

## **Paid Parking Frequently Asked Questions**

*Parking used to be free at SMGH. Why do I have to pay for parking now?*

Like many Ontario hospitals, SMGH is facing a deficit and must take action to balance its budget, as directed by the provincial government. Through negotiations with the SW LHIN, it was suggested that the MHA implement paid parking as one strategy to help generate revenue to support hospital programs and services. Health care officials across the province agree that paid parking at hospitals in Ontario may eventually be mandated by the province. Paid parking will be implemented at SMGH as of July 1, 2008 .

*What's this going to cost?*

Parking rates will be \$5/day or \$2/1 hour for visitors. Visitor parking is at the front north and south lots during hospital business hours. There is a designated drop off/pick up area that will not require payment within 15 minutes.

*Who gets the money that I pay for parking?*

The SMGH Foundation is administering the revenues from this new parking system. A portion of every parking payment will help fund priority patient care needs including site equipment purchases and renovation/building projects. By paying for parking, you are helping to build a stronger workplace and community.

*What if I don't have any coins for the machine?*

The paid parking system being implementing at Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital is a solar-powered Pay and Display one. The machines that issue the tickets will accept coins, bills, and credit cards. When you park, you simply pay at the machine, take the receipt issued and display it on your vehicle dashboard. There are two coin machines if change is needed, one in the SMGH lobby and another in the Emergency Department waiting room.

*Will this parking system cost a lot to install and maintain?*

Revenue generated from paid parking will basically pay for the initial installation of the system. Our parking management firm – Precise Parklink Inc – makes all the upfront investments required. A reserve fund will be created from a portion of the revenue generated from paid parking to cover the costs of needed improvements and upkeep of the parking lots, such as snow removal.

*What if I get into the lot and there's no parking spaces left?*

With the convenient Pay and Display units, there is no charge or barrier to leave an SMGH parking lot if you are unable to find a space.

With almost 100,000 patient visits every year, SMGH parking supply can be congested, especially during peak hospital hours. A parking lot expansion is needed along with improvements to the traffic flow of in-patient drop off/pick up areas. In addition, it must be ensured that emergency vehicles are uninterrupted by traffic at all times, and are

provided with a clear path to arrive at the emergency department. Funding from paid parking will help the hospital to implement these kinds of improvements.

*Isn't this going to cost money to patrol and monitor?*

The company that is installing this system – Precise Parklink Inc – is our parking system partner and they will monitor and issue fines for parking infractions. Precise Parklink is responsible for the patrol and monitoring of the parking lots. Visitors will be able to park in specifically designated Visitor areas - the front north and south lots during hospital business hours. Of course, the emergency spaces will continue to be available for emergency drop-off only. However, parking in those spaces is limited and Precise Parklink will monitor and patrol this area and issue parking tickets if a car parked for longer than 15 minutes. If a visitor parks in a staff designated lot (behind hospital), Precise Parklink will issue a parking infraction fine. Precise Parklink retains revenue from fines paid.

*What if I'm just picking up my mother, or dropping my spouse at an outpatient appointment?*

There will be a designated drop off/pick up area that will not require payment within 15 minutes. Improvements to the flow of traffic at SMGH parking lots for emergency vehicles will be additional benefit with this new payment system.

*I was thinking about volunteering at the hospital. Do I have to pay for parking too?*

Volunteers and auxiliary members will be provided with free parking. Please stop by the SMGH Foundation office for a validation ticket display.

*I live down the street from the hospital. What if everyone starts parking in my space?*

The SMGH Foundation has worked closely with the municipality to ensure that our neighbours will not be inconvenienced by this new parking system.

*Who do I contact if I want more information?*

You can send your comments or concerns by contacting the SMGH Foundation. The office is located off the main hospital lobby (across from the Gift Shop). Business hours are 8:30- 4:30, after hours, visitors may leave a phone message (from the lobby visitor phone) at extension 5020. Or visit our web site at [www.smghfoundation.on.ca](http://www.smghfoundation.on.ca)