system – with the ultimate goal of improving the health of children and youth.

About The Hospital for Sick Children

The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids) is recognized as one of the world’s foremost paediatric health-care institutions and is Canada’s leading centre dedicated to advancing children’s health through the integration of patient care, research and education. Founded in 1875 and affiliated with the University of Toronto, SickKids is one of Canada’s most research-intensive hospitals and has generated discoveries that have helped children globally. Its mission is to provide the best in complex and specialized child and family-centred care; pioneer scientific and clinical advancements; share expertise; foster an academic environment that nurtures health-care professionals; and champion an accessible, comprehensive and sustainable child health system. SickKids is proud of its vision for *Healthier Children. A Better World*. For more information, please visit www.sickkids.ca. Follow us on Twitter (@SickKidsNews) and Instagram (@SickKidsToronto).

About Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital

Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital is Canada’s largest children’s rehabilitation hospital and cares for kids with disabilities and medical complexity, and provides rehabilitation after illness or trauma. Fully affiliated with the University of Toronto, Holland Bloorview serves nearly 7,500 children and youth annually accounting for over 1,000 unique diagnoses. Holland Bloorview is a global leader in disability research, teaching, and client- and family-centered care. Holland Bloorview pioneers treatments, technologies, therapies and real-world programs that give kids with disabilities the tools to participate fully in life. For more information visit hollandbloorview.ca

About CHEO – OCTC

The Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario – Ottawa Children’s Treatment Centre (CHEO –OCTC) is the leading provider of specialized pediatric health services in Canada's capital. [CHEO](#)’s programs help over 500,000 children and youth each year in Eastern Ontario, Western Quebec, Nunavut and parts of Northern Ontario. As a world-class research centre and teaching hospital, for over 40 years CHEO has changed young lives in our community, while our innovations change young lives around the world. For more than 65 years, [OCTC](#) has been providing specialized care for children and youth with disabilities, including cerebral palsy, complex needs associated with congenital conditions, developmental delay, autism spectrum disorders and brain injury. The two previously separate organizations recently joined forces to become one organization, stronger together for kids and families.

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