



Dr. Howard Jaye Goldstein

306-2065 Finch Ave W | North York, ON | M3N 2V7

Notice of Practice Closure

June 22, 2020

Dear Patients,

For the past several months our world has been in turmoil as a result of the sudden arrival of the Coronavirus pandemic. The global impact has been unprecedented, our healthcare system stretched to its limits. We have been called upon to make extreme sacrifices and we have responded with one voice and a singular purpose. Acts of mitigation and containment have been embraced, sustained and ultimately will see us through to a successful and healthy conclusion.

As you are no doubt aware, Covid-19 has changed the practice of medicine dramatically. We have accepted the necessity to practice remote and virtual medicine. Telephone and email communications have allowed regular contact for advice and reassurance but fail to replace the fundamental doctor-patient relationship. "Routine" examinations have been postponed or cancelled.

Physical distancing measures and fear of contagious viral exposure present obstacles for access to every aspect of healthcare. My office has been in lockdown mode since mid-March and although it is expected that we will slowly introduce limited and restricted visits, I do not anticipate a return to business as usual in the foreseeable future. As you can well imagine, this situation is far from ideal, a major departure from what I have experienced in my professional life for the past 50 years.

On March 23rd, you were to have received a letter from me announcing my intention to retire from medical practice, effective June 30th. The precipitous arrival of Covid-19 and the extreme measures that have since been undertaken to mitigate the pandemic and its repercussions and consequences abruptly forced a change of plans.

Since then, I have been in my office 6 days a week and available 24/7, responding to your calls, emails and ensuring that your essential prescription needs are met. These vital services will continue and support your immediate needs as we move forward to some form of re-opening. My practice, however, will look much different in the coming months and will require your understanding, patience and acceptance that we are facing an imposed transition and a "new normal" which will likely not resemble anything that you have become accustomed to previously.

On September 30, 2020, I will officially retire from active medical practice and the office will close. This decision has been carefully considered and despite the current situation, there will be no perfect time for an exit strategy. For many of you, our relationship spans decades and for some, dates back to the early 70's. I have delivered your beautiful babies and in many cases continue to look after your children and grandchildren, fulfilling the true definition of family medicine. I have seen you through illness but have always emphasized wellness. We have shared the heights of happiness and have survived the depths of sadness together.

You have entrusted me with your care unconditionally. Your respect has strengthened our bond and provided me the gift and privilege of being your doctor. For this, I am forever indebted.

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For over thirty years, Angie has worked with me and on your behalf. She has considered you her extended family and has always ensured that your appointments, consultations, investigations and navigation through our complex health system is seamless and less complicated. Her personal, compassionate and professional approach to my practice has allowed me to focus on what I do best, while she has done everything else that relates to your immediate and personal needs. Angie has been an invaluable asset to all of us.

Retirement will be a novel and challenging adventure. I appreciate that these times further complicate my decision. I will miss the daily patient contact. Your personal stories have always stimulated, enlightened and enhanced my clinical experiences. These are the lasting memories I will take with me.

I wish you the best any doctor can wish his patients:

Good health, much happiness and a rich and fulfilling life.

It has been the honour of a lifetime to have cared for you and your families.

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Please see the next page for important instruction with respect to finding a new doctor, as well as your medical records.





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Finding a New Doctor

While I expect that this news will distress many of you, it will be necessary for all of us to move forward. Finding a new doctor is likely to be a challenge for some, especially in today's healthcare environment in Ontario. While I do not have a specific doctor to take over my office practice, I continue to actively explore possibilities on your behalf. It is hoped that more specific details will be available in the coming months prior to closure. Some interim suggestions include:

1. Ask family and friends whether their doctors are taking on new patients.
2. Contact "Health Care Connect" to assist in identifying physicians in your proximity who are accepting new patients at 1-800-445-1822.
3. Contact RSRS (see below) They will be overseeing the secure storage and retrieval of your medical charts and are often aware of physicians accepting new patients.

In the event of a medical emergency, patients are instructed to go to the nearest hospital emergency room.

Obtaining Your Medical Record

The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario mandate that I am responsible for maintaining your original chart records for a specified period of time prior to shredding. I have contracted that responsibility with RSRS, a physician-managed company, to safely and securely store all patients' records from my practice. They have also been asked to assist you in obtaining a *certified and searchable copy* for yourself and/or your new doctor. Your signed consent for record release or transfer will be efficiently managed on your behalf.

I encourage all patients to arrange for a certified copy of your medical records. The record will provide continuity for your ongoing care and should be accessible to you and your new doctor, once identified. I've included an infographic illustrating 10 reasons why this is so important.

Please do not delay in making these essential arrangements by contacting RSRS today. Please proceed on the web to:

www.recordsolutions.ca/DrHGoldstein

or call RSRS at

1-888-563-3732, Ext. 1

Note: There is a fee for copying and transferring medical records as this is not an OHIP-covered benefit.

*RSRS is a physician-managed medical records storage facility. They are fully compliant with the guidelines set by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario and the relevant privacy regulations.