

LHINKages

Summer Newsletter

Sharing Health Care News, Stories and Developments
in Northwestern Ontario



Ontario

North West Local Health
Integration Network

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Mission, Vision & Values

Vision

Healthier people, a strong health system-our future.

Mission

Develop an innovative, sustainable and efficient health system in service to the health and wellness of the people of the North West LHIN.

Values

1. Person-centred
2. Culturally Sensitive
3. Sustainable
4. Accountable
5. Collaborative
6. Innovative



The Integrated Health Service Plan 2016-2019 (IHSP IV) is now available in Print and Online Versions. If you would like to receive a print copy of the the IHSP IV, please send your email to nw.communications@lhins.on.ca.

The IHSP IV can be [read online here](#), or visit our website at www.northwestlhins.on.ca.

Celebrating North of Superior Healthcare Group Success

"We are accountable to the communities and the people that Wilson Memorial General Hospital and The McCausland Hospital serve."

Those were the words spoken by Adam Brown, CEO of North of Superior Healthcare Group (NOSH), which is a newly-formed organization in the North West LHIN. NOSH is a three-site facility organization including Wilson Memorial General Hospital located in Marathon, Ontario, and the McCausland Hospital and Wilkes Terrace Long-Term Care home located in Terrace Bay, Ontario.

"This is an important step in achieving our vision of healthy communities, now and in the future," said Adam, once again reiterating the importance of better integrated health care service delivery which will support the health of the people in the communities served.

Officially formed on April 1, 2016, the amalgamation of NOSH is the result of a journey that began in 2008. It was at this time that Wilson Memorial General Hospital and The McCausland Hospital entered into a Joint Venture Agreement that allowed for the sharing of senior administration between the two organizations. Operating as a single corporation allows the hospitals to combine expertise and improve coordination of care. It reduces the administrative burden that comes with operating as two separate entities. Integrating health care services allows for improved patient/client and family experiences and better health outcomes, making it easier for people to access the right care in the right place at the right time.

"Place matters in health care. Health and health care delivery are a very local experience," says Dr. Sarah Newbery, Chief of Staff, Wilson Memorial General Hospital and NOSH Board Member. "People in our communities make many of their health care decisions based, not so much on what the treatment is, but rather based on where they can receive that treatment. In small communities, strong small general hospitals matter because care as close to home as possible matters to the people that we serve."

"The North West LHIN is extremely proud and has been privileged to be working together with such an innovative organization - an organization that has taken an important, and early step for positive change in addressing the health needs of the population they serve. The Northwest health care system is undergoing change and the creation of NOSH is just one example of the transformation that is currently underway across the vast region."

Dan Levesque, Interim Board Chair for the North West LHIN

"The work of NOSH is an inspiration and demonstrates the benefit of an integrated system from the patient's perspective - right care at the right time and in the right place.

Together, we will continue to build an integrated health care system that will improve the patient care experience, improve access to care and reduce inequities across the system. Together, we will continue to build an integrated eHealth framework to support information sharing while also ensuring that the integrated health care system in the Northwest region is accountable and sustainable now and into the future."

