

South West LHIN exchange



Summer 2009

LHIN Symposiums Aimed At Improving Health Care for Residents

Health Leaders Gather in Owen Sound and London

The South West LHIN recently held two symposiums with health system providers and other key partners to help design a health services system that meets the changing needs of local residents. More than 365 health care experts and leaders from health care and related organizations attended one of two symposiums held June 1-2 in Owen Sound and June 8-9 in London.



"The Symposiums were an important opportunity for the staff and board members of different health care providers and partners to work together to create a health care system that helps people stay healthy, delivers good care to them when they are sick and will be there for their children and their grandchildren as we plan for the future," said Norm Gamble, Chair of the South West LHIN Board.

"The perspective and participation of front-line providers and health system leaders across the LHIN is critical as we work together to improve health services and meet the health care needs of residents," said Michael Barrett, CEO of the South West LHIN. "For important issues, we have found that face-to-face interaction is beneficial in ensuring we capitalize on everyone's wisdom and experience."

The objective of the symposiums included designing future models of care for the following key health system programs: chronic disease prevention and management, cancer care, pediatrics, medicine, critical care, long-term care services, mental health and addictions, women's health, emergency services, surgical services and complex continuing care. Participants worked on developing a vision, principles and organizing the fundamental building blocks for each program. As well, they worked to identify unique and common enablers – such as a universal electronic health record system and health human resources – that would facilitate the implementation of new models of care across the system and guide the future configuration of health care services.



Over each of the two day workshops, participants discussed and provided their advice on improving health care delivery to residents focusing on the changes required to meet the health care needs of individuals and families in the future.

Participants included representatives from more than 150 health service providers from communities across the LHIN – including hospitals, long-term care homes, mental health and addiction agencies, community support services, community health centres, the South West Community Care Access Centre, as well as family physicians, public health units and others.

Both venues also included a one-day Board Symposium, where representative members from provider boards across the LHIN gathered to discuss the governance implications related to designing a future health care system for the South West.

The recommendations and input gathered at the symposiums will inform the Health System Design Blueprint in addition to other work being done. When complete the Blueprint will provide insight and guidance on determining appropriate service configurations and opportunities for integration. This will help ensure the LHIN is working towards a high-quality, sustainable health care system and fulfilling its mission. As well, the Blueprint will be a core component of a renewed South West LHIN Integrated Health Service Plan, which will guide LHIN activities for 2010 to 2013.



The South West LHIN Board and staff wish to thank everyone who participated in the symposiums for their input and commitment. The insight and knowledge of health system partners in the south west is a strong foundation from which to evolve the system to meet new challenges.

The South West LHIN has also begun extensive community engagement, with 11 sessions held in July, and six more sessions to be held in September to seek input from the public. The complete list of public sessions is available [here](#).

More information about the Health System Design Blueprint Project and Integrated Health Service Plan is available on the South West LHIN website at www.southwestlhin.on.ca.

Emergency Department Human Resources Study Completed

Emergency Departments (EDs) throughout Ontario are facing significant staffing challenges and those in the South West LHIN are no exception. Finding either doctors or nurses to fill emergency room shifts can be very difficult and, in a few instances, emergency rooms have come very close to temporary closure because of the lack of available qualified staff.

That's why the South West LHIN commissioned an extensive study late in 2008 of all 27 emergency departments at hospitals across the LHIN.

The main goal of this initiative was to develop strategies that will strengthen the emergency department system within the South West LHIN. This can only be achieved by addressing barriers from a human resources perspective to ensure our communities have access to emergency health care services in a timely, safe, and reliable manner.

The Emergency Department Human Resources project focused on identifying the key issues and developing sustainable strategies for Emergency Department human resource coverage. The project reviewed causes, successes, barriers and solutions to the ED human resource challenges

In the course of this study, Emergency Department Physicians, Chiefs of Staff and Nursing Leads were consulted, as well as hospital administrators. Statistical data on the use of emergency rooms was also obtained from hospital systems. We also contacted other parties not directly related to health care but who could provide information about events (winter road closures, for example) that may

impact access to or the availability of emergency department services.

The Emergency Department Human Resources Project Final Report was received by the South West LHIN Board of Directors at its meeting on May 27th 2009 and can be found in its entirety on the South West LHIN website at www.southwestlhin.on.ca.

The report outlines seven strategies that can be considered in the framework of the entire health care continuum. The seven strategies can be categorized into two types: those relating to the current human resources issues, and those that relate to system design and future models of care. Hospitals and other health professionals are encouraged to review the menu of strategies and determine how they may assist their circumstances for the benefit of the patients and system.

The strategies contained in this report dealing directly with human resources planning and leadership will be assessed in the coming months. This assessment will involve connection to provincial policy leaders and other stakeholders involved in human resources planning.

Those strategies that deal with future models of care and primary care connections will be incorporated into the LHIN's Health System Design, or Blueprint Project as it is commonly known, and will assist with our health system design work looking at our future health system.

More information on the Blueprint Project is available on the South West LHIN website at <http://www.southwestlhin.on.ca/>. Click on Current Initiatives in the left column, then on Health System Blueprint.

\$25 Million for Seniors' Health Initiatives

The South West LHIN is allocating almost \$25 million this year to ensure more seniors can continue to live independently and to ensure those requiring care can receive it in the most appropriate setting.

