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Media Release

York Central Hospital Pleased to Announce Opening of new Maternal Fetal Medicine Unit!

RICHMOND HILL, ON. – Thanks to the relocation of perinatologists, ultrasound and genetic services in one centralized area, York Central Hospital officially opened its new Maternal Fetal Medicine Unit today. Conveniently located on the hospital's main level, women are now able to access all of these services with one-stop convenience.

Every day, 40 pregnant women are seen by medical professionals in the Maternal Fetal Medicine (MFM) Unit at York Central Hospital. "More than a third of the women seen each day have been classified as having high-risk pregnancies," says Dr. Jon Barrett, Chief of Obstetrics and Gynecology at York Central Hospital and Chief of the High-risk Pregnancy Unit at Sunnybrook Health Services Centre in Toronto.

High-risk pregnancies could be anything from multiples such as twins or triplets, or pregnant women suffering from chronic illness such as hypertension or kidney disease or having a history of complications during previous pregnancies. Sometimes prenatal testing has indicated the baby has a serious health issue. Whatever the result of testing, the MFM team can provide follow-up care and counseling as appropriate. Dr. Barrett notes that the number of high-risk pregnancies is growing. Contributing factors include older mothers and more advanced screening technology.

"York Central was the first community hospital in Ontario with a full-time, on-site MFM service," said Altaf Stationwala, the Hospital's President and CEO. "Since then, we have continued to evolve and grow to provide the specialized care often required with high-risk pregnancies so women can receive care in their community,"

The Hospital is a regional leader in care for high-risk pregnancies and fetal assessment. As such, York Central is pleased to offer this advanced care for our smallest patients and their mothers in one convenient location.

Now many of these women can receive all their prenatal care and deliver their babies at their community hospital. In the past, women had to travel to specific downtown hospitals for procedures including fetal assessment ultrasounds and amniocentesis. These specialized services are available at York Central Hospital, eliminating the need to travel far distances for these advanced services.

Since its inception, the MFM team has expanded to include two additional maternal fetal

medicine specialists Dr. Kofi Amanjwah and Dr. Vidia Persaud who can monitor high-risk pregnancies, as well as four ultrasound technicians, two genetic counselors and support staff. The new unit also has the upgraded equipment and space required to provide needed care. “Consultation, care and often delivery can now be done closer to home,” says Dr. Barrett.

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