

Graduated Closure of Ajax Youth Walk-In Medical Clinic

Many of our team members will recall that on October 2, 2017, we expanded service at our Ajax site to serve people of all ages. (For those of you who are *new* to our team, prior to October 2017 the Ajax team served *only* youth and transitional-aged youth between the ages of 13-29).

Over the course of the summer of 2017, the Ajax team met regularly to: (1) assess the impact to then-current youth services and (2) determine the requirements (people, processes, technology etc.) that were needed to successfully transition Ajax Clinical Services to serve clients across their lifespan by October 2, 2017.

At the time of that change, the *Medical Services Team* (MST) members, along with their “buddies” on the Administrative Support Team (AST), were also directed to begin “rostering” all clients – including youth clients – to a “most responsible provider”, while each provider worked with their clients to help them understand that Carea would be responsible for their *entire* health care needs...according to patient safety concerns and best-practices.

In order to provide some accommodation for our many legacy Ajax youth clients, the MST, with the support of management and leadership, elected to *temporarily* continue to run a *Youth Walk-In Clinic* (Medical) for “current registered Carea clients ages 13-29”. At that time, Paula produced signs that were placed on the door and in the waiting room to advise youth clients of the change. Paula also sent a both a staff announcement and public press release October 2, 2017 to advise our Carea team and the community.

Today, we are announcing that as of September 3, 2019, Carea will be closing the *Youth Walk-In Clinic* (Medical). While, we were fortunate to maintain these walk-in hours for youth for almost two years, the walk-in has evolved in a direction where it was under-utilized by legacy youth clients and was becoming a *defacto* acute care service (for which Carea is not funded). Medical Secretaries also noted the increased frequency of adult clients coming to Ajax from Carea’s Oshawa and Pickering location to be seen when they could not get an appointment with their Carea provider.

Brent will be working with Paula on signage for Ajax and an information leaflet to provide Carea clients including a list of local walk-in clinics. This will provide Carea clients with 11-weeks of advance notice.

Over the next several weeks, a working group is meeting on a project that has a larger mandate: to establish a best-practice for scheduling at Carea. One outcome of this project is to *increase* the number of available, same-day appointments to accommodate clients who have more urgent – but non-emergency, non-crisis needs. It is our goal to continue to find innovative way to *increase* accessibility to timely care for our valued clients.