

Community dental clinic opens



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Wright Clinic will open on the second floor of the Glen Cairn Community Resource Centre.

The new facility, a first for London, offers low-cost services to low-income Londoners

BY MELODY LAU

The founder of London's first permanent community dental clinic says it will be ready for patients by the end of January.

Located on the second floor of the Glen Cairn Community Resource Centre at 244 Adelaide St. S., The Wright Clinic will provide low-income Londoners with dental services either free of charge or for costs of up to \$30. Prospective patients can contact social agencies, including the resource centre, to fill an application to determine their eligibility.

Dr. Kenneth Wright, the project leader, also encourages individuals who receive benefits from the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) and Ontario Works to apply. He says some dental clinics refuse to accept patients on social assistance or will only provide limited services.

"In the Ontario Works plan, you can have two fillings and extractions every six months and that's it," said Wright. "The ODSP is better by offering root canals and more frequent fillings and cleanings, but they don't include dentures, crowns and implants."

The new clinic offers a complete range of service, including X-rays, he says.

Wright said the idea of establishing a permanent clinic came after seeing the limitations of the mobile dental clinic that he developed in 2008 during his tenure at the Schulich

CLINIC CONTINUED ON PG. 2

Community church offers free tax clinic

BY RON HUMPHRIES

Starting in 2016 Compass Community Church began offering the Community Volunteer Income Tax Program free tax clinic to our neighbours and beyond.

This government program is available to those with low to no income, including students, seniors, immigrants and many others.

In our first year we completed over 500 returns. We had expected to complete 1,000 this past tax season but were shut down due to the pandemic and the virtual tax clinic served far fewer clients than anticipated.

About one half of our 20-plus volunteers come from our church with others coming from the community and Fanshawe College.

When clients arrived at the walk-in clinic, they were greeted by a church volunteer and registered to have their taxes completed. Their taxes were then completed by another volunteer with the majority of tax returns submitted online.

We have heard many appreciative comments from our clients as we listen to their stories and recognize the importance of this service.

As we look towards the new season we are planning to run both a virtual and in-person clinic. This year all clients will need to book appointments.

If you are interested in joining this team of volunteers please contact us at compassstaxclinic@bell.net.

Ron Humphries is the coordinator of the Community Volunteer Income Tax Program at Compass Community Church.

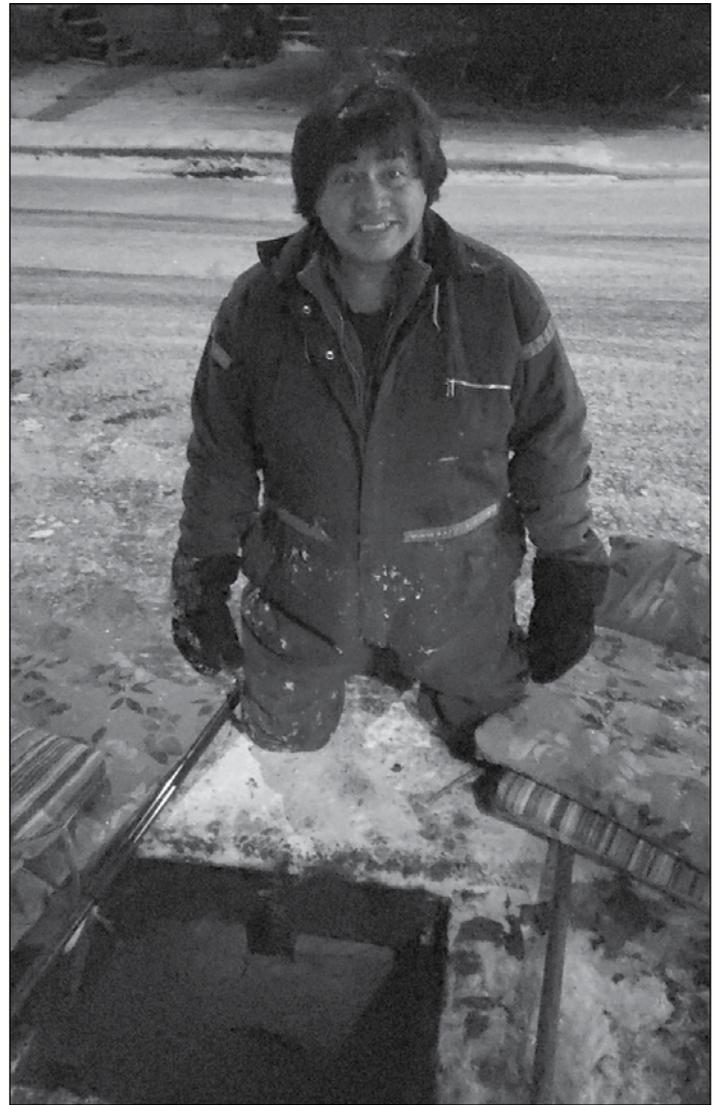


PHOTO BY MELANIE RAMSEY-DINWOODY

Just before Christmas, Jeffrey Jamieson, one of our neighbours in Chelsea Green, rescued his next door neighbour's family kitty from a sewer outside our houses, showing the true meaning of the season and community love. Great job Jeff and Nancy, his wife and lighting crew, for the rescue. So proud to call you my neighbours.



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- Lock your shed and garage.
- Don't open the door to strangers.

- Do not have your name on your home or mailbox, and don't leave notes advising you are not home.

If your home has been broken into while you were away, do not enter, or if you have don't touch anything.

Call 911 from your cell phone or from a neighbour's house.

Source: London Police Service' website

Clinic to provide logistical assistance for appointments

CONTINUED FROM PG. 1

School of Medicine and Dentistry. (He retired from the university last year after 52 years of teaching.) In the mobile program, called the Dental Outreach Community Service, senior Schulich students went into communities every second week with portable equipment to treat patients. (That program is currently paused because of the COVID-19 pandemic.)

“What we found is when we went into these communities, there were so many people to treat and we would only hit the same communities two or three times a year,” said Wright. “There are roughly 70,000 people in London who are at the poverty line or below.”

Partnering with health institutions, including the London Middlesex Health Unit, Wright helped form the London Community Dental Alliance, achieving charitable status to raise funds for the clinic's development.

With a permanent clinic running 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, Wright aims to serve more than 4,000 appointments each year. The core group of staff will include a dentist, a dental assistant, a receptionist and a system navigator.

The system navigator will help people with the logistics of getting to the clinic and obtaining treatment. “Many patients will have barriers and challenges,” Wright explained.

Volunteers will include additional dentists, hygienists, dental assistants and senior students at Schulich Dentistry and Fanshawe College with their supervisors.

During the construction process, the clinic was

redesigned to a closed concept to fit COVID-19 guidelines by incorporating closed doors and barriers in the reception room to contain and decontaminate the rooms quickly, says Wright. All staff have also been fitted for an N95 mask and will have their temperatures taken frequently.

“In the first week, we will probably see five to six patients a day to make sure everything works properly and we'll increase the number as each week goes by,” said Wright.

“Even working at full capacity, we're only going to be scratching the surface, but what we see is that the clinic will be a model for others in the city and the province.



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