

Dear

At Scarborough and Rouge Hospital (SRH), we are working to elevate disadvantaged communities and drive excellence and innovation in health care. With this in mind, I am pleased to submit this letter of inquiry and to ask you to join us as we change how diabetes care, treatment and management is delivered for the Scarborough community.

Scarborough is a vibrant, diverse and growing neighbourhood, one that has changed dramatically since the turn of the millennium. It is a settling ground for a uniquely multi-ethnic population – nearly 60% of all residents are first-generation immigrants and more than 73% are visible minorities. The community is also aging, with the number of people over the age of 60 increasing more than 40% since 2006 alone. Having the lowest family income in the GTA, Scarborough also faces critical challenges such as poverty, limited transit options, and a predisposition to a host of culturally prevalent diseases, including diabetes. In spite of these challenges, as well as issues of hospital overcrowding and some of the oldest healthcare facilities in the province, government spending on health care infrastructure in the community has remained non-existent since 2010.

At SRH Foundation, we have the vision and the plan to do better for diabetes patients living in Scarborough. As part of our visionary \$100-million capital fundraising campaign, *It's Our Time*, we are now looking to create the **Bridletowne Health and Wellness Centre**, a first-of-its-kind community hub for dialysis and ongoing diabetes treatment and management.

Under the campaign leadership of Dr. Cathy Whiteside – former Dean of Medicine at the University of Toronto – the Bridletowne Centre will serve as *the leading example* of community-based health and social infrastructure across the province and a means of supporting patients at every stage of disease management, **from early detection to prevention to treatment.**

“Bridletowne represents a pioneering approach to disease treatment and management that ensures SRH’s place at the forefront of more effective and efficient solutions to health care issues plaguing our community. With world-class nephrologists such as Dr. Robert Ting and Dr. Paul Tam helping to drive this effort forward, the Centre will serve as the catalyst for substantial social change, ensuring that poverty is no longer a barrier in accessing superior health care and treatment. This is a change that SRH will lead – first in Scarborough, and then in the broader community.”

– Dr. Cathy Whiteside

Located at the epicenter of a “diabetes hotspot,” SRH currently runs **the largest regional nephrology program in North America with more than 6,000 patients and supports the largest home-dialysis program in Canada**. Our expert teams are made up of some of nephrology’s top minds, as well as a loyal, multi-ethnic staff who understand and appreciate the distinct concerns of the community, with many being descended from first-generation immigrants themselves. However, growing incidence of diabetes and demand for dialysis treatments mean that SRH’s existing infrastructure and resources just are not enough.

The new Bridletowne Centre is a game changer, not only for the Scarborough community but health care in general, addressing the short, medium and long-term health and wellness needs of patients and setting the standard for others to follow our lead. This innovative, holistic model of care will radically transform the patient experience for an underserved population and dynamically improve treatment outcomes through excellence in education and delivery. The Centre will also maximize existing resources and keeps costs at a minimum by shifting the focus towards long-term disease management outside of the hospital setting.

Building on our existing programs, the Centre will combine multiple health care and social services in a single, easily accessible location within the community – one that will be equipped to provide an integrated level of care unlike any other. It will include a new YMCA, an expanded Diabetes and Chronic Kidney Disease Management and Treatment Clinic, and various other community agencies, establishing a cohesive core for the prevention, treatment and management of complex chronic disease related to diabetes and kidney failure.

The Bridletowne Centre will also change how the community reacts to the disease by fostering a sustainable change in lifestyle. The Centre will include proper teaching space for culturally sensitive education about healthy foods and their preparation, while physical activity programs will complement effective weight counselling to prevent obesity, diabetes and other health conditions. Ultimately, low-income patients will have everything they need to manage and even prevent disease, reducing the incidence of complications and reversing what has long been considered to be unavoidable for many in Scarborough.

Dr. Whiteside and I would welcome the opportunity to speak with you further about this project and to provide you with additional information.

Thank you for your consideration.