



Making the eConnection to Diabetes Patients

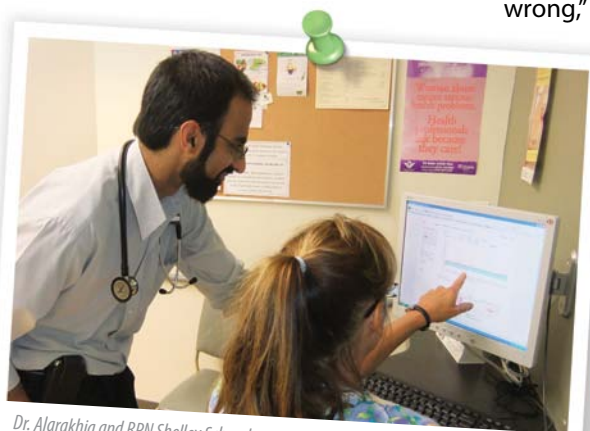
An innovative, patient-centred approach to improving quality of care

Like a lot of us, Derek Patton loves golf. Unlike a lot of us, Derek Patton is a diabetic – diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes just two years ago. Fortunately, he's been able to have professional help at his fingertips any time he needs it through his online eConnection: the WWLHIN HEALTHeCONNECTIONS (HeC) Project Patient Portal.

Derek was one of almost 1,000 residents with diabetes across Waterloo Wellington who participated in the HeC project through their Family Health Team. Participants tracked their blood sugar,

and charts that helped to identify any potential concerns.

"My wife and I are in our seventies and we try to manage our health by following the Canada Health Plan for our diet and getting involved in all sorts of activities. But I do have diabetes and high blood pressure and I know I operate better with a bit of oversight. That's why the patient portal has been very beneficial. Being able to enter my readings and get feedback helped me feel more in control. It was encouraging – especially those times when you think you've done something wrong," shared Derek.



Dr. Alarakhia and RPN Shelley Schmulz review a patient's health information through the patient portal at the Centre for Family Medicine in downtown Kitchener.

blood pressure, weight, and exercise daily in an easy-to-use and secure web-based patient portal. Through the portal, he and his care team had access to his entered data, electronic health record and graphs

"We both like jelly beans and they are full of sugar. One time I 'unintentionally' had six or eight of them before I took my blood sugar reading and of course it went off the map. So I added a message on the Portal to tell my healthcare team why the reading was so high and they told me not to worry. I message them when I'm troubled and I like the information and suggestions they give me about how to better manage my health," said Derek.

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"For me, the key element of the HeC Project was the patient portal," said Dr. Alarakhia a family doctor at the Centre for Family Medicine in Kitchener. "Diabetes is a very difficult disease to live with. It's easy to let

diabetes take control of you and of what you do – and it's easy to be very overwhelmed. The portal is an online e-tool that allows patients to take back control. It allows them to learn more about their

condition and therefore helps them improve their management. It also improves communication with the healthcare team and that is very positive. I see this as the next logical step in patient care."

Sunnyside Overnight Stay Program Helps Rejuvenate Caregivers

Respite combines needed break for caregivers with active programming for their loved ones

When Shirley Couillard's husband Paul was diagnosed with dementia in 2005, they knew his life would severely change. What they didn't realize, was how much it would change Shirley's life in the process.

"They say dementia is a disease of memory loss. But in reality, the hardest part is the loss of freedom - the freedom to start your day the way you want to and when you want to, the freedom to play sports



Shirley Couillard

and participate in social activities. As a caregiver, as Paul lost his freedoms, I lost mine as well," shared Shirley.

Paul has Vascular Dementia, one of the most common forms of dementia, ranking only second to Alzheimer's Disease. Vascular Dementia is caused by chronic, reduced blood flow to the brain—usually as the result of a stroke or series of strokes.

As his dementia progressed, Shirley needed more and more help to manage Paul's needs. She received a number of home care services through the Waterloo Wellington Community Care Access Centre (WWCCAC). They began attending a dining program a couple of nights a week at Sunnyside in Kitchener, and eventually started using their overnight stay program.