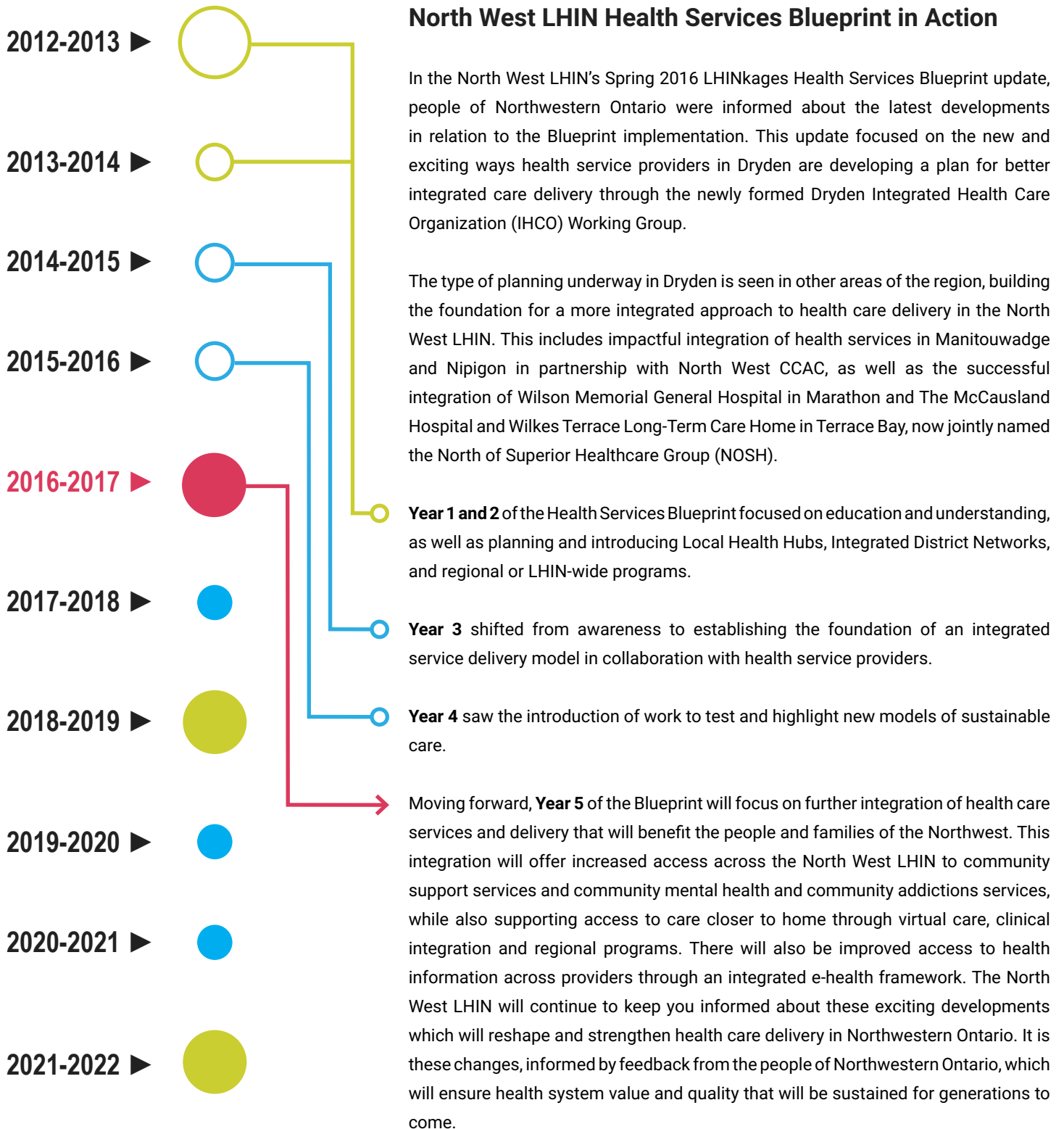
Laura Kokocinski, CEO, North West LHIN

The goals of NOSH are to enhance their rural hospitals by continuing to provide high quality health care services in a learning environment which improves the health of their communities in collaboration with other services providers. "The establishment of NOSH is truly a transformational step in small-town health care," says Daryl Skworcincki, the Board Chair of NOSH. "The partnership between the North West LHIN and NOSH has been the catalyst in making this development not only possible, but a reality."



April 25, 2016 - NOSH Celebration Event: Photo (Left to Right): Suzanne Bouchard, COO, NOSH; Janet Martel, CFO, NOSH; Adam Brown, CEO, NOSH; Cathy Collinson, Board Member, NOSH; Honourable Michael Gravelle, MPP Thunder Bay-Superior North; Jason Nesbitt, Former Board Chair, The McCausland Hospital; Laura Kokocinski, CEO North West LHIN; Ken McIntyre, Former Board Chair, Wilson Memorial Hospital; Dan Levesque, Interim Board Chair, North West LHIN

North West LHIN Health Services Blueprint in Action



Launched in 2012, The Blueprint is the result of extensive evidence-based research, and feedback from people across the North West LHIN who use the system, and from health service providers in the North West LHIN. This includes 17 sessions in 12 communities involving 188 participants, and 410 survey responses. As a result, the Blueprint sets the North West LHIN's vision for a redesigned health care system – a system that is integrated and that improves health outcomes for the people of the Northwest region.