As part of the Aging at Home Strategy, the South West LHIN is allocating \$17,409,869 to help seniors receive needed health services in the comfort and dignity of their own homes and communities. This amount represents \$7,005,606 previously announced in Year One (08-09), as well as an additional \$10,404,263 for year two. The Aging at Home Strategy combines traditional health services – such as home care and supportive housing – with new, locally-driven, innovative approaches to caring for seniors.

In addition to the Aging at Home investments, the South West LHIN will also fund the following:

- \$4,896,500 for increased home care, personal support and homemaking services will be provided by the South West CCAC
- \$1,996,900 to invest in local solutions that will address provide support to individuals requiring an alternate level of care
- \$250,000 for nurse-led outreach teams to provide more care to residents in long-term care homes and help them avoid transfers to the hospital emergency departments

For additional details on these funding allocations, please view our May 19, 2009 news release and backgrounder in the "Newsroom" section of our website at www.southwestlhin.on.ca

MSAAs Formalize New Relationship With Community Providers

Months of work by dedicated staff at community health service providers has resulted in a new accountability relationship with the

South West LHIN. The approval of new service accountability agreements for community health service providers by the South West LHIN Board formalizes the start of this relationship. This important milestone was reached when the South West LHIN Board of Directors approved 88 Multi-Sector Service Accountability Agreements (MSAA) in March 2009 meeting. Called “M-SAAs”, they replace the operational agreements used by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care prior to the LHINs assuming this role.

The MSAA supports a collaborative relationship between each community provider and the LHIN to improve the health of Ontarians through better access to high quality health services, to co-ordinate health care in local health systems and to manage the health system at the local level effectively, and efficiently. They also include renewed commitments related to performance measurement, service levels, balanced budgets and accountability guidelines.

The MSAA process involved community support service agencies, community mental health and addictions agencies, community health centres and the community care access centre.

The road leading to the final agreements began in early 2008 with a detailed province-wide agreement development process to finalize the structure of the M-SAA template. With the new agreement ready, the South West LHIN, acknowledging that this was a change from past practice, invited leaders from all community health service providers to information sessions to plan for the new process collaboratively. In October 2008, over 200 leaders from community health service providers came together at four different sessions with the South West LHIN to learn about the agreement process. At these sessions, the South West LHIN had an opportunity to share details about governance, accountability and system-level strategies and goals. The sessions aimed to align the importance of the agreements with the direction of the local health system.

“We designed this supportive approach to allow the process to unfold smoothly and help strengthen relationships with the providers in our LHIN,” said Mark Brintnell, Acting Senior Director, Performance, Contracts and Accountability at the South West LHIN.

“The LHIN has made every effort to make the new process clear and is providing assistance so the change is easy,” added Michelle Hurtubise, Executive Director of the London InterCommunity Health Centre.

In addition to strengthening the LHIN’s relationship with providers, there are new changes to the agreement that add value for community providers. One example of this is the M-SAAs two-year duration, which provides funding predictability, improving the ability of providers to determine how services and programs are planned and delivered.

Long-term care homes will begin a similar process later in 2009.

Successful Webcast Series Wraps Up

Between early January and late March, the South West LHIN hosted *A Healthier Tomorrow*, a series of Webcasts aimed at fulfilling the LHIN’s commitment to keep key stakeholders informed about the progress being made on key initiatives.

The objectives of the webcast series were to:

- Inform partners of the LHIN’s vision, mission, values, and health system improvement goals.
- Inform partners of how the Priority Action Teams’ (PAT) future directions align with the LHIN’s goals and show how recently funded projects move us closer to the desired state identified by the PATs.
- Acknowledge contributions of volunteers and partners who were actively involved in informing and defining LHIN directions.

The South West LHIN invited over 800 people by email to attend and participate in the series.

The key audiences that were targeted included Priority Action Team members, all Advisory Groups and Steering Committees, Health Service Providers and Community Partners.

On average, approximately 150-200 people participated in each Webcast and a few more listened in via teleconference.

Participants were asked to evaluate the series once the final Webcast was complete. Seventy per cent indicated they were satisfied with the webcasts and found them to be an effective medium for information sharing, relevant to their work and a valuable use of their time.

Over half (60%) of participants also indicated that they plan to align the goals of their organization with the LHIN directions, to ensure there is complementary action in the health care system across the South West.

Anyone who missed the original series can view of the webcasts at any time. They are archived on the South West LHIN website [here](#).

Based on the success of the A Healthier Tomorrow Webcast series, the South West LHIN also completed a seventh Webcast, *Managing Change, Transforming Health Care: A South West LHIN Webcast on our Refreshed Integrated Health Service Plan and Health Service Blueprint Project* on April 30th that was attended by over 200 people. To access that webcast, see "Update 4" [here](#).

The episode topics for the A Healthier Tomorrow Webcast series were:

January 9 – Health System Integration.

January 23 – Health System Design.

February 6 – Health Human Resources with Assistant Deputy Minister Dr. Josh Tepper.

February 20 – Seniors and Adults with Complex Needs.

March 6 – Primary Health Care and Chronic Disease Prevention and Management.

March 27 – eHealth

The South West LHIN will continue to look for ways to effectively communicate with partners regarding our health care system and future directions. Please watch the South West LHIN [homepage](#) for updates.

