

Trillium takes on more heart patients

Radhika Panjwani, Mississauga News
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Starting March 1, Mississauga's Trillium Health Centre will begin treating Brampton residents experiencing heart attacks.

Under a new program, Bramptonians who call 9-1-1 when they suffer a heart attack will be attended to by a Peel Paramedic who will administer an electro cardiogram (ECG) to determine whether the patient has experienced a ST-elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI) – a heart attack resulting from a blocked coronary artery.

Those patients will be transported directly to Trillium's cardiac catheterization lab, bypassing Brampton Civic Hospital, where the blocked artery will be repaired and healed through angioplasty.

The procedure – where a balloon catheter is used to open a clogged artery – is considered the new gold standard in treatment. Several Brampton physicians have been lobbying that city's William Osler Health System to allow emergency crews to save valuable time by transporting patients directly to Mississauga.

Since angioplasty was introduced at Trillium in 2008, about 87 patients from Halton Hills, Oakville, south Etobicoke and Mississauga have benefitted from the procedure.

According to Trillium officials, patients are on the road to recovery within 65.9 minutes, on average, of leaving their doorstep with paramedics.

In six to 12 hours the patient will be transported back to Brampton Civic Hospital to recuperate. That will free hospital beds at Trillium.

Trillium Health Centre received \$1 million from Queen's Park last month for the program, which is a collaborative effort by the hospital, Local Health Integrated Networks (LHINs) and Peel Regional Paramedics.

Heart patients head to Trillium

Peter Criscione, Brampton Guardian [Original story, as amended in Feb. 17 print edition above]
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<http://www.mississauga.com/news/article/608367--heart-patients-head-to-trillium>

Heart attack patients in Brampton will soon be transported directly to Mississauga's Trillium Health Centre, granting them access to treatment they can't get in Brampton.

"Please be advised that (Trillium has) finalized an agreement with William Osler Health System to permit the bypassing of their facility for ST-Elevation Myocardial Infarction (STEMI) patients," said Peel Paramedic Services director Peter Dundas in a memo issued to paramedics on Friday.

Peel emergency responders have been advised that starting March 1, Osler will allow paramedics

to transport heart attack patients to the cardiac catheterization lab at Trillium without visiting Brampton Civic Hospital first.

Currently, Brampton residents are taken to the emergency department at Brampton Civic where a physician examines them and administers blood-clot busting drugs — a procedure considered outdated by the medical establishment. The drugs only work half the time and in many instances, patients end up at Trillium where a balloon catheter is used to open the blocked coronary artery (angioplasty).

Angioplasty is considered the new “gold standard” in treatment and several Brampton physicians, including Dr. Sheldon Cheskes, medical director for the Sunnybrook Osler Centre for Pre-Hospital Care, have put pressure on Osler to allow emergency crews to save valuable time and transport patients directly to Mississauga.

Paramedics stationed in the south end of Peel Region have been trained to use an electrocardiogram machine, which allows emergency responders to determine if a patient is having a heart attack. Once confirmed, paramedics contact Trillium’s on-call cardiologist and a team is immediately prepared for the patient’s arrival.

Health officials say the initiative, launched last year, has paid off big time for Mississauga residents as survival rates have increased drastically in a short period. Since the launch of the primary percutaneous coronary intervention program, Peel emergency crews have managed to get patients treated (on average) within 68.5 minutes - undercutting the North American standard by nearly half an hour.

The aim in treating STEMI patients is to restore blood flow through the artery within 90 minutes of a heart attack.



Heart healthy. Peel paramedic will take heart attack patients in Brampton directly to Mississauga's Trillium Health Centre. Paramedics and staff at Trillium have started a program that speeds up treatment time. Peel emergency crews have managed to get patients treated (on average) within 68.5 minutes, bettering the North American average by 30 minutes. *File photo*