In the North West LHIN, the goal of integration is centred on service providers working collaboratively to identify opportunities to integrate the services of the local health system to provide appropriate, coordinated, effective and efficient services.

DO YOU KNOW?

THERE ARE TWO TELEHOMECARE PROGRAMS IN THUNDER BAY

Meet Sally



Sally has been discharged from Acute Care. Sally has congestive heart failure (CHF) and to help transition home, she has been referred to the Telehomecare Program at Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre (TBRHSC).

INTENTION

Severe to very severe heart failure and COPD patients- post acute care.

REFERRAL PROCESS

By Physician or Nurse Practitioner Only.

PROGRAM LENGTH

Minimum of 6 months.

WHAT IS REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM?

A working phone line or internet connection.

PROGRAM SPECIFICS

- Phone based remote monitoring program where the patient completes daily monitoring.
- Will require an initial clinical visit and additional clinic visits when needed to the TBRHSC.
- Program administered by Nurse Practitioners.
- Program available (currently) for patients in the Thunder Bay area only.
- Helps patients transition from acute care home to better understand their illnesses.
- Patients can transition to the North West Community Care Access Centre program from the post-acute care program.

Meet Sam



Sam has been diagnosed with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). He wants to learn how to live healthy with this new disease. To help Sam learn more about living with COPD, he was referred to the Telehomecare Program at the North West Community Care Access Centre by his wife.

INTENTION

Mild to moderate/borderline severe heart failure and COPD patients.

REFERRAL PROCESS

Anyone can refer to the program- clinicians, pharmacists, and self-referrals are welcome.

PROGRAM LENGTH

Maximum of 6 months.

WHAT IS REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM?

A working phone line, internet connection or the ability to connect to cellular service.

PROGRAM SPECIFICS

- Phone based remote monitoring program where the patient completes daily monitoring and receives regular health coaching sessions.
- Equipment installed in patients home.
- Program administered by Registered Nurses.
- Program available to any drive to community in the Northwest region.
- Helps patients to better understand their illnesses.

Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre
Telehomecare Program

For general or referral information please contact:
Phone: 807-684-6753 | Fax: 807-684-5865

North West Community Care Access Centre
Telehomecare Program

For general or referral information please contact:
Telehomecare@nw.ccac-ont.ca | Fax-807-767-6968

Telehomecare

Post-Acute Care Program

"Telehomecare is a life-line for me. It is a very important resource for people like me, coming out of the hospital with a new, serious diagnosis. I am privileged to be a part of this beneficial program," says Trudy Epp, a congestive heart failure (CHF) patient of the Telehomecare Post-Acute Care Program at Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre (TBRHSC).

In August 2015, Trudy was admitted to cardiac care at TBRHSC and diagnosed with CHF. After discharge, Trudy was referred to the Telehomecare Post-Acute Care Program to help her transition from the hospital to self-managing her new illness. "I feel like I have been given a life-line. I have access to my Nurse Practitioner, Jeff, for professional advice and resources five days a week. My vitals are being monitored- the vulnerability I felt when I first got home from the hospital is gone. It is very reassuring to know that a qualified person is following your health, every day," says Trudy.

Trudy is grateful for the support she received during her time on the program. In October 2015, she completed a cardiac procedure which had amazing results in returning her heart to a consistent rhythm. The rhythm stayed consistent until January 2016. Trudy spoke with Jeff and he arranged for Trudy to see her cardiologist within 24 hours. Two weeks later, Trudy underwent the second cardiac procedure. "Jeff was wonderful for his support and knowledge of the system and referral processes. The mental health piece of this program is irreplaceable," says Trudy. "When you have questions or need help, he is there for you. What could have been a complicated process was seamless and supportive."



The Telehomecare Post-Acute Care Program is led by two Nurse Practitioners that support severe to very severe CHF and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) patients. After an acute stay at TBRHSC, patients are referred to the program through physician referral. Once enrolled in the program, patients are asked to come in to see the Nurse Practitioners for an initial visit and to be trained on how to use the equipment provided. Additional visits may be needed.

