

Southlake Health expands Cardiac Prevention and Rehabilitation Program to Georgina

Cardiac rehab expansion will bring care closer to home as part of Southlake's Distributed Health Network

Newmarket, ON – June 20, 2025 – Southlake Health is expanding its Cardiac Prevention and Rehabilitation Program in Georgina to bring leading edge cardiac care, closer to home for patients in the community. The program will operate at the Multi-use Recreational Complex (MURC) supporting patients' recovery and long-term heart health for up to six months following a cardiac event.

"Expanding the Cardiac Prevention and Rehabilitation Program to Georgina is a meaningful step toward our vision of a Distributed Health Network that delivers care closer to home," said Paul Woods, MD, President and CEO, Southlake Health. "It's an excellent example of how we're working with communities to meet patients where they are, and ensure they have access to the right care closer to home."

Southlake's Cardiac Prevention and Rehabilitation Program is a referral-based program for people recovering from heart conditions or cardiac surgery. What began in 1996 as a small initiative serving approximately 175 patients each year has grown to serve more than 700 patients annually thanks to government support. The program is delivered over six months by an interdisciplinary team of experts from Southlake, and helps patients rebuild their strength, improve heart health, and reduce the risk of future events. It includes supervised exercise, education, and lifestyle coaching tailored to each participant's needs. Georgina residents account for more than 1,185 visits to the program last year, representing more than 10 per cent of total visits.

To meet growing demand and bring care closer to home, the Cardiac Prevention and Rehabilitation Program will expand to Georgina starting in September 2025, with regular classes offered at the MURC. This new location will reduce travel barriers for Georgina residents, who currently travel to Newmarket for these services. A referral from a physician is required.

"Cardiac rehabilitation is a proven intervention that helps people recover faster, reduce risk of future events, and improve long-term heart health," said Dr. Christopher Overgaard, Chief, Department of Cardiac Health, Southlake Health. "We're thrilled to extend this program to Georgina, offering more patients access to the care and education they need, right in their own backyard."

Southlake is proud to collaborate with the Town of Georgina to bring this important initiative to the community. This builds on the collaboration that started with the memorandum of

understanding signed by Southlake, the Town of Georgina, and the Northern York South Simcoe Ontario Health Team last year.

“Our partnership with Southlake Health is a testament to our commitment to making healthcare more accessible for Georgina residents,” said Mayor Margaret Quirk, Town of Georgina. “The MURC will serve as the perfect backdrop to support residents who are healing from cardiac events. The memorandum of understanding has allowed The Town of Georgina and Southlake to accomplish real progress when delivering healthcare closer to home for our residents. The integration of these crucial medical services in our community means our citizens can benefit from the comfort and convenience of nearby care, ensuring a healthier community for all.”

As a Level 7 Regional Cardiac Program, Southlake’s contributions to advancing cardiac care extends far beyond the operating room. The highly skilled team of medical staff and staff provide almost every type of cardiac care, except for heart transplants, saving patients from travelling into Toronto for world-class care. As leaders in their fields, the team actively participate in ground-breaking research and are often the first to perform industry-leading procedures in Ontario, Canada, and the world. Southlake continues to collaborate with international experts to enhance cardiac care and improve patient outcomes globally.

Quotes

“Connecting communities across Ontario to health care closer to home is a top priority for our government. Expanding the Cardiac Prevention and Rehabilitation Program to operate here in Georgina will help save lives, improve patient outcomes, and connect residents to high-quality care.”

- Caroline Mulroney, MPP, York–Simcoe

Quick Facts – Southlake’s Regional Cardiac Program

- Southlake’s Level 7 Regional Cardiac Program is the fourth largest comprehensive heart program in Ontario and provides almost every type of cardiac care, with the exception of heart transplants, to thousands of patients from York Region to Muskoka.
- Southlake is the regional hub for emergent heart attack care, meaning if a patient is having a heart attack, they’ll be brought to Southlake for treatment no matter which hospital is closest in the region.
- Southlake’s Cardiac Prevention and Rehabilitation Program is one of the earliest healthcare provider programs in Canada to offer rehab prior to cardiac surgery, which began in 2005.

- Southlake's program supports more than 10,300 patient visits each year, underscoring the need for expanded access.
- Since 2014, the program has also operated in Bradford, supported by strong community partnerships. Today's announcement builds on this model of care by delivering care closer to home for patients in Georgina.

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About Southlake Health

For 100 years and counting, Southlake Health has built healthy communities through leading edge care with an unwavering pride for people, place and performance. Over the years, Southlake Health has evolved into one of Canada's top healthcare organizations. It is more than a single centre. Southlake Health is a network of expertise, compassion and excellence that delivers health and wellness, close to home.

With 6,000 staff, medical staff, volunteers and learners, as well as an operating budget in excess of \$600 million, Southlake Health operates several sites to deliver care to patients across northern York Region and southern Simcoe County. It also provides specialized cardiac and cancer care to patients as far north as Muskoka and as far south as North York through its regional programs.

Southlake Health is committed to growing alongside the communities it serves. State-of-the-art technologies, advanced research and the latest techniques help patients in every stage of life. In a recognition of its commitment to quality and patient safety, Southlake Health has received the highest distinction of Exemplary Standing from Accreditation Canada for the past 16 years. Known as a pioneer in innovative integrated care initiatives, the Southlake@home program has spread across Ontario to ensure care is always within reach.

With support from its communities, Southlake Health will continue to save lives, push boundaries and bring care closer to home for people today and for generations to come. Help us do more by donating at southlake.ca/foundation.