Through funding from the Waterloo Wellington LHIN's Aging at Home program, the Region of

Waterloo Sunnyside Seniors' Services was able to expand their respite program from a weekend to seven days a week, allowing caregivers like Shirley an extended break. The program provides participants with a therapeutic, social and recreational experience geared to the specific needs of memory impaired adults. Referrals to the program are made through the WWCCAC.

"The part of the whole dementia journey which I most appreciate, is having Sunnyside to come to," said Shirley.

"When the overnight stay services were expanded to seven days a week, I was able to drop Paul off for a week at a time. This allowed me to run errands and participate in community activities again, but most importantly, it allowed for my body to be rejuvenated. Being able to let-go of your responsibility for even a short-time and know that your loved one is being taken care of takes so much off of your shoulders," said Shirley.

Mental Health Programs Expanding at CMH and GRH

In November, the mental health program at Grand River Hospital (GRH) expanded to include new day programs and specialized mental health care beds at the Freeport Site.

The enhanced programs will serve patients 19 years of age and older who may need stays of up to three months as they receive treatment for a mental illness. The day programs also help mental health patients who have received in-patient treatment and continue to need support as they live in their own homes in the community.

"Patients and their families from across Waterloo and Wellington will benefit from the expansion at Freeport, which includes 50 new beds and a wide range of specialized services," said Malcolm Maxwell, President and CEO, Grand River Hospital.

Cambridge Memorial Hospital (CMH) is also expanding its mental health services. The current 10 bed unit will expand to a 16 bed Schedule 1 facility, supported on an interim basis by another nine Schedule 1 beds offered at GRH. The beds are expected to be in place by late spring / early summer of 2011.

"We are delighted with the news that acute mental health services will be

enhanced for residents in Waterloo Wellington," said Patrick Gaskin, President and CEO, Cambridge Memorial Hospital. "We are working with our partners at the WWLHIN and GRH to plan for the expansion and support smooth patient flow."



Breast Diagnostic Assessment Clinic Cuts Breast Cancer Surgery Wait Times by 58%

When a woman's doctor finds a lump in her breast, her first reaction can often be fear. What if it's cancer? What will my options be? What about my family? Finding a way to ease that fear, reduce wait times for diagnostic testing and surgery, and provide top quality care was the motivation behind the creation of the Breast Diagnostic Assessment Clinic at the Waterloo Wellington Breast Centre at Grand River Hospital's Freeport site.

Women with a clinical breast concern needing further assessment are referred to the Clinic by their family physician. They receive one appointment in which

date," explained Dr. Craig McFadyen, Regional Vice President, Cancer Care Ontario. "With the Clinic, a woman has two appointments instead of five or six. This decreases not only her wait time, but her stress. She is receiving expert radiological and surgical opinions the same day as her exam."

The Clinic, which opened in 2007, sees approximately 500 women each year. Of those women, half will have a biopsy and half of those who have a biopsy will need surgery. Each woman is assisted through the diagnostic and assessment process by a patient navigator who answers questions and provides comfort where needed.



Dr. McFadyen and radiologist Dr. Rafferty examine a patient's mammogram results in the Breast Diagnostic Assessment Clinic

they will have a clinical exam and a mammogram and/or ultrasound if needed. The radiologist and surgeon then review the results together, right away. If concerns are identified and a biopsy is needed, the woman receives the biopsy that day.

Since the opening of the Clinic, the wait time from screening to surgery has gone from approximately 111 days to 47 days.

"Before, a woman would wait for an appointment with her family doctor, wait for a mammogram, wait for the results, then wait for a referral to a surgeon, wait for a biopsy, then wait for the results, and then wait for a surgery

"We have tried to change the paradigm by creating a patient-centred system, not a system-centred system," said Dr. McFadyen. "The patient is not bending to the system, the system is bending to the patient. This is something we need to do across health care."

Women over the age of 50 should have a mammogram generally every two years. To find the Ontario Breast Screening Program site closest to you call 1-800-668-9304 or visit www.cancercare.on.ca/obsplocations.