The technology is simple, straight forward and easy to use. Each patient is provided with a tablet, a weigh scale, oxygen saturation monitor and a blood pressure cuff. Monday through Friday, the patient completes the simple questions on the tablet, including weight measurement, O2 levels and blood pressure readings. Once completed, all of the vitals are transmitted to the Nurse Practitioners computer to monitor each patient individually. "The equipment is easy to use even for people not confident with technology," says Trudy.

The most important part of the program for Trudy has been the ongoing availability of resources. "Most patients, when they have left the hospital think.....I should have asked! With Telehomecare you have the supportive, professional, knowledgeable people to support you and the resources you need to take the worries you have away," says Trudy.

The Post-Acute Care Telehomecare program is funded by the North West LHIN at Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre (TBRHSC).



Jeff Yahn, Nurse Practitioner, Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre, Post-Acute Care Telehomecare Program and **Trudy Epp**, Congestive Heart Failure Patient.

Delivering Orthopaedics Care in a Different Way to Enhance Patient Care Experience

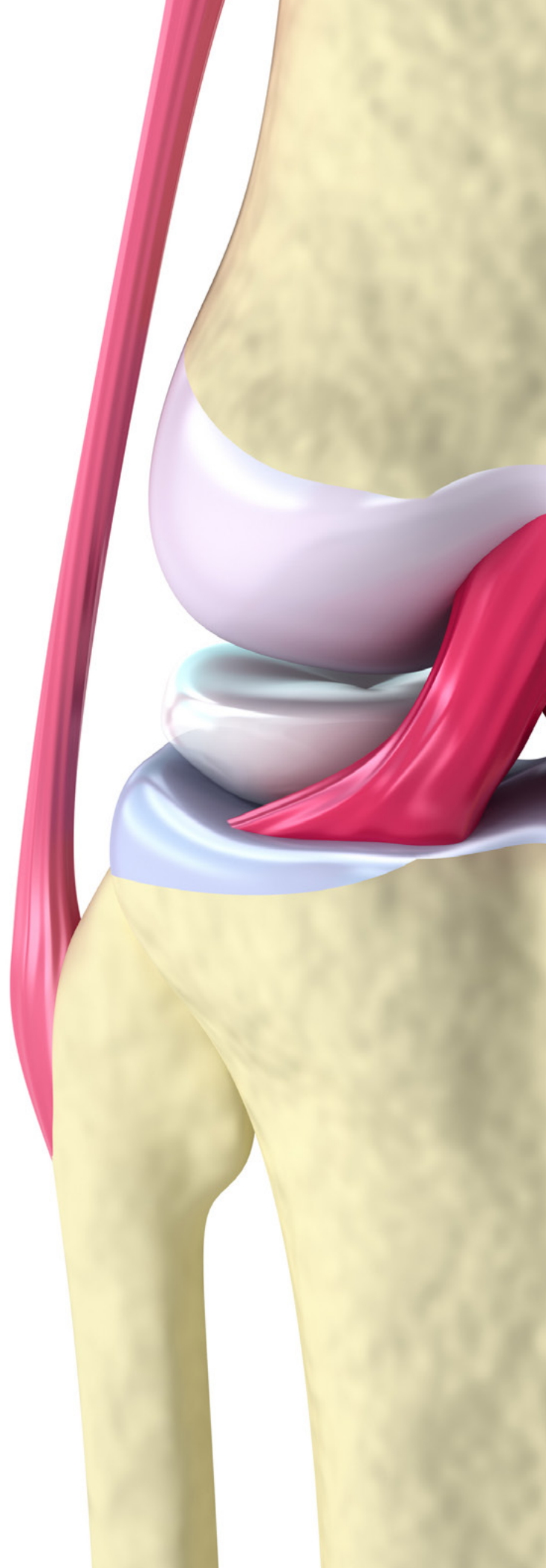
The North West LHIN has established a Regional Orthopaedics Program for conditions such as back pain, traumatic injuries, arthritis, and hip and knee osteoarthritis. The Program will improve health outcomes for the population served, health care delivery and allow people of Northwestern Ontario to access high quality musculoskeletal care, as close to home as possible.

The approval of the Program follows extensive research, analysis, and consultation led by a regional skill based steering committee comprised of health care practitioners, administrators, and patients from across the North West LHIN.

