

# Obstetrics services resuming October 3

## Program rebuilding includes return of WLMH Midwives

*The below is an abbreviated version of a staff and physician message shared on August 17, 2022*

Starting October 3, the labour and delivery program will return to West Lincoln Memorial Hospital (WLMH) site, operating in a 24/7 model of care. This is the result of many months of work and significant recruitment efforts by multiple departments at the site and across Hamilton Health Sciences (HHS), to bring the service back in a sustainable manner. This was also made possible by significant partner contributions, including the WLMH Foundation and Niagara Health.

Specifics include:

- Physician coverage will be enhanced by a new obstetrician and gynecologist who will join the program on a six-month contract, with the possibility of extension for an additional four months.
- Following months of aggressive recruitment efforts, program staffing is currently sufficient to return based on expected near-term patient volumes. Recruitment will continue to ensure further coverage as volumes grow over the coming months.
- WLMH's operating room team is also growing with the addition of new procedures and surgeries being delivered at the site, which will allow for a 24/7 call schedule to support urgent after hours obstetrical cases.
- As part of a return to 24/7 coverage, we are excited to welcome the WLMH Midwifery team back to the site. WLMH Midwives have been practicing at Niagara Health, and will

provide care to expectant mothers, families and babies at WLMH starting October 3. Their presence will be an essential piece of the program's transition back to the site by adding ongoing low-risk obstetrics mentoring to the nursing team, as well as for the long-term success of the program.

In addition, recruitment has progressed toward hiring two additional full-time OBGYNs to the program. Interviews will take place this fall. A team of four FT OBGYNs – the largest physician complement the program has ever operated – will add stability and predictability to the program, enabling long-term growth.

This period of temporary redirect has been longer than anyone expected or wanted. We are optimistic that the foundational rebuilding mentioned above represents the start of the program's next chapter.

Thank you to our staff and physicians who remain committed to serving patients at the site and in this program, despite the many changes over the past few years. We would also like to acknowledge the WLMH Foundation which graciously provided the hospital with a grant to assist with OBGYN recruitment, in addition to its ongoing financial support of the program. Finally, we thank our partners at Niagara Health in caring for WLMH mothers and babies during this time.