



Northern Shores News

A Newsletter of the Northern Shores District Health Council

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Minister of Health and Long-Term Care Announces
the Northern Shores Children's Treatment Centre

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(as of December 1, 2002)

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On November 18, 2002, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care Tony Clement announced, at the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Regional Health Centre in North Bay, the government's commitment to move forward with the Northern Shores Children's Treatment Centre (CTC). The Minister stated that, "The Children's Treatment Centre will enhance the recruitment, retention and ongoing professional development of a wide variety of pediatric-trained health professionals and will create the required milieu for parent support and education activities".

Planning for children's rehabilitation services has been a significant priority for the Northern Shores District Health Council (NSDHC). The complexity of the current array of children's rehabilitation services has been highlighted in community consultations with parents of special needs children and service providers.

In March 1999, the Health Services Restructuring Commission also recognized the needs in this area and advised that an assessment of children's services be undertaken and that consideration be given to a CTC or other appropriate organization to better serve children and their families. The NSDHC responded by completing the report entitled *A System Design Plan for the Integration of Children's Rehabilitation Services* in May 2000, which recommended the establishment of a CTC. In response to this recommendation, the Minister appointed a CTC Implementation Task Force in late 2001.

Peter Deane, NSDHC Executive Director, stated that, "We are very pleased to hear the announcement from the Minister today reiterating this government's intention to move ahead. Council will continue to support the community and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term

Care to bring this much needed service to the region. Children and their families are the big winners in this announcement."

The Minister announced that CTCs provide much needed services to children with special needs and that the new CTC will serve the Districts of Muskoka, Nipissing and Parry Sound. Additionally, he stated that the North Bay General Hospital will act as the Interim Board for the new Centre.

Currently there are 19 CTCs in the province serving approximately 40,000 children and youth with special needs and their families. The new Northern Shores CTC, slated to get under way in early 2003, will be Ontario's 20th.

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Comings and Goings

It is with sincere thanks that the NSDHC bids farewell to two long serving members.

Glenda Poupore (Nipissing provider representative) has been the Council chairperson for the last two years. She has been on the NSDHC since its inception in 1998 and prior to that was a member of the Nipissing-Timiskaming DHC. Glenda has been very involved in the DHC's long-term and palliative care planning work. Glenda's relaxed nature and sense of humour will be missed by Council members and staff.

Sylvia Fenton (Timiskaming municipal representative) has been an NSDHC Vice-Chairperson and Treasurer for the past two years, and served as Chairperson of the Council's French Language Health Services Committee. As a member of both the Northern Shores and previous Nipissing-Timiskaming DHCs, Sylvia has always worked to ensure that rural areas receive equitable access to necessary health services.

Council has recommended **Bob Norris** (Timiskaming consumer representative) to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care as the new NSDHC Chairperson.

Integration and Coordination – NSDHC Perspective

A large number of organizations from the Northern Shores area attended the recent conference on Opportunities for Health Services Integration and Coordination in the North held on October 10 & 11, 2002 in Thunder Bay. The objectives of the conference were:

- to develop a shared understanding of the unique challenges and opportunities of health care in Northern Ontario; and
- to identify the critical success factors, guiding principles and priorities for action to facilitate enhanced coordination of health services.

The following items were identified as the most important priorities for action to advance the coordination and integration of health services delivery in the North.

- The MOHLTC must provide an enabling framework for local integration initiatives.
- Local/regional health care service providers should assume leadership in collaborating both within and

across sectors to establish joint mechanisms (e.g. steering committee/coordinating body, task force) to pursue the potential for greater coordination and integration of health services delivery to patients/clients within their communities.

- Government must expedite access for Northern communities to information technology and integrated health records as a fundamental requirement for improved coordination and integration of health services delivery.

A number of critical success factors were identified as:

- the relationship among the parties;
- the process;
- Government support and funding;
- evaluation; and
- technology.

The MOHLTC's North Region Office will be working with the three Northern DHCs to identify ways of moving the results of the conference forward. At this point in time, the scope of the integration and coordination planning activities and provider expectations have not been determined.