Key findings indicate that people in the North West LHIN face a higher than average prevalence of risk factors for musculoskeletal disease; have a higher than average use of orthopaedic surgical services; and have their care needs met through a diverse group of providers and organizations throughout the region. With current trends in population aging, the North West LHIN is also projected to face significant growth in the prevalence of musculoskeletal disorders.

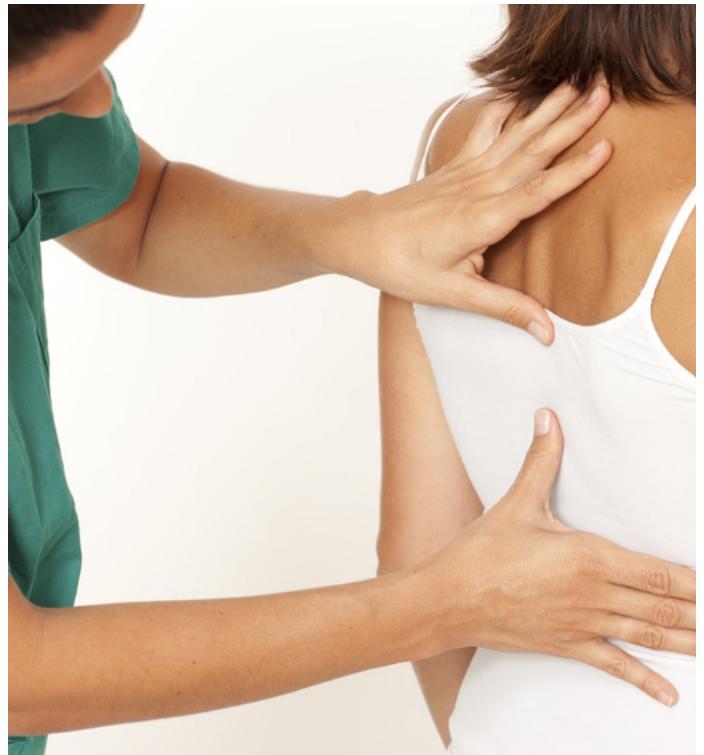
“Having a regional approach to the delivery of orthopaedic services across the North West LHIN is a critical step in ensuring that people are connected to high quality care regardless of where they live. Patients/clients expect timely access to health care services, lower wait times and to avoid unnecessary travel. The Regional Orthopaedics Program will focus on addressing these needs today and for years to come”, says Laura Kokocinski, CEO, North West LHIN.

The Regional Orthopaedics Program has been developed in alignment with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care’s *Patients First: Action Plan for Health Care*, the North West LHIN Strategic Directions, Integrated Health Service Plan (IHSP) 2016-2019, and North West LHIN Health Services Blueprint.



Integrated Musculoskeletal Care in the North West LHIN - *Shaping the Future*

Submitted by: Caroline Fanti, Practice Leader for
the Inter-Professional Spine Assessment and
Education Clinics, TBRHSC



Musculoskeletal care has evolved to provide the right care, at the right time, by the right clinician. Musculoskeletal disorders are defined as injuries or disorders of the muscles, nerves, tendons and joints of the body which may be caused by sudden force or trauma, or prolonged exposure to repeated factors such as vibration or repetition (US Centers for Disease Control, 2015).

Lawrence Karpowich was referred by his family physician to the Inter-Professional Assessment and Education Clinic (ISAEC) at Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre (TBRHSC). ISAEC provides rapid access to specialty care with the goal of helping patients manage their low back symptoms and prevent chronic pain.

Lawrence was assessed by Advanced Practice Physiotherapist, Caroline Fanti, who detected subtle signs of cervical spine myelopathy or spinal cord compression. Caroline immediately contacted orthopaedic surgeon Dr. David Puskas and organized appropriate advanced imaging. A spine tumour was detected and the patient had surgery within 2 days of his magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scan. This case required the combined skill set of orthopaedic spine surgeon Dr. David Puskas and neurosurgeon Dr. Graeme Marchuk. Recognition of the multiple skill sets required for complex spinal care showcases the strength of the collaborative program.

As a result of his surgery, Lawrence has avoided quadriplegia and is expected to make a full recovery to normal function. Lawrence says, "The team saved my life. I am so grateful. The care I received from everyone at TBRHSC was number one."

