

January 24, 2020.

Dear Mayor Henderson and Councillors,

We have some concerns about transport for residents on stretchers who are trying to return from the hospital to their residence. We are members of the Golden Plough Lodge Family Council. Part of our role is to advocate for our residents and families.

In the last 6 months, we have had residents who were transferred to Northumberland Hills Hospital emergency department by ambulance.

In one case, a 93 year old who had a fall and suffered a huge laceration to the head required stitches. After having tests done, it was determined the resident also had a fracture in 2 bones in the neck (there was no displacement of the bones). A rigid collar was applied and then, after an 8 hour wait, the head wound was stitched. Then the resident was discharged. That was a surprise to the family member accompanying the resident. Next came the hard part... finding transport for the resident. The resident, who is wheelchair-bound at the home, was on a stretcher so that restricts the options available. A transport company (Voyager) was contacted and only after a credit card number was approved did the resident get a time for transport and a cost. The time was initially an 8 hour wait but was later changed to a 3 hour wait. This was now 6pm. The cost of transport from the hospital to the Golden Plough Lodge was \$160.18. The family member was shocked but had no option.

Another resident had a similar experience but to add further stress, a family member had accompanied the resident to the hospital in the ambulance. When that resident was discharged, it was after midnight. The resident was transported by Voyager but the family member was stranded in the emergency department. There was no other family or friend to take the person home and no taxis running. The family member had to spend the night in the waiting room until a taxi was available.

We have contacted other agencies for information on transport.

- 1) Ontario Patient Transport - just connects you with non-emergent transport services in various locations in Ontario.
- 2) Apollo Transport - we were unable to contact them.
- 3) Voyageur medical Transport - Based in London but vehicles in Peterborough, Bowmanville, and many other places. Cost-\$160.18 for 10 kilometers or less. Over 10 kilometers it costs \$2.57 per kilometer.
- 4) Community Care - They do not transfer people on a stretcher. Their clients have to travel independently or with a PSW.
- 5) Ambulance - only transport medical emergencies.
- 6) Wheels - Do not transport clients on stretchers.

We would like you to be aware of this area of resident care that is very stressful for residents and families and there doesn't seem to be any other options. Has anyone considered approaching a transport company on behalf of the nursing homes in the area?

Sincerely,  
Gwen Barnes  
Chair of Family Council  
Golden Plough Lodge