



November 7 2006.

Ms. Marlene Awad,  
Director, Administration and Information Management  
Regional Geriatric Program of Toronto  
Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre  
2075 Bayview Ave., H478  
Toronto, Ontario M4N 3M5

We are pleased to have been a part of the Geriatric Emergency Management ( GEM) Initiative and are providing this letter of support to advocate for the continuation of the GEM program.

We recognize that the need is great and our GEM nurse is only one person: However, this role has benefited the health of seniors who use our health care facility in many ways.

- The development of stronger linkages with the community has assisted the Emergency program to make the transition back to home, LTC or Retirement Home a much smoother one for our seniors.
- Our GEM nurse has been instrumental in providing education to staff internally and externally related to the special needs of the elderly.
- Early intervention in the Emergency by our GEM nurse has contributed to admission avoidance and improved discharge planning.
- The development of partnerships with inpatient teams has facilitated the internal patient care process and in many cases has provided those teams with the pre-admission data necessary to create a realistic care plan.
- In this community as in many, we are seeing increased numbers of seniors challenged by scarce resources and a reduced ability to navigate the health care system. In a fast-paced environment such as the ED, our GEM nurse is often the only one with the time and skills to develop the relationship with our seniors, understand their complex needs and advocate on their behalf.

St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton and its Emergency Services look forward to a continued partnership.

Sincerely,

Ida Porteous,  
Director Clinical Services

Dr. Agostino Bellissimo  
Medical Director, Emergency Services

Cc: Winnie Doyle, Vice President Clinical Services and Chief Nursing Executive  
Dr. Kevin Smith, CEO, St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton



# London Health Sciences Centre

Neil Johnson  
Integrated Vice President Medicine  
Services  
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October 23, 2006

Ms. Marlene Awad  
Director, Administration & Information Management  
Regional Geriatric Program of Toronto  
Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre  
2075 Bayview Ave., H478  
Toronto, ON M4N 3M5

Ms. Awad:

I am pleased to provide a letter of support for the Geriatric Emergency Management (GEM) Project. The Emergency Department (ED) at London Health Sciences Center, University Hospital has been fortunate to have a GEM Nurse in place since April 2004. This role has been instrumental in identifying the frail elderly who often present with multiple and complex problems and in increasing the capacity of the ED staff to deal with this population.

Feedback from service providers, long-term care homes, other key stakeholders and patients indicates that both clients and staff are very satisfied with the services provided by the GEM Nurse and that the quality of care delivered to this vulnerable population in this setting has improved.

The GEM Project benefits the hospital in many ways. Patient needs are being addressed in a timely manner by appropriate staff and patient flow within the ED has improved. In addition, the GEM Project has led to improved communication with area and regional family physicians, long-term care and retirement homes, Community Care Access Centres and the community.

This is a very valuable initiative that is sure to change the way EDs address the needs and concerns of the frail elderly in Ontario. The sustainability of this program is vital to the provision of excellent care to the frail elderly and I would encourage further growth of this initiative to additional health care facilities.

Sincerely,

Neil Johnson  
Integrated Vice President  
Medicine Services  
London Health Science Centre  
University Hospital  
339 Windermere Road, PO Box 5339  
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KINGSTON  
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2006 October 24

Marlene Awad  
Director, Administration & Information Management  
Regional Geriatric Program of Toronto  
Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre  
2075 Bayview Ave., H478  
Toronto, ON  
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Dear Ms. Awad,

We are pleased to provide a letter of support for the Geriatric Emergency Management (GEM) Program.

The implementation of this program has provided timely, targeted geriatric assessment of at risk seniors in the emergency department. It has also enhanced linkages with community partners to promote suitable disposition planning for the frail elderly.

The GEM nurse has been able to raise the bar of gerontological expertise in the emergency setting, but there is still ample room for improvement. Emergency care providers need to better understand the complex physical and cognitive health issues in the geriatric patient population.

The GEM initiative has been recognized as a valuable addition to our community health care as evidenced by the favourable media coverage in our region.

We look forward to the continuation, and hopefully expansion of the GEM initiative.

Sincerely,

Pam Devine  
Program Operational Director  
Emergency Program

Dr. Paul Dungey  
Program Medical Director  
Emergency Program

\*cs

October 30, 2006

Ms Marlene Awad  
Director, Administration & Information Management  
Regional Geriatric Program of Toronto  
Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre  
2075 Bayview Avenue, H478  
Toronto, ON M4N 3M5

Dear Ms. Awad:

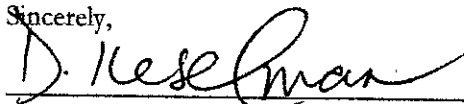
I am pleased to provide a letter of support for the Geriatric Emergency Management (GEM) Program. Support of this program and the work of the GEM nurse is crucial, to promote the continued development of a successful alliance with the LTC sector and community agencies. The program also supports the alignment with the LHINs strategic direction to focus on the provision of quality care to seniors and improve their well-being.