Another patient success story took place at Dryden Regional Health Centre and highlights optimal utilization of operating room time in the region and the responsiveness of our integrated regional program to patient need. Our team of orthopaedic surgeons and advanced practice physiotherapist traveled to Dryden to provide Orthopaedic surgery and clinical consultations. Ten joint replacements, three knee arthroscopies and 73 patient consults were carried out in 2 days. Calvin Skene presented with a locked knee. He was provided with consultation and surgery in the same day. "I was in a lot of discomfort. It was great to be seen so quickly," says Calvin. "The care I received from the whole team was perfect." This case represents a shift in the role of hospital administrators from a simple supportive capacity to actively improving care by providing access to resources in a timely manner. This embodies real life, patient focused care. Hats off to the Dryden Regional Health Centre leadership team and their health care providers.

Improving Mental Health and Addictions Services



The North West LHIN is committed to a comprehensive, integrated, regional model of care for mental health and addictions. The model of care for mental health and addictions incorporates awareness, education, assessment, early intervention and long-term supports to improve the quality of life and health outcomes for people living with mental health issues.

The North West LHIN has been working with stakeholders from different service sectors, including the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) and the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS), to develop a multijurisdictional plan for individuals with complex mental health and addictions needs. The plan contains recommendations to help clients who are moving from one type of service to another and experiencing gaps in access to mental health and addiction services.

The North West LHIN also worked with the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) and North East Local Health Integration Network to support tele-psychiatry (the delivery of psychiatric assessment and care through telecommunications technology, usually videoconferencing) and education of primary care clinics for patients/clients with mental health and addiction issues.

Improved access to services within the Mental Health and Addictions system this past year included:

- The specialized Behavioural Supports Unit at St. Joseph's Care Group has resulted in a decrease in transfers to hospital for inpatient stays by 15 per cent. An additional psychogeriatric resource consultant was added to the existing team of two consultants in City of Thunder Bay Integrated District Network, which has expanded services to the District of Thunder Bay Integrated District Network.
- Peer support provided by People Advocating for Change Through Empowerment at Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre (TBRHSC) is providing much-needed support to mental health consumers both within the hospital and upon discharge from the Schedule 1 Unit. Based on its success, this partnership is now being considered in Thunder Bay District hospitals.
- Tele-psychiatry provided by the CAMH for regional physicians attached to Family Health Teams has been well received and is continuing with one-time funding.





THE NEXT TWO YEARS!

In our previous Spring LHINKages Newsletter, we featured years four through eight as part of our Ten Year Accomplishments celebration. We are continuing the journey as we highlight the next two years from a decade of celebration at the North West LHIN!

Year Nine: 2013 - 2014

- 2013-2016 North West LHIN Strategic Plan released
- 2013-2016 IHSP III released
- North West LHIN launches its first three Integrated District Networks as part of its Health Services Blueprint
- North West LHIN releases its inaugural eHealth Services Plan 2013-2016
- New North West LHIN Endocrinology Physician Lead and Chronic Disease/Diabetes Lead positions announced
- Mental Health Nurses staffed in 8 of 11 school boards in Northwestern Ontario
- Expanded withdrawal management services at Balmoral Centre
- Increased supports for community services - assisted living, supportive housing, and expanded telehomecare

Year Ten: 2014 - 2015

- Regional CIO, project management, and decision support enabled through Small, Rural and Northern Hospital Transformation Fund
- Regional Critical Care Response, originally conceptualized as part of surge planning, became a reality bringing virtual Intensive Care Unit (ICU) services to the region
- North West LHIN is the first LHIN in Ontario to implement a common Hospital Information System at all hospitals
- More than 80% of primary care physicians and 38% of specialists now use Electronic Medical Records
- Established a Regional Primary Care Council and City of Thunder Bay Primary Care Council
- Preparations begin for Guide Your Health: Your Story, Your Future to inform the fourth IHSP (2016-2019)

Minister's Medal: Honouring Excellence in Health Quality and Safety

The Minister's Medal Honouring Excellence in Health Quality and Safety is an annual program designed to recognize the excellent work done by health care providers across the province. As a competitive annual program, 2016 being the 4th year the medals have been awarded, it provides an opportunity to recognize system champions who place the patient at the centre of the circle of care and have demonstrated exceptional work in collaboration and achieved sustainable results, while promoting system value and quality in the health care system.

