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MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

***FCHS reintroduces Endoscopy Services***

**(Strathroy, ON) –** The Middlesex Hospital Alliance (MHA) is pleased to announce that Four Counties Health Services (FCHS) will resume Endoscopy services effective July 2018.

In June 2017, following Dr. Eberhard’s retirement after a dedicated career in medicine, a full review of the endoscopy program was conducted. This involved consultations with local stakeholders and a thorough understanding of the new resources required to resume the program. “As a result of this review and financial support from the FCHS Foundation, we are delighted to resume this important program and continue to provide care closer to home,” said Rosemary Frketich, VP Clinical Services and CNO.

There are two basic types of endoscopy. An upper endoscopy procedure which occurs when the esophagus, stomach, and the entrance to the small intestine are viewed by a thin flexible tube inserted through the mouth. The second type is a colonoscopy which takes places when the lining of the large intestine or colon, and rectum is viewed by a flexible tube inserted through the anus.

Dr. Akram Elgamal, general surgeon at the Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital, will perform the procedures at FCHS on an interim basis once a month until such time as a permanent specialist can be recruited into the role. MHA Deputy Chief of Staff, Dr. Jon Dreyer, said, “I am very pleased that Dr. Elgamal, who has been doing these scopes in Strathroy for many years, has agreed to provide this service for the short term.”

As a strong testament to the viability of the program, the Four Counties Health Services Foundation has agreed to support the program with a $450,000 fundraising campaign to fund the specialized clinical equipment required. “The FCHS Foundation is pleased to support FCHS in restarting its endoscopy program,” said Tom Jeffrey, FCHS Foundation board chair.

FCHS Site Director Kim Jenkins stated that FCHS is excited to resume Endoscopy services. “Prior to our June implementation date, the hospital will be contacting local family physicians to inform them of the patient referral process to this valuable service”.

About MHA:

The Middlesex Hospital Alliance (MHA) is comprised of two fully-accredited partner sites: Four Counties Health Services and Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital.

A progressive, team-oriented and technologically adept organization of excellence, the MHA is creating a more integrated and seamless approach to treatment by embracing and seeking out partnerships, through collaboration and investing in people. This coordinated approach helps to ensure that a high level of service is provided while reducing costs and continually enhancing quality.