



COMPASSION is our
PASSION

OUR VISION: OUTSTANDING CARE - NO EXCEPTIONS!

OUR MISSION: DELIVER AN OUTSTANDING PATIENT CARE EXPERIENCE BY A PASSIONATE COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

January 14, 2020

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To the Representatives of Feminists for Action Windsor and 40 Days for Life Windsor:

The Board of Directors wishes to thank both of your groups and the representatives who delivered presentations to our Board at our December 12, 2019 meeting at the Windsor Regional Hospital (WRH) Met Campus. We do appreciate the passion both groups clearly have for this issue and we did appreciate both groups taking the opportunity to speak directly to the Board regarding your respective concerns.

The Board has completed its review of both presentations as well as the videos that were provided by Feminists for Action Windsor in regards to whether WRH should consider an application for a 150-meter “access zone” from the property line of any “clinic” providing the services of a therapeutic abortion. As you know, The *Safe Access to Abortion Services Act*, passed in 2017, mandates that for “facilities” such as hospitals providing this clinical procedure, there is a 50-meter access zone to the property line. This means that for hospitals to have an “access zone” *greater* than from their property line, they need to submit an application with that request.

The Board’s overall commitment was to ensure that patient safety is not compromised, regardless of any ideological position held on the broader issue of abortion by individual, volunteer, community members of our Board which, as with Canadian society, includes varying perspectives on this matter. Rather, the discussion before the Board focused on whether advocacy taking place on Tecumseh Road provides adequate safe access to patients, balanced by the right to peaceful protest.

As a reminder, prior to the presentations on December 12th, the Board also received feedback from frontline employees, professional staff and patients; reviewed the existing legislation; examined what other hospital facilities are doing across the province and examined what the impact would be of applying to make application for the 150-meter Access Zone from the Met Campus property line under the *Safe Access to Abortion Services Act*.

Following a review of the presentations as well as the prior research and after thorough discussion by the WRH Board of Directors at our most recent meeting held on Thursday, January 9, 2020, the Board has concluded that the current restriction which limits advocacy to Tecumseh Road has not compromised safe access for patients seeking therapeutic abortion. As such, the Board upheld its prior decision not to pursue an application for a 150-meter “access zone” at this time and continuing to abide by our legislated requirement which ensures a safe access zone that restricts advocacy and protest to the property line or beyond. The Board reserves the right to revisit this decision at any point in the future, if it deems appropriate.

As a public hospital, we need to balance the right to free expression on any number of issues with the need to ensure the safety of our patients. We will continue to respect both points of view while complying with provincial legislation when it comes to the availability of therapeutic abortion services.

However, as noted previously, we will continue to monitor all public advocacy activities taking place around the Campus to ensure both sides continue to respect patient privacy and express their views in a safe and non-violent, non-confrontational manner. We will also continue to be prepared to contact local police if any situations prove volatile or if advocates either side of this issue veers off of Tecumseh Road to inside of our property line. As of the date of this letter, no such incidents transpired and we were not notified of any potential breach, even though such advocacy has been taking place for many years.

We will continue to respect both points of view while complying with provincial legislation when it comes to the availability of therapeutic abortion services.

Thank you for taking the time to deliver formal presentations for this thorough discussion.

Yours truly,



Daniel Wilson
Chair, Board of Directors WRH