



# **MEDIA RELEASE**

## **Ontario Nurses' Association**

May 2, 2008

### **Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant CCAC Offices Moving: *Consolidations Will Impact Accessibility***

TORONTO – The Ontario Nurses' Association (ONA) is warning residents and clients of the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Community Care Access Centre that plans to consolidate five intake offices into one office in the northeast corner of Burlington will result in a decline in service and access to health care for our residents.

“This move will have a detrimental impact on both the dedicated staff of this CCAC and the clients who count on services,” notes Linda Haslam-Stroud, RN, President of the Ontario Nurses' Association (ONA). “When Local Health Integration Networks, or LHINs, were created, the government promised that they would provide ‘local’ health services responsive to ‘local’ needs. Making clients and case managers travel to the farthest corner of the LHIN boundary is hardly what I would call ‘local,’” she said.

ONA believes the move will result in clients seeing their cases handled in a “call-centre” type of environment, outside the community they live in. We believe this type of Intake process will disadvantage many of our clients who currently access services independently and physically present themselves to our offices.

In addition to presenting roadblocks to excellent client services, the consolidation of offices is impacting staff. ONA is aware of 13 case managers in Niagara, nine in Hamilton, three in Haldimand-Norfolk and seven in Brant from the Intake Team, Short-Stay Team and Extended-Hours Team who are unable to make the move. They are now in the process of “bumping.” This process will result in case managers displacing others who have established relationships with current clients and their families.

“We can't afford to keep losing experienced caregivers to consolidations and closures,” says Haslam-Stroud. “Yet again, residents of Hamilton, Niagara, Haldimand and Brant are seeing access to health-care services decline and the loss of more dedicated regulated health professionals.”

ONA is the union representing 54,000 front-line registered nurses and allied health professionals working in Ontario hospitals, long-term care facilities, public health, the community and industry. ONA is celebrating 35 years of nursing advocacy – a proud past, a powerful future.

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**For more information:**

**Ontario Nurses' Association**

Sheree Bond

(416) 964-8833, ext. 2430    Cellular: (416) 986-8240

**85 Grenville Street, Suite 400, Toronto, Ontario M5S 3A2**  
**Telephone: (416) 964-8833 • Toll-free: 1-800-387-5580 • Fax: (416) 964-8891**  
**www.ona.org • E-mail: [onamail@ona.org](mailto:onamail@ona.org)**