

Mimi Lowi-Young is the CEO for the Central West LHIN

Mimi Lowi-Young, CEO of the Central West LHIN.

In 2010/11, almost \$760 million was invested locally for patient/client services by 53 health-care programs across the Central West LHIN. Less than half of one percent of total funding was used for LHIN operations – which means that more than 99.5 percent of the money went directly to health service organizations.

Each of those organizations signs an accountability agreement with the LHIN outlining what will be done with their funding, including what kind of services will be provided and how many residents will be served. The staff at the Central West LHIN sets performance targets (such as wait times), achieves local health-care performance, holds organizations accountable for achieving those targets, and reports those results publicly.

While working with local health service providers, the LHIN also builds relationships with residents and community leaders from the business, cultural and civic sectors. Since 2006, the Central West LHIN has organized 130 public consultations involving 4,500 individuals. These include public meetings to discuss how the health-care system is working in general for local residents, as well as specific presentations to community groups, boards of trade and municipal councils.

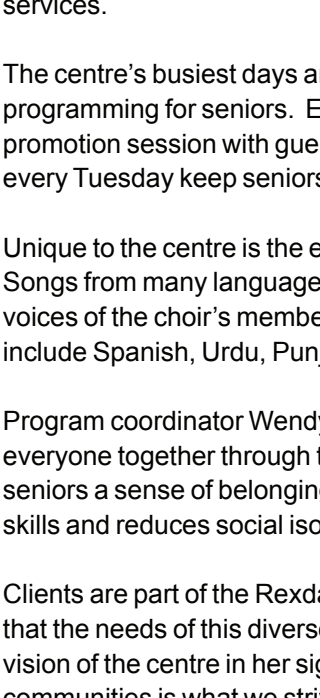
Some of the new initiatives undertaken by the Central West LHIN in 2010/11 to ensure improved access to local health services include:

- Establishment of the Central West Regional Diabetes Coordination Centre, hosted by William Osler Health System, to organize diabetes programs and services in the region.
- The Regional Chronic Kidney Disease Coordination Centre, hosted by William Osler Health System, was established to coordinate plans and services.
- Year three of Aging at Home was launched with \$10.7 in total funding, that supports 47 programs helping 20,000 seniors.
- CCAC Nursing Care Centres have been established in 3 locations (Brampton, Orangeville and Etobicoke) to provide access to care for local residents.
- Home First has been adopted to facilitate people leaving hospital so they can be cared for in their homes.
- The Central West Palliative Care Network was established to bring together community resources to support individuals at a critical stage in their life.

When it comes to health care, every part of the province has unique requirements. The needs of northern Ontario are different from those in urban centres in the south. What is required in urban centres is not the same as in rural communities. By talking and listening to local health service providers and community residents, LHINs identify and bring to life health-care decisions focused on quality – with an understanding of the diverse and unique needs of each community.

By keeping the lines of communication open locally, we can reach our goal of moving toward high-quality, sustainable health care for all residents.

[next story](#)



Safia Ahmed, Executive Director of the Rexdale Community Health Centre.

Rexdale Community Health Centre: Building on the strength of diversity

Safia Ahmed moves from one meeting to another, seamlessly. Her calm demeanour does little to indicate the packed schedule of the tireless Executive Director of the Rexdale Community Health Centre.

The Central West LHIN funds the Rexdale Community Health Centre, which serves one of the highest-needs populations in the province and is also one of the busiest. The LHIN and the centre sign regularly updated accountability agreements setting out targets for services delivered. The centre serves approximately 300 clients per day; last year there were more than 11,000 active clients.

A broad array of health services are offered, staffed with physicians, nurses, dietitians, therapists, and even dental professionals, to name a few. The centre is also host to several programs key to the Central West LHIN's Aging at Home strategy.

Aging at Home provides funding for the centre's integrated seniors' program that serves over 195 people. Older adults from all cultural backgrounds visit the centre frequently to socialize with their peers, in addition to receiving health services.

The centre's busiest days are Tuesdays and Thursdays, with back-to-back programming for seniors. ESL classes, fitness and handicraft classes, a health-promotion session with guest speakers plus a congregated dining session every Tuesday keep seniors informed, healthy and involved.

