

Monday, August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2019

**Mr. Selwyn Hicks, Grey County Warden**

[selwyn.hicks@grey.ca](mailto:selwyn.hicks@grey.ca)

595 9<sup>th</sup> Ave East, Owen Sound ON N4K 3E3

**Mr. Ian Boddy, Owen Sound Mayor**

[ian.boddy@grey.ca](mailto:ian.boddy@grey.ca)

808 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave East, Owen Sound ON N4K 2H4

Re: Support for Georgian College to offer bachelor of science nursing program in Owen Sound

Dear Mayor Boddy, and Warden Hicks,

I am writing on behalf of Grey Bruce Health Services to thank you for advocating with the provincial government to bring the registered nursing degree program to the Owen Sound campus of Georgian College.

GBHS fully supports this proposal, and we believe the RN program would benefit Grey and Bruce counties in a number of ways. GBHS has six hospitals within 40 minutes of the Owen Sound campus, and as you know, our regional hospital is next door to the college. We are the second largest employer in the area, with a staff of 1,600, 650 of whom are nurses. Recruitment is a constant struggle for us, and we hire approximately 60 nurses per year.

New graduates are our primary audience for nurse recruitment. We do our best to attract nurses from other city centres, which can be a challenge. If Georgian College in Owen Sound is approved for the RN degree program, this would allow us to recruit right here, in our own backyard, and give local graduates a chance to stay in Grey and Bruce. We see this as a win for the college, local families, the regional economy, and for the healthcare sector who would have access to a sustainable pool of qualified, home-grown nurses.

Like many other healthcare providers in our region, we are facing a large number of staff who will soon be able to retire. Currently, 55 percent of our nurses are 45 years and older. This means that in five years, we will need to replace up to 40 percent of our nurses due to retirement.

GBHS has a very good, collaborative partnership with Georgian College. We work with the college to provide placements for students in the Registered Practical Nurse program, placing approximately 200 students a year. Adding the RN degree program to the Owen Sound Campus will allow us to expand our partnership, and keep skilled nurses in the community to care for a population of 170,000 served by our six GBHS hospitals.

Once again, we sincerely appreciate your efforts to bring the RN program to Owen Sound, and we welcome any opportunity to support you in this initiative.

Sincerely,



Joanne Flewwelling  
Interim President & CEO  
Grey Bruce Health Services

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