Message from the Interim Chief Executive Officer



Meeting the health care needs of a single person can be a challenge. They might need treatment and support for a mental illness; they might also

be managing a chronic disease such as diabetes, or caring for a loved one with cancer or Alzheimer's. That's why it's important to look at the health system, not from the view of a single program or service, but from the view of the people needing care.

At the WWLHIN, we have the opportunity to look at the health system as a whole and how we can better meet the diverse health care needs of residents in Waterloo Wellington. We are committed to ensuring our residents have access to the highest quality health care through an integrated system.

In this issue of the *WWLHIN Information Bulletin*, you will find information about a project that utilized eHealth technology to help almost 1,000 local residents better manage their diabetes. You will read about Shirley, a caregiver for her husband who has dementia, and how a local program helped ease the burden of providing 24/7 care. You will also learn about a made-in Waterloo Wellington program that has reduced wait times for breast cancer surgery by almost 60%.

In partnership with our health service providers, we are making a real difference in the lives and health of local residents. If you have a story you would like to share, as a provider or patient/client/resident, please feel free to contact our office. We look forward to your comments and feedback.

Sincerely,

Bruce Lauckner,
Interim Chief Executive Officer



Upcoming Events

January 13

Community Council Meeting
7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
50 Sportsworld Crossing, Suite 220,
East Building

January 20

WWLHIN Board Meeting
6 p.m. to 9 p.m.
50 Sportsworld Crossing, Suite 220,
East Building



Health Service Provider Profile

Township of Mapleton –
Seniors Centre for Excellence

What type of services does your organization provide?

The largest part of our program consists of providing exercise and educational programs for seniors to ensure that they maintain their independence. We also provide social opportunities such as congregate dining programs and seniors groups. We have partnered with many different organizations to offer support groups and education that assist seniors

Provincial Update

In August, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) announced the creation of 30 new Family Health Teams across the province to provide better access to family health care. The announcement included a new Family Health Team for Guelph – The Mango Tree Family Health Team.

In August, the MOHLTC announced 14 new Nurse Practitioner-led Clinics including one at Conestoga College in Kitchener.

In October, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care introduced new legislation, the Broader Public Sector Accountability Act that if passed, would bring in new rules and higher accountability standards for hospitals, Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) and the broader public sector around the use of external lobbyists, consultants and expenses. The Waterloo Wellington LHIN welcomes this new legislation and remains committed to ensuring every dollar spent delivers value to taxpayers and the residents of the communities we serve.

In October, the Minister of Health Deb Matthews visited the Centre for Family Medicine Family Health Team in Kitchener to announce that Ontario has helped one million more people find a family doctor since 2003. In the Waterloo-Wellington LHIN, 4,347 people registered for Health Care Connect and 2,112 were connected with a primary care provider. 89% of complex vulnerable patients were connected.

to take an active role in their own health. We also provide referrals to existing agencies in the community. We have partnered with all three of the Family Health Teams in the area to provide.

How many clients do you serve and how many staff do you have?

In the year 2009/10 we served 658 clients. We have one full-time and one part-time staff member.

What would your clients say is the best thing you do?

I think people are most impressed that we have been able to increase the number of exercise programs available to the community. We have partnered with the Minto-Mapleton Family Health Team to provide three walking programs and a

fourth has started in Arthur with the Upper Grand Family Health Team.

How can someone access your services?

People can phone, email, we also receive referrals from local Family Health Teams. We do regular advertising in the local media to ensure that people are aware of our services and know how to access our services.

What is your favourite part about your work?

Hands down working with seniors and community partners that meets the mandate of the WWLHIN and provides seniors with the programs, education and tools they need to help them maintain their independence.

Helen Edwards, Seniors Health Services Coordinator
For more information, contact Helen at 519-638-1000 or hedwards@town.mapleton.on.ca.

LIVE AND LIVE WELL IN WATERLOO WELLINGTON

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Veillez communiquer avec nous pour obtenir un exemplaire de ce document en français.

The WWLHIN has moved!