Unique to the centre is the ethno-cultural choir, which meets every Friday. Songs from many languages provide a means of sharing the different cultural voices of the choir's members. The top five languages spoken at the centre include Spanish, Urdu, Punjabi, Hindi and Somali.

Program coordinator Wendy Caceres-Speakman says the choir brings everyone together through the universal language of music. It also gives seniors a sense of belonging and purpose, helps build their communication skills and reduces social isolation that could lead to hospitalization.

Clients are part of the Rexdale community. It's not an easy task to ensure that the needs of this diverse population are met, but Safia Ahmed keeps the vision of the centre in her sight at all times. "Creating healthy and empowered communities is what we strive for every day," she says.

Safia provides strategic leadership for her team of seven managers and 75 staff who run the Rexdale CHC and its four satellite locations and hubs. She explains that they have a bottom-up approach to their planning, which starts at the community-level. Once the community's needs are identified, the analysis begins, and a strategic plan is developed to meet the objectives and overall goals of serving the community.

In addition to allocating funds and working out an accountability agreement, the LHIN gets involved at the community level, which is a role that Safia says is extremely valuable. It's not just about providing financial support, but understanding where the money is going and why it's needed.

So the partnership between the LHIN and the Rexdale Community Health Centre is critical to ensuring that the community has access to the appropriate health-care services. According to Safia, it's all about synergies. "We need to create these synergies in order to address the needs of the communities. It's about creativity, not just money."

Mimi Lowi-Young, CEO of the Central West LHIN, agrees. "Every corner of this province has different health-care needs," she says. "The only way we can best meet those needs is through local decision-making. By talking and listening to community residents and local health care providers, we can ensure the highest-quality health care for the communities in our LHIN."

Because the LHINs are geographically based and devoted to specific regions, there are resources to work at the community level. It's one of the benefits that the LHINs bring to health care – and one that Safia says is essential. "The ability for communities to influence how resources are allocated so their needs are addressed is important," she says.

[previous story](#) | [next story](#)

Engaging the Somali Community

Understanding the needs of local residents is also the foundation upon which LHINs were built. So when the opportunity to engage the Somali community was presented, the Central West LHIN was enthusiastic about organizing a one-day workshop.

Held in the spring, the session drew over 80 participants. Members of the Somali community from the Rexdale/Dixon area, as well as MPPs and representatives from health service providers, filled the Kingsview Village Junior School's gymnasium to discuss local residents' health-care needs. Attendees were welcomed, followed by a short presentation about the LHIN's mandate of improving access to health-care services.

"We need to hear about what is working in the healthcare system and what we need to do to make it better," says Mimi Lowi-Young – CEO of the Central West LHIN. "Community engagement is what has helped us build the local health system."

Attendees were divided into smaller groups and encouraged to discuss the quality of health care. What did they like about local health-care services? What improvements would they like to see in the future?

In order to ensure all attendees could participate, Somali interpreters were on hand to help facilitate the discussions. Central West LHIN staff members also participated in the groups to capture the conversations.

It was a successful day. Attendees were candid about what they liked and provided information that would be useful to help improve local health-care services.

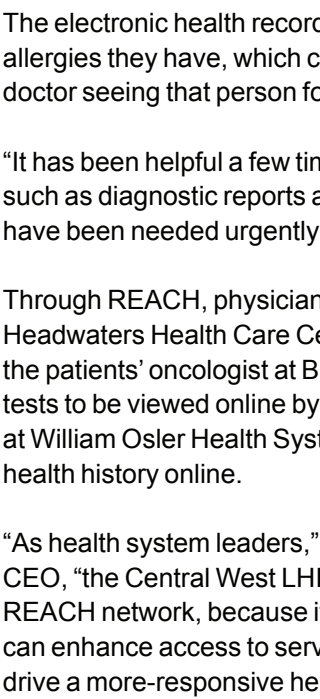
The residents had a lot of positive feedback. They were happy with having access to information, including from the 24-hour Telehealth phone line. Appreciation for the access to interpreters, expanded community outreach to educate the community on disease prevention, and the accountability of the health-care system enforced by higher authorities were some key points in the discussion.

