

## The Welland McMaster Health Team

The Welland McMaster Health Team is a team of interdisciplinary Health Care Professionals and affiliated Family Physicians who provide primary care to over 17,000 patients of the Niagara Region. One of their missions is to foster a patient-centered experience. Their reputation is built on their actions, and the accountability of their team is measured by the difference they make in the lives of their patients and community. An important component of making a difference is making the service and delivery of service accessible to everyone.

This starts with clear communication.

At the start of the Pandemic, the Family Health Team immediately implemented Covid-19 safety barriers in their reception areas. Shortly after, it became clear that both the staff and the patients were experiencing challenges in communication through the protective barriers. As a solution, two of our STS-K002 window intercom systems with hearing loop antennas were installed.

### Finding the right fit

Marc Gagnon, Market Development Manager at Hearing Loops Canada, and his team originally installed an STS-K071 kit. Soon after the installment, however, it was realized by both the installers and the Family Health Team that a more robust solution was needed. Given the nature of the work the administrative receptionists do, and most importantly to protect the privacy of patient information, it was decided that a kit with mute capabilities would be most beneficial. As a result, two STS-K002 systems were



installed. The system features our STS-SU1 Staff Unit, which includes a switch to mute on the staff side, a patient side counter microphone and speaker, as well as a hearing loop antenna. The mute feature allows the administrative team to control the system with ease and ensure patient information confidentiality on their side of the partition. The hearing loop antenna makes it a hearing accessible space for those who have a t-coil enabled hearing aid.

These window intercom systems are installed where communication is hindered due to glass partitions and facemasks. Safety should be the main priority, but not at the expense of quality communication. By installing these kits, the Welland McMaster Family Health Team can ensure safety *and* provide clear communication, providing a better patient experience.

Patient traffic through their offices has been reduced due to Covid-19, but the communication solution is helping to ensure safety and more accessible communications. As traffic increases, there may be future installments to another four windows, but for now, this was an excellent place to start.

“As Executive Director of the Welland McMaster Family Health Team, we are always striving to ensure the best possible patient experience. Working with Marc and his team to implement the Hearing Assistive Technology ensures patient accessibility and ease in communicating with our administrative team, while still protecting the health and well-being of both the patient and our staff. So far we have been very satisfied with the technology and the service response Marc and the Hearing Loops Canada team has provided.”

– Jim Borysko, Executive Director

