

Surge Capacity Demo Project Launched

The Surge Capacity Management demonstration project was officially launched in the Champlain LHIN on July 22nd, 2007. Attendees learned about Surge Capacity Planning and Management from the Provincial Team including **Dr. Chris Mazza** Physician Advisor, **Julie Trpkovski** Program Coordinator and **Dr. Bernard Lawless**, Provincial Lead, Critical Care and Trauma. **Dr. Redouane Bouali**, Critical Care LHIN Leader, Champlain LHIN presented on the necessity of building Critical Care Networks to ensure quality and patient safety. Keynote speaker **Peter Varga**, Director of Critical Care, Respiratory, Oncology and Medicine at Humber River Regional Hospital, provided an overview on the implementation process of surge capacity principles at his community hospital. Mr. Varga's presentation showed how surge capacity management requires system integration to be successful. **Steve Farquhar**, Director of Operations at ORNGE Transport Medicine concluded the day with an educational session on the future of critical care transport. Thank you to all the speakers for your informative and engaging sessions.

The LHIN demonstration project will test implementation of a principled approach and framework to manage surge capacity and leverage critical care resources in each organization and across the LHIN. The surge framework classifies surges as “**minor**” if they can be managed by a single hospital, “**moderate**” if they require the cooperation of several hospitals across a LHIN and “**major**” if the response requires the combined critical care resources of several LHINs or the entire province. The demonstration project will enable each participating hospital to strengthen communication, improve partnerships and ensure access to critical care resources in a timely manner.

CCRTs Show Impressive Patient Safety Gains

The **Ottawa Hospital General Site**, the earliest among four demonstration sites to implement a Critical Care Response Team (CCRT), continues to realize very impressive gains in areas of patient safety through the improved access to and quality of critical care intervention provided by CCRTs.

The team averages over 40 consults per 1000 inpatients admissions per month, an impressive call rate, and has managed to decrease the cardiac arrests occurring among its ward patients by 48% and decreased its 48-hour readmission rate from wards to the ICU by 37%. The medical leadership of **Dr. Alan Baxter**, the administrative leadership of **Ms. Wendy Fortier** and the nursing leadership of **Ms. Janet Moore-Holmes** achieved these outcomes for their patients with support from physicians, nurses, respiratory therapists and administrators across the hospital.

On July 18th, 2007 CCRT site leads and co-leads from across Ontario participated in an “Ask the Experts” teleconference that produced thoughtful, diverse and instructive feedback for sites that are in the development phase of implementing their intensivist led CCRTs. The call explored a range of different approaches and issues to help meet the goals of ongoing education. Other areas of discussion included addressing barriers to patient safety, strategies to engage other hospital in meeting educational needs identified by the CCRT and the ward nurses.

Critical Care Information System Update

As part of the second wave of the rollout, the following 12 hospitals will implement the Critical Care Information System (CCIS) by October:

- Brockville General Hospital
- Cambridge Memorial Hospital
- Cornwall Community Hospital
- Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital
- Lakeridge Health Corporation
- Quinte Healthcare Corporation
- Ross Memorial Hospital
- Rouge Valley Health System
- Southlake Regional Health Centre
- St. Joseph's Health Centre (Toronto)
- St. Joseph's Health Care System (Hamilton)
- St. Mary's General Hospital

LHIN report users are being registered to access LHIN-level reports from the CCIS. Small upgrades to enhance the existing functionality of the CCIS are being implemented in planned releases for the remainder of 2007. A report upgrade will be available to all registered executive and report users on August 10. This will improve the accuracy and definitions of some of the online reports. Also, as part of a formal consultation process for future versions of the CCIS, the Critical Care Secretariat and CCIS Provincial Project Team are contacting a wide representation of stakeholders to capture their opinions regarding priorities for data elements that will serve as utilization and quality indicators for provincial critical care resources.

Recommendations from the focus groups and survey results will be reviewed in a consensus conference at the end of October to determine the most urgent data elements and functions to be introduced in following CCIS upgrades.

Ethical Issues of Access to Care

The Admission, Discharge and Triage (A/D/T) Guidelines Working Group has finalized draft "Ontario Critical Care Access and Utilization Clinical Guidelines", which will be distributed to the broader critical care community for further consultation. An online feedback mechanism will facilitate this process and focus groups will be conducted in the fall via the Ontario Telemedicine Networks. Please visit the website for focus group dates and to participate in this important initiative.

Critical Care LHIN Leaders Meet to Review System Design and Capacity

On August 13th, **Dr. Bernard Lawless** and Ontario's **Critical Care LHIN Leaders** held the first annual Critical Care System Design and Capacity Review. They reviewed data on:

- future demand for critical care capacity (at the provincial and LHIN-level),
- current patient transfer patterns and the location of specialty services
- current MOHLTC capacity expansion plans (approved capital plans).

Based on this review, participants developed recommendations for improving Ontario's critical care system. These recommendations will form the basis of a report to be submitted to the LHIN CEOs and MOHLTC senior managers in the fall.

For More Information

Please visit us on the web:
www.health.gov.on.ca/criticalcare or contact:

Robert McKay
Manager, Critical Care Secretariat
Phone: (416) 550-0037
Email: Robert.McKay@ontario.ca