There were also many suggestions for improvements. The community felt there needed to be better services to support independent living for seniors. They suggested improved transportation, additional community nurses and personal support workers, and a reduction of wait times for access to health services.

In addition, they asked for more culturally sensitive programs, more diversity within the health-care industry and more interpreters to help ease communication barriers.

It was valuable feedback. The LHIN staff, MPPs and health service providers were better informed after the session, which will improve planning to ensure better access to an integrated system of health care.

[previous story](#) | [next story](#)



Technology is key to improving patient care

Combining clinical technologies and information in health care is a key enabler of positive change in Ontario. eHealth holds the potential to enhance patient care, safety and access.

Increasing the use of physician electronic medical-record systems within the LHIN continues to be a key focus. With them, patients can be confident that their doctors will be able to access their information, such as the latest lab results, quickly and easily.

The Central West LHIN is participating in a project that will remove barriers to electronic-information exchange and increase access to electronic patient health information across both the Central West and Mississauga Halton LHINs. The objective is to allow information in the Rapid Electronic Access to Clinical Health Information Portal (REACH), a digital information system, to be shared with more clinicians.

Before REACH, physicians at Headwaters Health Care Centre, for example, could only view computerized records on a patient's diagnosis, tests and treatment received at Headwaters but with REACH, "the ability to view a more complete patient record online will allow doctors to collaborate on patient assessments," says Dr. Mark Lane-Smith: "I recently had a patient admitted through the ER who had had emergency surgery in Brampton Civic Hospital in the past month, but was unsure just what was done. Through the REACH portal, I was able to access records to clarify details of that Brampton admission, which assisted in decision-making here."

Knowing that patients often move between facilities, Headwaters Health Care Centre worked closely with MEDSEEK Web Service and William Osler Health System, Credit Valley Hospital, Trillium Health Centre and Halton Healthcare Services to launch REACH. This portal gives Headwaters' clinicians online access to patient health information stored electronically at any of the hospitals in the network.

Physicians at Headwaters Health Care Centre can now review and update their patients' records online, resulting in fewer delays in providing care and eliminating unnecessary repetition of tests and procedures. Clinicians can access their patient's medical records, including lab and diagnostic test results, transcriptions and progress reports.

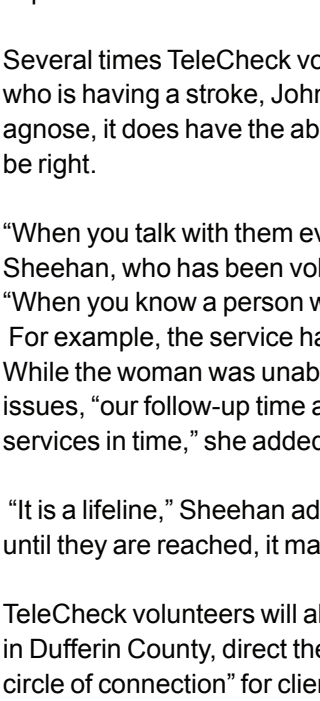
The electronic health record also shows patients' medications, including any allergies they have, which could be critical in an emergency situation for a doctor seeing that person for the first time.

"It has been helpful a few times," says Dr. David Stenning, "when information such as diagnostic reports and consultation notes from Brampton Civic Hospital have been needed urgently after hours for patient care."

Through REACH, physicians treating cancer patients for chemotherapy at Headwaters Health Care Centre can seamlessly view progress notes from the patients' oncologist at Brampton Civic Hospital. It allows a stroke patient's tests to be viewed online by Headwaters' physicians while orthopedic surgeons at William Osler Health System can view a Headwaters' hip-fracture patient's health history online.

"As health system leaders," explains Mimi Lowi-Young, Central West LHIN CEO, "the Central West LHIN is pleased to celebrate Headwaters joining the REACH network, because it is an example of how electronic medical records can enhance access to services, provide better and more efficient care, and drive a more-responsive health system that focuses on patients' needs."

