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MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Community Paramedicine facility showcased

FRANKVILLE – The Community Paramedicine Program has a new home at the North Leeds Paramedic Station.

The Leeds Grenville Paramedic Service's (LGPS) program has been up and running for about a year providing in-home health care and virtual visits to more than 1,000 area residents. Elected officials and staff today announced the Community Paramedicine Program office and training centre is being housed in Frankville in the former Elizabethtown-Kitley Township fire station.

"Our government is fixing Ontario's long-term care system and improving the care seniors receive is a key part of our plan," said the Honourable Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and MPP for Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes, after touring the location.

"The expansion of the Community Paramedicine for Long-Term Care program will support seniors across the province with the care they need when and where they need it while they wait for a bed in long-term care," the Minister said.

The Leeds Grenville Paramedic Service has received \$1.24-million from the province to operate the Community Paramedicine program and will receive a total of \$3.25-million to continue operation into 2024. Funding is through the Ontario Ministry of Long Term Care as well as the Ministry of Health (Ontario Health) and is based on waitlists of seniors seeking placement in a long-term care home or who are soon to be eligible for long-term care.

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In 2021, the LGPS Community Paramedic Program enrolled 777 clients. These clients were visited in their homes by a Community Paramedic on 1,688 occasions, in addition to 317 virtual visits.

"We now have the resources to reach out and provide care to some of our most vulnerable in the community," said Warden Roger Haley.

Joint Services Committee Chair Corinna Smith-Gatcke, Mayor of the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands, also praised the program for being accessible, responsive, proactive and safe. "This program leverages the valuable education and expertise of our paramedics to provide community-based health care outside of their emergency response and ambulance transport roles," Ms. Smith-Gatcke said.

Leeds Grenville Paramedic Service Chief Jeff Carss said all Community Paramedic resources, along with five paramedic staff and two Emergency Response Vehicles (ERVs) are housed at the site as it is being renovated.

The program provides home visitation service 12 hours per day, seven days a week and phone calls are answered 24/7. The Leeds Grenville program, as well as in other parts of the province, has reduced the number of costly 911 calls, avoidable emergency room hospital visits, and provided additional supports and connections for individuals.

"This allows residents to stay at home longer, and be healthier and happier," said Paramedic Service Superintendent Jonathan Sylvester, who supervises the program. "The Community Paramedic Program is in the unique position of bringing experienced medical assessments, treatments and ongoing health care inside the homes of Leeds Grenville residents who otherwise struggle to access or navigate the health care system," he said.

Individuals are referred to the program through their home and community care staff, family physician or paramedic. Clinical decision making, community service referrals, communication with health care teams, bloodwork, medication reviews, vaccinations and palliative care are just a few of the areas of expertise delivered through the Community Paramedicine Program.

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The program also assisted with COVID-19 initiatives by supporting testing, vaccination and monitoring/care for individuals within their homes. In 2021, LGPS performed 7,543 COVID-19 swabs and delivered 1,929 COVID-19 vaccinations. It also supported several initiatives led by the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, Brockville General Hospital and Ontario Health.

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