

CENTRAL WEST LOCAL HEALTH INTEGRATION NETWORK

Bulletin 2 – March 2006

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Why is Community Engagement important to us?

Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) will be responsible for planning, integrating and eventually funding local health services in 14 different geographic areas of Ontario.

The mandate of LHINs is to restore equity to Ontario's health care system, improving access to health services and the quality of health services through better integration and coordination.

LHINs are founded on the principle that health care is best planned, coordinated and funded in an integrated manner within the local community because local people can best determine their health service needs and priorities.

The Central West LHIN wants to make sure that our vision for health services, our priorities and strategic directions, and our activities reflect information we have received from the community. Local health care priorities will be identified at the local level, by people who are closer to what is really going on.

One of the first tasks of the Central West LHIN will be to develop an Integrated Health Services Plan (IHSP). The success, credibility and durability of the first IHSP will depend on listening to the public, health care users and providers. We will engage actively in open communication and broad community consultation to determine the health service needs and priorities within the Central West LHIN's borders.

What do we mean by Community Engagement?

The Central West LHIN is developing approaches to help learn from the experiences and insights of the public, health care users and providers.

We have four **ultimate goals** for the community engagement process:

- 1) *Focus on the people who use health care* - We will place the client at the centre and engage directly with those who are most knowledgeable about their experience and satisfaction with health care services – the residents of the Central West LHIN.
- 2) *Enhance local accountability* - By providing the public, local health care users and providers with direct opportunities for input into our decision-making, we aim to maximize community input, acceptance, and commitment to common goals, respective responsibilities, and mutual accountability.
- 3) *Balance priorities* - Informing and involving the public is the best approach to addressing community needs and responsibilities. We will create a shared sense of responsibility for achieving balance among many competing priorities.
- 4) *Develop system capacity & sustainability* - Communities are the best source of knowledge about their own needs and their own solutions. We will harness this knowledge and capacity, to identify needs and gaps, and to help build sustainable, long-term solutions.

Beyond our overall goals, we have **specific objectives** for our community engagement process:

- To provide the community with balanced and objective information to improve its understanding of the role of LHINs and the responsibilities and expectations of community members and health care providers.
- To obtain feedback and make recommendations on service gaps and opportunities for improved coordination.
- To work directly with the community to ensure that its concerns are understood and considered.
- To find and develop alternative and/or preferred services.

Central West has a set of **basic principles** that we will follow in our community engagement efforts. We will be:

Transparent

We will be open about the purpose, goals, accountabilities, expectations, and constraints of our community engagement initiatives and how the community's input will be used in decision-making.

Responsive

We will be respectful of, and responsive to, community input.

Timely

We will engage the community as early and often as possible in the planning process, allowing time for meaningful discussions and planning.

Inclusive

We will engage the public, health care users and providers, who have a stake in, or will be impacted by, our actions.

Accessible

We will engage with the diversity of the public, health care users and providers who will be affected by our decisions. We will ensure that all voices can be heard in the community engagement process.

Appropriate

We will use tools and approaches that are right for the purpose of our interaction.

Balanced

We will balance the participation and influence of the public, health care users and providers.

Accountable

We will monitor the effectiveness of our community engagement strategies.

The Central West LHIN will use everything from bulletins such as this, to a website, meetings, surveys, workshops, newsletters, speaking opportunities and media outreach. These tools will be used to engage in meaningful discussions with the public, health care users and providers. We will be attentive to the diversity of the population of the Central West LHIN.

Who are we?

Central West LHIN Board of Directors

Chair	Joe McReynolds, Caledon East
Vice-Chair	Terry Miller, Brampton
Secretary	Kuldip Kandola, Brampton
Member	Sukhjinder (Mintoo) Mand, Toronto
Member	Jack Prazeres, Mississauga
Member	Mavis Wilson, Shelburne
CEO	Mimi Lowi-Young

How to Reach Us

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