

AMO 2025

Ontario Medical
Association
August 19, 2025



MUNICIPALITY OF
West Grey



westgrey.com/conferences

With a population of over 13,500 the Municipality of West Grey is the largest geographic municipality in Grey County (876 square kilometres), with the River Styx and Rocky Saugeen, Beatty Saugeen and South Saugeen Rivers being the connecting links between our rural communities of Elmwood, Durham, Neustadt and Ayton.

Durham Hospital

- In early 2024, the South Bruce Grey Health Centre (SBGHC), made the arbitrary decision to remove all in-patient beds at the Durham Hospital and reduce emergency hours from 24 to 10 hours/day.
- In June 2025, following a legal appeal from the Municipality of West Grey requesting a judicial review of the decision, the Ontario Superior Court ruled that the decision by SBGHC constitutes a private operational matter and was not subject to judicial review.
- While the Municipality of West Grey accepts the Court's decision, it maintains that the concerns raised were valid and rooted in the best interests of the community.
- In March 2025, SBGHC announced site improvements to the emergency department (still only operating 10 hours/day) at the Durham Hospital and it has been reported (though not confirmed) that they will be bringing a mental health clinic to the Hospital.

Importance of Accessible, Reliable Healthcare in Rural Municipalities

- **Complete Communities:** It is critical that communities are designed to meet residents' daily needs throughout their lives by providing a mix of housing, jobs and access to essential services within their own communities, including healthcare.
- **Aging Population:** Rural communities face unique social and environmental challenges that can have an impact on health and healthy aging; ensuring a fulsome healthcare offering in rural communities is essential to enabling older persons to remain independent.
- **New Resident Attraction:** Access to quality healthcare is a crucial factor in attracting new residents to rural communities; strong healthcare systems, including hospitals and clinics, are essential for both attracting and retaining residents and a productive workforce.
- **Community Engagement:** Rural communities have, for generations, raised funds to build community assets, including our hospitals and healthcare support systems; they want to continue to be part of the solution to ensure the sustainability of their communities.

Our Asks to the Province to Support Rural Ontario Healthcare

To ensure rural Ontario can contribute meaningfully to provincial goals, we urge the Province to commit to an integrated, systems-based approach for collective impact.

- **Municipal Participation in Healthcare Solutions:** Including rural municipalities in shaping the future of healthcare in our regions.
- **Support Community Health Hubs:** Support the development and enhancement of rural health hubs, which can integrate services and improve coordination of care in rural Ontario.
- **Engage Local Communities:** Embrace community consultations and planning processes related to healthcare service delivery, ensuring that local needs and priorities are addressed.
- **Recruitment of Healthcare Professionals:** Support initiatives that attract and retain healthcare professionals in rural areas.