The Minister's Medal is an opportunity to showcase your contributions and successes and have them recognized by your peers, the ministry and the public. The Medal will be awarded to one team of organizations and one individual champion.

This year the program will aim to celebrate and recognize:

- A patient-centred approach to health care with a focus on progressive initiatives that emphasize improved access to care
- better coordinated care, information sharing/patient education and patient engagement
- Collaboration between care partners who provide patient care across the continuum
- Sustainable results
- A strong emphasis on measurable outcomes
- An awareness of promoting system value for quality
- A focus on quality and value embedded in program design

The application template can be downloaded from the Ministry website: [Download application and learn more here.](#)

Please send completed applications to the North West LHIN office at 975 Alloy Dr., Suite 201, Thunder Bay, ON P7B 5Z8, or email to: nw.communications@lhins.on.ca By Monday, July 11, 2016.



Meet Heather Gray, Making a Difference: A Decade of Service

Heather Gray, the Director of Health System Design and Development, has been working at the North West LHIN for nearly 10 years. She appreciates and values the relationships that she has developed with people throughout the Northwest health system.

Heather holds undergraduate degrees in English Literature and Nursing, as well as a master's degree in Adult Education. She has worked in a number of clinical, administrative and educational roles throughout her career in health care, most often with a regional focus.

When asked to choose an important mentor in her career, Heather identified Marg Boone, a retired professor with the School of Nursing at Lakehead University. "Through Marg, I developed an understanding of the northern/rural context in health care planning and delivery. This has been invaluable," says Heather.

For Heather, the most rewarding part about her position with the North West LHIN is the potential to make a difference. Many important initiatives have been advanced through the Health System Design and Development team. A Regional Palliative Care Program is in place, a Wound Care Plan has been developed for the region, telehomecare is improving access for residents, a Regional Orthopaedics Program is being implemented and improvements in diabetes care are underway.

Heather is retiring this August and is looking forward to spending time with family and friends, enjoying the outdoors, and traveling. Heather's guidance and enthusiasm will be greatly missed. The North West LHIN would like to thank Heather for her significant contributions and service to the people of Northwestern Ontario.



New Physician Lead: Welcome Dr. Stewart Kennedy

Dr. Stewart Kennedy has been appointed as the New North West LHIN Primary Care Lead. Dr. Kennedy is the Executive Vice President of Medicine and Academics at Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre (TBRHSC). He is a Past President of the Ontario Medical Association and continues to practice comprehensive family medicine with active hospital privileges in Thunder Bay, Ontario. He is the Associate Lead of the Family Health Team Wave 5 – Harbourview Medical Clinic. Within his community, Dr. Kennedy is an Assistant Professor at the Northern Ontario School of Medicine and has been the recipient of the Community Teacher of the Year award from the Ontario College of Family Practice.

(Photo by: Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre)

Board in Brief –

Selected highlights from the North West LHIN Board of Directors Meetings

Do you know that the meetings of the North West LHIN Board of Directors are open to the public? To learn more, visit the North West LHIN's website. The following are selected highlights of the past three months.

Cathy Farrell Reappointed

Cathy Farrell has been appointed for a second three-year term which expires on April 23, 2019. The Public Appointments Secretariat of the Province of Ontario, through the Order-in-Council initially appointed Cathy to the Board as Director on April 24, 2013.

Cathy brings to the Board excellent skills in leadership, strategic planning and governance. Cathy also has extensive professional experience related to child welfare and developmental services. Cathy is a registered social worker and currently operates North of Superior Adoption Services in addition to consulting with Thunder Bay Family Network. She serves as the Vice-President of Branch Affairs with the Ontario Association of Social Workers.

Prior to these roles, Cathy was the founding Executive Director of Wesway, a respite care organization supporting families and caregivers in their own homes. Her other work experience includes managing Children's Clinical Services and the Fair Start Program at Thunder Bay District Health Unit. Cathy also served as Resource Consultant with Choices, an innovative pilot project for adults with developmental disabilities in Thunder Bay. Cathy has been actively engaged in leadership roles with numerous community organizations and boards, including Communities Together for Children, Lakehead Association for Community Living, Residential Placement Advisory Committees, school councils and community groups.

