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MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

***SMGH to open Palliative/End of Life Unit***

**(Strathroy, ON) –** SMGH has provided high quality palliative care services to patients for many years but has never had a designated Palliative Care Suite. Recently a family member of a patient hospitalized at SMGH for palliative care identified the need for high quality end-of-life care services to provide privacy and dignity in a calm, peaceful space for patients and their families. Thanks to the generous donation from the Rotary Club of Strathroy in collaboration with the SMGH Foundation, renovations are under way on the Medicine Floor - One South, to establish a designated palliative care suite. This suite will offer families many of the comforts of home including a kitchenette, space for family members to sleep and home like furnishings. This suite will offer patients a peaceful room with a healthcare team to support end of life care.

“A team of dedicated caregivers, as well as a family member of a recent palliative care patient, designed the suite with the goal to provide a standardized approach to palliative care to meet patient and family needs,” said Rosemary Frketich, VP Clinical Services and CNO. “The creation of this suite also aligns with our Strategic Plan and Clinical Services Plan to provide exceptional care as we would expect for our own families. Patients and their families can be together in a space that is like a ‘home away from home’.”

The need for palliative care continues to grow with a 30% increase in demand, year after year, for the last few years. “We recognize the need for our patients of all ages and from all walks of life to have a tranquil place where they can share quality time with loved ones near end of life,” said Todd Stepanuik, President & CEO. “This new suite will allow us to do just that”.

“We are extremely thankful to be able to provide a Palliative Care Suite for patients and their families,” said Dr. Ian Ferguson, Chief of Staff. “The Suite is unlike any other hospital rooms, offering many of the amenities of home for our patients and their families”.

The new Palliative Care Suite is expected to be completed in June 2019. For Further information about the Palliative Care Suite, please visit our website at: <https://www.mhalliance.on.ca/news-and-events/your-stories/>.

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.

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