



Midwifery office comes to town

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BY STACEY ROY

EMC News - By this spring women who desire the personal touch of a midwife will no longer have to travel to Brockville because the Leeds-Grenville Midwives are opening a satellite office in Smiths Falls.

"I'd like to be open by March and latest beginning of April," said Cory Tanguay of the Leeds-Grenville Midwives.

The organization is one step ahead in this effort with the receipt of a letter of support from the Town of Smiths Falls that was given to Tanguay during her presentation at this week's special Committee of the Whole session held Jan. 31.

During her talk, Tanguay explained that her organization has been serving the Smiths Falls area since opening in Brockville three years ago.

In fact, the local area currently makes up 30 per cent of its overall client base, but Tanguay feels this could be expanded upon.

"The problem I see is a lot of my clients come from this area, but now have to travel," she added. "Coming an hour to Brockville isn't meeting their needs."

Transportation issues are big hurdles particularly because pregnant women have more appointments toward the end of their pregnancy when mobility and exhaustion often kick in.

NEXT STEPS

With council's support in hand, Tanguay is now looking to secure a small office space in town and acquire hospital privileges at the Smiths Falls hospital site. Being able to work at the local hospital is critical in order to provide women with a truly local service.

"We're hoping that will come together," Tanguay said.

The midwives organization has the support of council in this endeavour, based on the discussion around the table this week.

"I certainly think it's absolutely paramount that we support your application to get privileges at the hospital," said councilors Ken Graham.

Councillor Lorraine Allen has had personal experience with midwives. Thanks to this alternative birthing option, Allen was able to experience her grandson's birth eight months ago and found it to be a very special family moment.

"He was born with a team of midwives" at an Ottawa hospital, councillor Allen said.

The experience midwives offer is one of companionship throughout the entire pregnancy. Tanguay explains that midwives have the same ability to order tests and ultrasounds as a doctor would in normal pregnancy. The difference some women see with midwives is the level of education and counseling they receive so that new mothers can make an informed decision.

Tanguay summed up the experience of birthing with a midwife as "it can be whatever you want it to be."

Once a woman is in active labour your midwife will be on site with you helping throughout the active labour process and will stay two-to-three hours after birth. The entire process, even in hospital, is focused on mother and baby without using a lot of hospital resources.

"We don't really take up that much space," Tanguay said.

A woman who delivers with a midwife will be released from hospital within two-to-three hours after birth. However, midwife care continues with a visit within the first 24 hours of giving birth. Another visit will take place on day three and between day five and seven. At the six week appointment the woman is discharged from their care as is the case in traditional medical practice. For more information on midwives, log on to www.leedsgrenvillemidwives.ca.

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