Reinforcing Safety at Red Lake Margaret Cochenour Memorial Hospital

The North West LHIN Board of Directors endorsed Red Lake Margaret Cochenour Memorial Hospital's Capital Development Project which is at its initial stage to renovate Medical Devices Reprocessing Department (MDRD) and Endoscopy Procedure Room to current standards and best practices for infection control. The Project will also ensure patient safety, employee wellness and access to service for the people of Red Lake. The hospital will now continue to the next stage of the capital process.

Planning For A New Regional Data Centre at the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre



The Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre (TBRHSC) is planning to relocate and expand the existing regional data centre to increase the space from 2,400 square feet to 4,500 square feet. The Data Centre is currently operated by TBRHSC and St Joseph's Care Group for the benefit of all hospitals in Northwestern Ontario. It supports various clinical and electronic health record applications, research systems, business applications, picture archiving communication systems for diagnostic imaging, business intelligence systems and administrative systems to better serve patients/clients. The North West LHIN Board of Directors has approved the Pre-Capital Submission for a new Data Centre.

Governance-to-Governance

On May 30, 2016, the North West LHIN Board of Directors engaged the Dryden Local Health Hub-health service provider boards and senior leadership to share an update and discuss Year 5 of the implementation plan of the North West LHIN Health Services Blueprint and the plans for improved integrated care for people in the Dryden catchment area.



Health Quality Ontario

A new report just released by Health Quality Ontario takes a closer look at the challenges faced by unpaid caregivers who look after long-stay home care patients. The report finds that home care patients are becoming collectively more elderly, ill and impaired, which has created a significant challenge for their caregivers who are family and friends. For more findings and to read the report, please contact Health Quality Ontario.

Word on the *Tweet*



@ONThealth -

"Mental health is more than the absence of mental illness. It's a state of well-being.
#GETLOUD



"National Aboriginal Diabetes Awareness Day!
Read more here <http://ow.ly/4nvfet>"

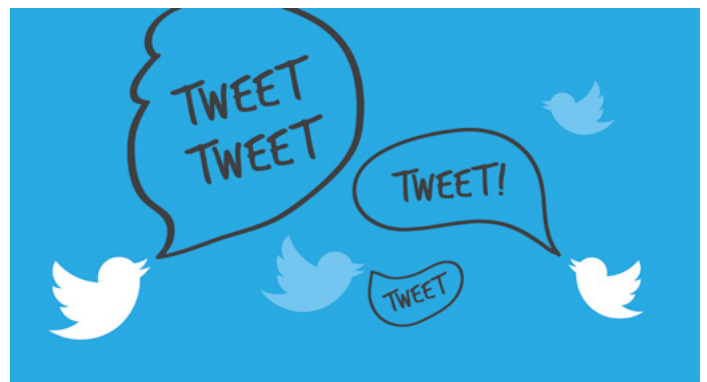


"MPP Michael Gravelle provides greetings on celebrating the North of Superior Healthcare Group #NOSH"



@TBRHSF -

"Tonight we thank the hundreds of incomparable TBRHSC and Foundation volunteers!"



Upcoming Events

JULY	
International Self-Care Day	July 24, 2016
AUGUST	
World Breastfeeding Week (International)	August 1 - 7, 2016
Spinal Muscular Atrophy Awareness Day	August 13, 2016
SEPTEMBER	
Childhood Cancer Awareness Month	September, 2016
Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month	September, 2016
Prostate Cancer Awareness Month	September, 2016
Blood Cancer Awareness Month	September, 2016
Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Awareness Day	September 9, 2016
World Suicide Prevention Day	September 10, 2016
Terry Fox Run	September 18, 2016
World Alzheimer's Day	September 21, 2016
North West LHIN Board Meeting	September 27, 2016
World Heart Day	September 29, 2016



If you would like to learn more or have a story to share, please contact our Corporate Communications and Community Engagement team, we would like to hear from you!

Contact details here:

Email: nw.communications@lhins.on.ca

Online: www.northwestlhins.on.ca

Toll Free: 1 866-907-5446

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