The NSDHC has always supported increasing the level of integration and coordination within and across various health care sectors (i.e. horizontally and vertically). The benefits to the people that use health services (being all of us) undoubtedly outweigh the costs and efforts that are required to enhance the service level linkages between the myriad of health care providers.

To this end, all NSDHC planning work has emphasized service coordination where providers themselves have identified the opportunities and activities that would lead to the provision of better integrated care. The list of both front line and structural recommendations developed locally related to mental health, addiction, hospital, children's and long-term care services (to name a few) is comprehensive and impressive.

As Mr. Roy Romanow indicates in *Building on Values: The Future of Health Care in Canada* (November 2002), "We must transform our health care "system" from one in which a multitude of participants, working in silos, focus primarily on managing illness, to one in which they work collaboratively to deliver a seamless, integrated array of services to Canadians, from prevention and promotion to primary care, to hospital, community, mental health, home and end-of-life care."

Mr. Romanow's observation is not new, but it once again reinforces the need to increase coordination to better deliver services to the population and more effectively use scarce human and financial resources. The

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imperative is no longer about planning for better coordination, this has been done. It is about planning, supporting and achieving the implementation. Highlights of current NSDHC planing work include . . .

Hospital Services

Muskoka Hospitals

NSDHC staff met with the boards of directors and senior management of the two Muskoka hospitals in October 2002 to present highlights of the Muskoka Hospital Profile prepared by the NSDHC. The Profile is a means of using information to initiate joint program and service planning between the two facilities. The hospitals have agreed to further investigate existing linkages and identify areas for development.

North Bay Regional Health Centre Official Groundbreaking

The official groundbreaking ceremony for the new North Bay Regional Health Centre (as recommended by the Health Services Restructuring Commission) was held on November 18, 2002. Minister of Health and Long-Term Care Tony Clement was the special guest. The new facility is expected to open in 2005.

Nipissing-Timiskaming Hospital Network

The Network has identified a number of priority activities from its Program Plan for attention over the coming months. Although specific recommendations will be addressed, the broad categories that have been selected are: care maps, manpower planning, orthopedics, mental health, telemedicine and complex continuing care (geriatrics). The NSDHC continues to provide support to the Network on an ongoing basis.

Mental Health

Nipissing Mental Health System Group

With the support of the NSDHC, the System Group is working on building partnerships among the agency participants around:

- an interagency service agreement to better coordinate services in Mattawa;
- a common referral form;
- exploring the feasibility of a mobile crisis intervention service; and
- common screening tools between mental health and addictions agencies.

Northeast Mental Health Implementation Task Force (NEMHITF)

The NEMHITF held its final meeting on December 2 and 3, 2002 in North Bay at which time the final regional implementation plan was reviewed and endorsed. The

Task Force will be submitting its recommendations to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care for consideration.

Health Human Resources

DHCs have been requested by the MOHLTC to undertake a province-wide project aimed at enhancing health human resources (HHR) capacity and utilization. The Ministry released the project guidelines associated with this endeavour in mid-October. The project will involve local stakeholders in a process that identifies and shares redeployment strategies in addressing growing HHR challenges and pressures. Information gathered will assist provincial planning, policy development, and improve local service delivery, with the goal of impacting population health. The local planning forums and resulting reports are to be completed by March 31, 2003.

Long-Term Care

Memory Assessment Working Group (MAWG)

In the fall, focus group meetings were held in the Northeast Region to update community partners on the status of the Business Case for Specialized Geriatric Services and the Memory Assessment Network. Since funds have not been secured for Phase 1 of the business plan, the MAWG has decided to pilot the permanent model outlined in the Business Case. A coordinator will be hired to assess the need for services, establish contracts for service and perform an intake function. Further, an information technology intern will be hired (pending funding from FedNor) and a research component will be undertaken through Huntington University.

Other recent NSDHC long-term care planning work has included:

- supporting the development of dementia networks; and
- working with the developmental disabilities sector.