The GEM Nurse is instrumental in promoting and enhancing medical intervention, averting unnecessary admissions, increasing awareness and improving care to the elderly. In addition, the GEM Nurse provides support and education to the ER nurse and physician staff while implementing and planning for hospital wide senior friendly programs. Examples of these programs are falls prevention, least restraint policy the implementation of P.I.E.C.E.S., increased awareness for wound and skin problems and geriatric sensitivity and knowledge.

The GEM Nurse works closely with the geriatricians and provides guidance and assistance in the treatment of the elderly and their families. Furthermore, the GEM Nurse works closely with the wound and skin team, and participates in the Geriatric Assessment Clinic.

Clearly the GEM program and its mandate is aimed at improved patient care, admission avoidance, establishment of successful alliances, while increasing awareness as it relates to elder care, is an important venue for the achievement of quality elder care. I greatly support the continuation of the GEM program and respectfully request a consideration be given to funding a second position to be assisted at the Humber River Regional Hospital, Church site Emergency Department. I commend the RGP on this initiative and look forward to continued partnership in the future.

Sincerely,



David Keselman, RN, BScN, MN  
Program Director  
Acute Medicine, Emergency Services & Family Practice

cc: J. deLacy, VP – Patient Services  
M. Czaus, Chief Nursing Officer

amb:DK

**Humber River**  
REGIONAL HOSPITAL

November 1, 2006

Church Street Site 200  
Church St. Weston,  
Ontario M9N 1N8

Ms Marlene. Awad  
Director, Administration & Information Management  
Regional Geriatric Program of Toronto Sunnybrook  
Health Sciences Centre  
2075 Bayview Avenue, H478  
Toronto, ON M4N 3M5

tel. (416) 249-8111

Dear Ms. A wad:

I am pleased to provide a letter of support for the Geriatric Emergency Management Program. Humber River Regional Hospital had over 100,000 ER visits last year and is experiencing an increase of about 7% in ER volumes this time over last year. Consequently, the number of elderly patients requiring specialized geriatric services increased.

The GEM Program would potentially enhance the flow of elderly patients through the ER and reduce the number of senior admissions to the hospital. It is evident that this program has been well received by the staff and physicians within the hospital, but also by the community serviced by HRRH, as it continue to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of our healthcare and elder care system.

Beyond operational benefits, the GEM role is also an opportunity for the ER staff and physicians, as well as the corporation as a whole, to show its ability to provide complex care to a fragile population. As it is well known, the ER tends to be fast-paced with only minimal time for each patient. This program would enhance these shortcomings and allow the GEM practitioner a greater flexibility to devote more time and attention to those seeking geriatric services.

I support the continuation of the GEM Program and would like to suggest extending the service to both of our emergency departments which will result in an additional position for the Church site ER.

Sincerely,

Rueben Devlin  
President & CEO  
Humber River Regional Hospital



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Rouge Valley Ajax and Pickering  
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September 20, 2006

Ms Marlene Awad  
Director, Administration & Information Management  
Regional Geriatric Program of Toronto  
Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre  
2075 Bayview Ave., H478  
Toronto, ON M4N 3M5

I am pleased to provide a letter of support for the Geriatric Emergency Management (GEM) Program. Implementation of this program has resulted in the continued development of successful alliances with the LTC sector, Retirement Homes and Community Agencies both within and outside our catchment area. The shared goal of promoting senior health in the community has been the catalyst. The GEM Nurse at RVHS has been instrumental in promoting enhanced medical intervention in selected nursing homes e.g. fluid management and palliative care and in feeding tube assessments. These initiatives and others have resulted in a demonstrated reduction in transfers to hospital.

Internally, the GEM nurse has developed screening and assessment tools and experiences a 30% referral rate from staff. She has educated hospital and physician staff in the management of the geriatric population and available resources and this has resulted in a reduction in admission rates.

Our GEM nurse has been well received but is only able to service a portion of those clients in need given she is one person. I support continuation of the GEM program and respectfully request consideration be given to funding a second position to be sited at the Rouge Valley Ajax and Pickering.

Clearly the GEM Program has resulted in improved patient care, admission avoidance, and the establishment of successful alliances. I congratulate the RGP on this initiative and look forward to a continued partnership in this area.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hume Martin", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Hume Martin  
President & CEO

cc: N. Bubela, VP, Programs & Support Services, RVHS  
M. Charlebois, VP Professional Practice & Chief Nursing Executive, RVHS

Tom Atkins,  
Chair, Board of Directors

Hume Martin, *MHSc., CHE*  
President & CEO  
[www.rougevalley.ca](http://www.rougevalley.ca)

Dr. Naresh Mohan, *MBBS FRCS(C)*  
Chief of Staff

October 10, 2006

Ms. Marlene Awad  
Director, Administration & Information Management  
Regional Geriatric Program of Toronto  
Sunnybrook Health Science Centre  
2075 Bayview Ave., H478  
Toronto, ON  
M4N 3M5

As the medical director of emergency department, I am delighted to provide a letter of support for the Geriatric Emergency Management (GEM) Program. This program has made a tremendous impact on senior care in our community.

