

The Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre expands to serve South Algonquin residents

May 21, 2020 – South Algonquin residents now have easy access to a new 24/7 health-care service that is strengthening primary care for more people during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Renfrew County Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre (RC VTAC) is available for South Algonquin residents who have a non-urgent health issue and do not have a family physician/nurse practitioner or cannot reach their family physician/nurse practitioner.

“We have many individuals in South Algonquin who do not have a family physician or nurse practitioner,” said Jane Dumas, Mayor, South Algonquin Township. “I like the way the VTAC model is laid out and I know there is truly need in our community.”

The approximate 1,100 permanent residents in South Algonquin typically access emergency care at St. Francis Memorial Hospital in Barry’s Bay – a RC VTAC partner hospital.

“It is a natural tie in for RC VTAC to serve South Algonquin residents and we’re pleased to expand our much-needed service to the community as a better way to access non-urgent care,” said Dr. Jonathan Fitzsimon, Clinical Coordinator, RC VTAC. “Our goal is to alleviate unnecessary pressure on our Emergency Departments, while ensuring that nobody is left at home to suffer without the care they need.”

Through the RC VTAC, family physicians, nurse practitioners and community paramedics assess and manage health concerns (including COVID-19 concerns) in multiple ways depending on the individual’s needs. This includes:

- Phone appointments
- Video appointments
- In-home assessments and diagnostic testing by community paramedics
- Remote monitoring and alerting and if necessary, escalation to a designated team of physicians and allied health professionals for the management of sicker patients at home
- Referral to other services including mental health support

The RC VTAC has now assessed approximately 3,300 patients through a virtual visit with a family physician since it launched on March 27, 2020. In addition, nearly 2,600 patients received an in-home assessment by a community paramedic and the majority were eligible to be swabbed for COVID-19.

The RC VTAC is a collaboration between Family Health Teams, Community Health Centres, the County of Renfrew Paramedic Service, Renfrew County Hospitals and the Renfrew County and District Health Unit, with the support of Ontario Health East.

The service is covered by OHIP and can be accessed 24/7 by calling 1-844-727-6404.

Learn more at www.rcvtac.ca

About Renfrew County Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre

The Renfrew County Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre (RC VTAC) was created in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to strengthen access to primary care for all Renfrew County residents. It connects Renfrew County residents who have a health concern (including COVID-19 concerns) but either do not have a family physician or cannot access their usual family physician with 24/7 care and support from a family physician, nurse practitioner and/or community paramedic via phone, video or an in-home assessment. It also provides referrals to other services including mental health support. The RC VTAC is a collaboration between Renfrew County Family Health Teams, Community Health Centres, the County of Renfrew Paramedic Service, Renfrew County Hospitals and the Renfrew County and District Health Unit, with the support of Ontario Health East. Learn more at www.rcvtac.ca

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