Addiction Services

Northern Shores Implementation Committee (NSIC)

With the support of the NSDHC, the NSIC is working to address issues related to further defining roles and responsibilities within the addiction treatment continuum and the joint operating plan development process.

Concurrent Disorders

The Ministry has requested that the two Northeast DHCs assist in the implementation planning for the regional Concurrent Disorders Program. Although specific details have not yet been defined, this initiative crosses

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Council's existing planning priorities of addiction services and mental health planning.

Regional Planning

Child and Adolescent Mental Health and Psychiatric Services

Developing a regional plan for specialized children's mental health services was identified as a planning priority in the Council's 2002-2003 Operating Plan. Planners from the two Northeastern Ontario DHCs will jointly produce a report consisting of directions that build on the regional framework that was developed and submitted in May 2000 by the Northeast Steering Committee of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric and Mental Health Services.

Northeast Dialysis Services Report

The MOHLTC completed its review of the *Northeastern Ontario Dialysis Report* (February 2002) and has requested clarification from the Northeastern Ontario Dialysis Steering Committee regarding: treatment, site capacity, and prioritizing recommendations. The Ministry has asked the Committee to continue to review dialysis needs in the Northeast and to provide recommendations to the Ministry via the District Health Councils. The final report of Phase 2 is scheduled to be completed in December 2002.

Methadone Maintenance Treatment (MMT) Regional Working Group

The MMT Regional Working Group was established by the MOHLTC to make recommendations on the most appropriate service delivery model for the provision of MMT services in the Northeast. The Working Group is being facilitated by the MOHLTC with the support of the two Northeast DHCs, the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, and the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

Regional Eating Disorder Outreach Program

The Northeast DHCs provided initial planning support to the Regional Eating Disorder Program as it was established over the past two years through the Sudbury Regional Hospital. During the summer of 2002, the MOHLTC responded favorably to a request to remove the age limit for program admission. This change allows the program to treat individuals when symptoms begin. Other recent Program enhancements include:

- expanded mandate to provide Level 1 outpatient care throughout Northeastern Ontario;
- the on-site clinical treatment team will offer training, and consultation to community-based providers; and

- videoconferencing technology will be used to support service delivery as close to home as possible for clients.

Stay Tuned

Northern Shores Health System Profile

The Northern Shores Health System Profile represents the continued evolution of the Northern Shores Hospital Profile (June 2000). The primary goal of the new Profile will be to increase access to consistent and comparable health information to support integrated system planning. Additionally, a section of the document will focus on health and health system monitoring based on a District appropriate set of indicators. The timing of the Profile's development will allow for the inclusion of very recent hospital utilization information (2001/2002), the results of the 2001 Canadian Community Health Survey and a significant amount of Census 2001 statistics.

Northern Health Issues Strategy

The NSDHC is participating in an initiative aimed at identifying priority health and health system issues in Northern Ontario. Under the auspices of Networking in the North (a Northern hospitals' forum), the project steering committee is in the process of organizing a May 2003 regional conference for all human services providers to be held in Sudbury.

MOHLTC NEWS

To stay up-to-date with recent provincial developments, below you will find a number of MOHLTC headlines taken from www.newswire.ca/government/ontario.

September 2002

- Nearly 85% of Ontarians Satisfied with Their Healthcare
- Ground-Breaking Ceremony for New Long-Term Care Facility in Powassan

October 2002

- Eves' Government Invites Communities Across Ontario to Apply for New Nurse Practitioners (9 positions were allocated to the Northern Shores area)
- Health Minister to Launch New Province-Wide Consumer Health Web Portal

November 2002

- Ernie Eves' Government Invests up to \$350 Million to Enhance Patient Care in Hospitals
- Ernie Eves' Government Announces Northern Ontario's First Family Health Network (in North Bay)
- Ontario One Step Closer to Increased Access to MRIs and CT Scans

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- Eves' Government Invests in Diabetes Prevention for Kids