



Owen Sound Sun Times

Hospital clears hurdle

Ministry's approval of Stage 2 submission a big step forward for Markdale hospital plan

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Grey Bruce Health Services has cleared "a very significant" hurdle on its journey to building a new hospital in Markdale, says its president

and CEO.

Lance Thurston said the hospital corporation's Stage 2 submission has been endorsed by the South West Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) and approved by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, which keeps the project on track for construction to begin in 2018.

"This is really where the LHIN and the ministry say to us, the hospital, yes we agree with and we support the concept that you've put forth in

terms of how your hospital's going to operate, in terms of the anticipated volumes of patients and the volumes of procedures that you're anticipating. So they have agreed to the sizing of the functional centres of the hospital," he said Wednesday in an interview.

"This was probably the most significant hurdle out of the entire process. They're all significant, don't get me wrong and we've got a long way to go and probably a lot of hurdles to jump, but Stage 2 was the real

big one."

Stage 3, which Thurston said is well underway, involves completing detailed engineering and architectural drawings for the new hospital, which will cost about \$63 million to build.

Ontario Health Minister Eric Hoskins announced in September 2014 that the province had given the green light to the project to replace the deteriorating, now 65-year-old Centre Grey Hospital in Markdale.

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Some modifications made to plan

Hospital, from page 1

The news came more than a decade after a community fundraiser was launched to help finance the build and eight years after the government gave the hospital corporation a planning and design grant to begin the process to replace the town's hospital.

GBHS says there are five stages in the province's approval process for building a new hospital.

Its Stage 2 documents, which also included cost estimates and a project timeline, were sent to the health ministry and South West LHIN in January 2015.

GBHS says it was in discussion with ministry officials for some time on the submission and

some modifications were made to its design plan.

The most significant change was to move some administration services to the lower level, which will free up the main floor for patient and clinical services. The adjustment means the overall footprint of the hospital will be smaller and it also reduced the anticipated cost for the project by a few million dollars.

GBHS says the new hospital will be about 68,000 square feet and include four acute care beds, a palliative care room, a 24/7 emergency room with five treatment areas, a procedures room, laboratory, diagnostic imaging services, physiotherapy and space for ambulatory

care clinics.

The fourth stage of the approval's process will involve securing working drawings and final cost estimates for the build. Stage 5 includes putting the project out to tender for construction.

It will take about two years to actually build the hospital, Thurston said.

About \$12 million in cash and pledges from the community have been collected to assist with the project's costs.

The ministry is to fund 90 per cent of what it considers "allowable construction costs," while the other 10 per cent must come from GBHS and the community.

Money for equipment must come from donations.

Thanks
Pearl