

Looking forward in 2008

Debbie Fischer, ADM of Transition, sat down with *NEW Directions*, in the first of a series of conversations about the ministry's transition to stewardship. Coming up in future issues: a snapshot of 2008 projects, stewardship from a stakeholder point of view, empowering cross-functional teams and more.



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The ministry has progressed well in transitioning its structure to support the stewardship model, said Debbie Fischer, Assistant Deputy Minister, Transition. "We have implemented the divisions that focus on the stewardship functions of strategy, information management and financial investment," Fischer said, "but there is more work to be done." The coming year will see continued work assessing and designing the remaining areas of the ministry, to strengthen the organization's position to effectively guide the health care system.

Looking ahead, one of the key priorities in 2008 is the detailed design of Health System Accountability and Performance (HSAP). The division's structure and process analysis are on track. "We have already communicated the high-level management structure (see Nov. 2, 2007 *NEW Directions*). We're now looking at how the processes will work underneath that structure," Fischer said. She confirmed that the work on HSAP will likely take until at least October, at which time the detailed design to the staff level will be announced.

Other initiatives the ministry will undertake this year include:

- Review of direct and controllership services in Corporate and Direct Services to align with and support the ministry's stewardship role
- Implementation of a review of the Health Boards Secretariat that will enable an improved customer focus
- Transfer of OHIP client registration and associated functions to ServiceOntario in the spring of 2008, consistent with the

government's approach to modernize services to Ontarians and with the ministry's stewardship role

- Assessment of Public Health and Health Human Resources Strategy, which will inform decisions regarding next steps in the design of the stewardship model.

Health System Strategy and Health System Information Management and Investment (HSIMI) are also hard at work this year building capacity and implementing their completed design. The Health Capital Investment Branch in HSIMI will start the detailed design process in the next few months.

Part of the stewardship process will include ongoing assessment of the ministry's retained programs and internal processes, Fischer said. "To build and maintain an effective organization, there will always need to be assessments of whether a function or program is best done by the ministry and whether it fits into our stewardship role."

At the same time, in 2008 there will be a significant emphasis on fostering the cultural change that such a large-scale transformation requires. "Becoming proficient at working in this new environment requires paying attention to both the structural design and social change," Fischer explained. "Both are required to change the ministry's culture."

She said that it is exciting for her to see how much ministry staff has accomplished in two years. "By continuing to stay focused in this, the third year of transition, the momentum we've built will carry us through to achieve the overall stewardship approach to our business." ■

NEW Directions

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