
Local Health Integration Networks: Building a True System

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There are many important changes happening in the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care – changes that will allow it to fulfill its mandate to support and guide Ontario's health system and allow it to advise government in the best way possible.

Last week, this bulletin highlighted how the ministry is moving towards April 1, 2007 when Ontario's 14 Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) take on the role of planning, funding and integrating local health services. That marks the next significant step in the government's plan to integrate and coordinate health services.

As we move closer to April 1, the ministry will provide more detailed information that you will need as we all begin to operate in the new world of LHINs. This will be done through a variety of vehicles, including this bulletin, the ministry web site, Q&As, memos, and training sessions.

Ministry Transition

Introducing LHINs is a big step, but that alone couldn't bring about the changes needed to help build our many excellent health services into an outstanding health system.

To align with these external changes and to refocus internally, Deputy Minister Ron Sapsford announced in January, 2006 that the ministry would be reorganized over the next few years.

This reorganization will allow the ministry to focus more on providing overall direction and leadership for the province's health care system. Essentially, the ministry's future role will focus on stewardship, on planning, and on guiding resources to bring value to the health system.

Stewardship will see the ministry take responsibility for:

Establishing overall strategic direction and provincial priorities for the health system

- Developing legislation, regulations, standards, policies, and directives to support those strategic directions
- Monitoring and reporting on the performance of the health system and the health of Ontarians
- Planning for and establishing funding models and levels of funding for the health care system.

The ministry will be less involved when it comes to the actual delivery of health care and will provide overall direction and leadership for the system.

This new role will allow the health system to deliver more responsive and more sustainable health care. That's because Ontario's health system will be based on accurate forecasting and analysis, and effective planning and implementation.

The ministry has created four new divisions:

- 1) Health System Information Management – John McKinley, Assistant Deputy Minister
- 2) Health System Strategy – Adalsteinn (Steini) Brown, Assistant Deputy Minister
- 3) Health System Investment; and Funding – Maureen Adamson, Assistant Deputy Minister
- 4) Health System Accountability and Performance – Hugh McLeod, Assistant Deputy Minister.

In addition, a number of corporate functions and ministry direct services have been organized into a new Corporate and Direct Services Division – Dawn Ogram, Assistant Deputy Minister. The Public Health Division and the Health Human Resources Division won't be affected at this time.

Last October, the Deputy Minister announced a transitional organizational structure for the ministry which will be phased in by December 31, 2007.

The ministry has been reviewing and redefining the Regional Office business processes and functions to align with the ministry's new stewardship role. As LHINs take on their full responsibilities on April 1, they will assume new functions and processes to fulfill their mandate. Similarly, the ministry will take on new functions and processes in keeping with the ministry's new stewardship role.

Health service providers should continue to work with Regional Offices until there is specific direction from the ministry to change reporting relationships.

As we move forward toward the vision of a new health care system, you will increasingly hear from your local LHIN offices.

New Appointments

Director LHIN Liaison Branch

Carrie Hayward has been appointed the Director of the new LHIN Liaison Branch, in the Health System Accountability and Performance Division. She assumed this position effective January 22. In her new role, Carrie will provide leadership in formalizing the relationship between the ministry and the 14 LHINs. This includes managing their accountability agreements and memoranda of understanding as Crown Agencies. She will also be responsible for managing the provincial and priority programs that will continue to report directly to the ministry, as well as French Language Health Services and the AIDS Bureau. A plan and timetable will be communicated shortly which describes when functions and units will transition to the new branch under Carrie's leadership. She will continue to act as Director of the Mental Health and Addictions Branch in the Community Health Division for an interim period.

Director Financial Management Branch

Pier Falotico has been appointed the Director of the new Financial Management Branch in the Corporate and Direct Services Division. Pier will be responsible for the financial management and processing of transactions associated with the LHINs and other programs retained by the ministry. He will be responsible for controllership functions that relate to funding in excess of \$20 billion, transaction processing including claims-based funding initiatives, annual reconciliation of funding provided to health service providers, and financial reporting. One of Pier's first assignments in his new role will be to implement the new financial processes and controllership functions as they relate to LHIN and ministry-managed programs.

Please regularly check the ministry's website at <http://www.health.gov.on.ca/transformation/lhin/lhinmn.html> for the latest news on the ministry's transformation.

This update is produced by the LHIN Communication Team
For more information call INFOline at 1-888-779-7767
8:30 am to 5:00 p.m. Monday to Friday