



Rexall Health Centre first York Region business to earn 'Friendly to Seniors' certification

Richmond Hill, Ontario – February 7, 2008 – It's a fact: seniors are an important and growing population and as consumers, they have unique wants and needs. Richmond Hill's Rexall Health Centre is at the forefront of this trend by becoming a certified Friendly to Seniors pharmacy – the first business in York Region to achieve this distinctive certification.

Friendly to Seniors is an innovative, new certification program provided by CHATS (Community Home Assistance to Seniors), whereby York Region businesses and organizations are assessed for their 'senior-friendliness', in respect to their senior appeal, accessibility, safety and attitude toward seniors. Rexall Health Centre immediately saw the value in investing in the Friendly to Seniors certification, since many of its clients are senior-aged and the Centre is uniquely focused on helping its clients take a more proactive approach to their health.

"We recognize that service is critical to our business and programs like CHATS Friendly to Seniors only enhances our ability to meet the needs of our senior clients," says Maryann Istiloglu, Manager, Community Health Events at Rexall Health Centre. "The Friendly to Seniors program is very important to our staff. The training provides them with the skills needed to be more responsive to our senior clients and ensure they feel confident in their choice of pharmacy."

The Friendly to Seniors training provided staff at Rexall Health Centre with the skills and knowledge they needed to more effectively meet the needs of senior-aged clients. For instance, the training helped staff appreciate the physical challenges that seniors face, such as picking things up, reading small print, bending over, and so on.

"The program was developed by seniors, for seniors," says Hillary Richardson, the CHATS Friendly to Seniors Co-ordinator. "It responds to the preferences and concerns of an increasing number of older people. By working with businesses, services, seniors, and people who work with older adults, we can influence changing attitudes and behaviors towards seniors."

In order to achieve a Friendly to Seniors certification, trained senior-aged CHATS Friendly to Seniors volunteers conduct assessments with organizations and businesses in the region and provide recommendations which are then incorporated into an action plan. Following the assessments, volunteers conduct workshops with staff, educating them about the aging process, seniors' lifestyles, as well as their needs and challenges. These informative workshops help businesses to enhance their communication skills, customer service and accessibility for seniors in the community. Once a minimum 60 per cent of the staff has successfully completed the training, the official CHATS Friendly to Seniors certification is awarded.

To find out more about becoming 'Friendly to Seniors,' call CHATS at 905-713-6596 or 1-877-452-4287, or e-mail friendlytoseniors@chats.on.ca

To experience Rexall Health Centre's 'Friendly to Seniors' approach, visit them at the Weston Produce Plaza, 9625 Yonge St., Richmond Hill, or call 905-508-9403.



About Rexall Health Centre

Featuring unique services like private pharmacist consultations, health clinics and in-store health and wellness seminars, Rexall Health Centre truly is a leading edge pharmacy, dedicated to improving patient health and wellness.

Located in Richmond Hill, Rexall Health Centre is a new pharmacy model under the Katz Group Canada family of pharmacies umbrella. It offers integrated access to health education, clinical services and health care professionals including pharmacists, a doctor of pharmacy, registered nurses and more, all under one roof. With extensive research into the wants and needs of today's clientele, this new model was developed by Rexall, pharmacy education leaders, health professionals and designers. For more information, visit www.rexallhealthcentre.ca.

About CHATS – Community Home Assistance to Seniors

In 1980, CHATS was launched by a caring group of York Region residents as a charitable organization, to assist local seniors in maintaining an independent lifestyle. Since then, CHATS has evolved into a nationally-recognized organization that delivers a continuum of services to meet the changing needs of more than 4,000 seniors and family caregivers each year.

CHATS takes an innovative approach to wellness by focusing on its clients in a holistic way, enhancing their physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health. Programs and services include in-home help and care; home delivered meals (Meals on Wheels); transportation services; an adult day program; seniors wellness programs throughout York Region; caregiver relief, support and education, and much more.

Under the strong, experienced know-how of about 160 staff, supported by a Board of Directors, committees, and about 600 volunteers, CHATS embraces professional business savvy with caring, compassionate dedication – a unique combination that ultimately benefits its clients, community partners, and the community over-all. For more information, visit www.chats.on.ca

CHATS has partnered with other organizations in Toronto and Windsor that have been offering the Friendly to Seniors certification program. Together, the organizations represent the Friendly to Seniors Ontario Association.

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