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*For more information
contact:*

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Michael Mazza
Chief Executive Officer
519 245-5295 ext. 5592

New Hips & Knees Surgeon at Middlesex Hospital Alliance

Dr. Samer Hanna, MD, FRCSC, will be joining Middlesex Hospital Alliance (MHA), Strathroy site as an Orthopaedic Surgeon in early July, 2007.

“We welcome Dr. Hanna to our surgical team and know that his skills will complement our Orthopaedic services, especially in our relatively recent Hips & Knees program,” Mike Mazza, CEO of MHA says.

Dr. Hanna is coming to MHA from Mount Sinai Hospital in Toronto, where he completed a fellowship in lower limb reconstruction. Previous to that, he completed a fellowship in orthopaedic trauma, arthroplasty, foot and ankle surgery at Sunnybrook Health Science Centre. He looks forward to developing his general orthopaedic practice with a focus on hips and knees. He is seeing new patients with referrals from family physicians.

Total joint replacements is one of the six major health services targeted by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care with their recent Wait Times strategy. The strategy is designed to increase access and reduce wait times for joint replacements, including significantly increasing the number of procedures to reduce the backlog that has developed over the last decade. According to the Ministry, patients can use the Wait Times information reported on the Ministry web site system “to make informed choices about where to be referred for quicker service.” Currently in Southwestern Ontario, wait times for a hip replacement surgery, for example, is averaging 255 days, compared with the provincial target of 182 days.

The Middlesex Hospital Alliance Hip & Knee Total Joint Replacements Program started modestly in 2006, relying in a large part on the services of visiting surgeons. “Having Dr. Hanna on staff at MHA will allow us to deliver our Hip & Knee Joint Replacement Program even more efficiently,” Mazza says.

The most common reason for having a hip or knee replaced is osteoarthritis. This is a degenerative joint disease, marked by the breakdown of the joint's cartilage. It most commonly affects people over age 45, however younger men and women can also get this disease. A joint replacement is aimed at helping people live fuller, more active lives.

When only some of the joint is damaged, a surgeon may be able to repair or replace just the damaged parts. When the entire joint is damaged, a total joint replacement is done. To replace a total hip or knee joint, a surgeon removes the diseased or damaged parts and inserts artificial parts, called prostheses or implants.

CEO Mike Mazza says that Hips & Knees is an increasingly important program at the MHA: “A community hospital such as Strathroy site, has the capacity to provide just this sort of program successfully and efficiently. Patients can be referred for Total Joint Replacement surgery here – close to home – instead of having to travel to more distant hospitals.”