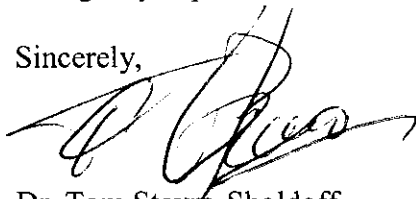
RVHS Centenary Site has 48,000 ER visitors last year, of which 11.8% were seniors over age 74. Around 35% of the senior visitors were referred to the GEM nurse either by an ED nurse, inpatient or outpatient units, ED physicians, hospital specialists, staff in the community geriatric services, and external stakeholders. More than 1000 of the referred seniors received either a face-to-face assessment or a follow-up telephone assessment by the GEM nurse. The remaining referred seniors were followed up either by internal services or by external community services. The need for the GEM service is overwhelming.

The GEM program has enhanced the flow of elderly patient through ER and reduced the number of senior admission to hospital. It is evidenced that this program has not only well received by the staff within hospital and also in the community. It continues to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of our health care system.

Beyond operational benefits, the GEM role is also an opportunity to show ER's more compassionate side. For practical reasons, ER tends to be a very fast-paced, acute environment, allowing minimal time to interact with clients and understand the client's mental, social and emotional well-being. The GEM nurse is able to spend more time to care for each client, and thus able to provide holistic care.

I support the continuation of the GEM program and would like to suggest extending this service to all emergency departments. I am looking forward the extension of this initiative.

Sincerely,



Dr. Tom Stavro-Sholdoff  
Medical Director of Emergency Department

cc Maureen Charlebois  
VP, Professional Practice and  
Chief Nursing Executive

**JOHN J. PETO MD FRCPC** GERIATRIC MEDICINE

Suite 302, The Court, 2863 Ellesmere Rd., Scarborough, Ontario M1E 5E9 Telephone 281-0025 Fax: 416-281-0026

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October 4, 2006

Ms. Marlene Awad  
Director Administration & Information Management  
Regional Geriatric Program Toronto  
Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre  
2075 Bayview Ave.  
H478 Toronto, Ontario  
M4N 3M5

Dear Ms. Awad:

I would like to provide more information about the GEM Nurse Program at RVHS. Clara Tsang has been with us for a while now and her impact on patient care has been truly spectacular.

She sees patients in the Emergency Department, follows them up with community agencies as well as long-term care facilities.

She is instrumental in providing referral to the geriatric consultation team (GCT) in house. This pilot has now been permanently funded partly due to her efforts.

She is coming up with imaginative pathways to assist management to complex patients in the community. She is prepared to do site visits as well to promote the educational aspect of patient management. She is deeply involved in the feeding tube programs at several of our long-term care facilities and has just revised the protocol making tube replacement more accessible to patients.

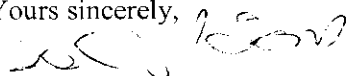
As you are aware, statistics are being collated about her activities and the benefit she provides for Rouge Valley Health System.

It is a pleasure working with her. She volunteered to participate in the steering committee of the Seamless Care for Seniors network of the Central East LHIN. As chairman of the committee, I am very happy to be able to call upon her expertise in development of various projects.

She was already involved in the development of the IHSP draft being submitted to the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care as of the end of October.

Her professionalism is laudable. It's a pleasure working with her both as a geriatrician as well as a member of the Central East LHIN. We greatly appreciate her ongoing involvement in patient care at RVHS.

Yours sincerely,



John J. Peto, MD, FRCPC  
Chief of Geriatric Medicine  
Rouge Valley Health System  
JP/gc

October 23, 2006



Ms. Marlene Awad,  
Director Administration & Information Management,  
Regional Geriatric Program of Toronto,  
Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre,  
2075 Bayview Ave., H478  
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Dear Ms. Awad,

I am pleased to provide a letter of support for the Geriatric Emergency Management (GEM) Program. St. Michael's Hospital has an inner city health designation with a focus on vulnerable populations, which includes frail seniors. The implementation of the GEM program at St. Michael's Hospital has led to improved risk screening of frail elders in the emergency department which has resulted in earlier identification of key issues and therefore improved patient outcomes and discharge planning for both discharged and admitted patients through the GEM nurse assessment.

Early assessment and planning has led to improved communication and flow with services such as internal medicine.

The GEM program has resulted in the development of successful external partnerships with CCAC, LTC homes, family practice, community agencies such as street health and Toronto Public Health as well as internal partnerships with internal medicine, geriatric services and psychiatric emergency services.

The implementation of the GEM program, with the associated educational and program planning activities, has also resulted in increased awareness of the needs of the frail elderly both within the emergency department and the organization as a whole.

The GEM program has clearly resulted in improved patient care, program planning for frail seniors as well as the establishment of several successful partnerships at St. Michael's Hospital. I support this program and look forward to a continued partnership.

Sincerely,



Jim O'Neill  
Program Director for the Inner City Health Program  
Executive Director, Community and Health Services Partnerships  
St. Michael's Hospital