

Green Health Day – Guelph Family Health Team

Guelph residents going to their doctors' offices on May 4 could once again see their doctors, nurses and others wearing green shirts talking about ***Climate Change is a Health Issue***. With the success of the *Green Health Day* this past November, the Guelph FHT hopes this event will continue to bring awareness to the community around the connections between health and climate change and how we can ALL play a role.

According to numerous medical journals, climate change is the biggest threat to global public health.

"If we all work together we can make a real difference", said Ross Kirkconnell, Executive Director of the Guelph Family Team, "and Guelph family doctors, nurses, other clinicians and staff are committed to being a part of the solution."

Dr. David Cranmer wants his patients and colleagues to know:

"Climate change is becoming a major health issue. Our chief public health officer has said that climate change is the largest health threat facing people in Canada. Heat related illness, diseases due to poor air quality including cancers, heart and lung diseases, worsening mental health due to climate change and severe weather events like severe storms, floods, and heat waves, are some of the ways climate change is affecting our health. We need more people to be aware of this and do what they can to reduce their oil and gas consumption, and demand more of our leaders to do the same on a bigger scale."

The Guelph Family Health Team continues to work on the 5 core green initiatives including reducing use of exam bed paper, recycling masks, and adopting non-aerosol inhalers for patients with breathing medications.

Ryan Truscott, who co-chairs the Guelph FHT's Patient and Family Advisory Committee, comments:

"The Guelph Family Health Team is working to combat climate change by making small changes to our clinics that are having a big impact on the environment. Recycling face masks... curbing the use of exam table paper... encouraging our medical team to recommend more environmentally friendly inhalers... switching to rechargeable batteries in 24hr blood pressure monitors... switching visits to virtual appointments if possible/appropriate...A greener approach to healthcare is good for patients and for the future of our planet."

Dr. Anne-Marie Zajdlik, has been involved in the planning and is excited to be taking part:

"Humankind has all the intelligence, knowledge, tools and financial resources needed to achieve its climate goals. By working together to achieve those goals, we maintain the health of our planet. Human health relies on a healthy planet. Now is the time to take action. A rapid and widespread response is necessary. Given its innovative and creative leadership, it makes perfect sense that in just a few short months, the Guelph Family Health Team's climate change response has gone from a Green Council to a Green Health Care and Climate Change initiative."



Other organizations including Guelph General Hospital and the Hamilton Family Health Team are also getting involved with this important topic.

The Guelph Family Health Team's Green Healthcare Initiatives story was recently published in CASCADES's "*Stories of environmentally sustainable practices in primary care*" story campaign. [CLICK HERE](#) to read the full story online.

The mask recycling initiative was featured in a Guelph Today article. [CLICK HERE](#) to read the full article online.

To learn more about the Guelph Family Health Team and the Green Initiatives, [CLICK HERE](#).

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Guelph Family Health Team (Guelph FHT) provides team-based care to support patient wellbeing. Patients have access to a range of services, provided by a team of health care professionals that offer patients support in every stage of life. Guelph FHT supports 95 Family Doctors and serves 125,000 patients within 25 offices across Guelph. Guelph FHT is a proud partner of the Guelph Wellington Ontario Health Team. Visit www.guelphfht.com to learn more.