[previous story](#) | [next story](#)



TeleCheck Dufferin – making a difference for seniors

TeleCheck Dufferin is an expansion of the Aging at Home program, a LHIN-funded initiative, that provides daily reassurance, safety, social calls and emergency response to seniors who choose to live independently. This article, written by Brian Halliday, was published in the Orangeville Banner on May 21, 2011.

"Good morning Colin. It's TeleCheck calling. How are you doing today?" That's the friendly greeting 96-year-old Alton resident Colin Burgess has grown accustomed to hearing over the phone every morning sometime between 8:30 and 9 a.m.

"I look forward to it," Burgess said. "It opens up the day. It makes the day more cheerful."

Making its first calls more than six years ago, TeleCheck Dufferin began with two clients and four volunteers on Jan. 17, 2005. It is now grown significantly since then, with more than 20 volunteers now calling to check in on 76 people older than 55, facing different health or safety concerns, every morning.

Seniors set the time of the daily morning call — most are full-time clients, while others are short-term and receive calls while family members are away on vacation.

If TeleCheck volunteers are unable to connect with clients at that arranged time each morning, they call back every 10 minutes, and if they haven't reached the senior within an hour, phone the person's emergency contact. If that fails, after another hour, they'll call emergency responders to check in on the person and make sure everything is OK.

"They're a backup to your health and your well-being," Burgess, who suffers from a common abnormal heart rhythm called atrial fibrillation, which can trigger symptoms suddenly. "There are so many seniors that really have nobody and this is an opportunity to have somebody phone them."

As TeleCheck Dufferin program coordinator Katherine Johnson explained, the aging at home strategy funded by the Central West LHIN, and overseen by the Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Community Torchlight Distress Centre, is critically important for seniors at risk who want to retain their independence.

Several times TeleCheck volunteers have been on the phone with someone who is having a stroke, Johnson explained, and while the agency does not diagnose, it does have the ability to infer something might not be right.

"When you talk with them every day, you can tell in their voice," said Heather Sheehan, who has been volunteering at TeleCheck for more than five years. "When you know a person well enough, you can tell something is happening." For example, the service has saved one woman's life twice, Johnson noted. While the woman was unable to make any phone calls because of her health issues, "our follow-up time alerted family and they got her to emergency services in time," she added.

"It is a lifeline," Sheehan added. "When they know that we will not be satisfied until they are reached, it makes this whole thing worthwhile."

TeleCheck volunteers will also help seniors navigate the social service system in Dufferin County, direct them to appropriate agencies for help, "opening up a circle of connection" for clients, Johnson added.

"Most people don't know the resources in the community until you need them," she said. "We do. We have a focus of the seniors' services, not only the social community services, but the medical and the community resources."

The daily morning phone calls made from 8:30 a.m. to noon can be quick — depending on each client and their plans that day — while other times people are in the mood to talk.

Burgess still lives on his own. The spry senior said the daily morning phone call is invaluable, not only because it offers a safety check each morning, it also gives him someone to talk with.

"It makes people feel good that somebody else is caring for them. They're calling and finding how you are feeling," Burgess said. "You have communication with some people on the outside who really care."

[previous story](#) | [next story](#)

On Track for Better Health Care for all Ontarians

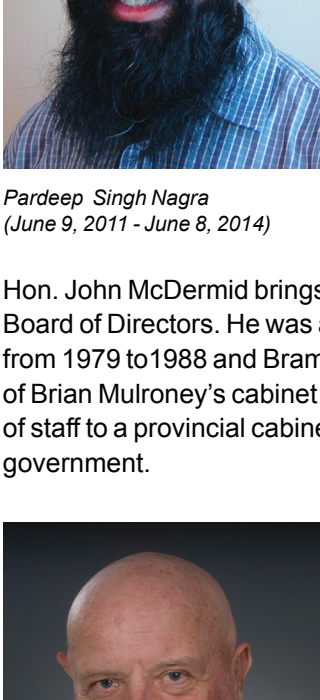
Ontario is leading the country in reducing health care wait times, providing families with better access to care while helping children lead healthier, active lives. That is just some of the good news on health care outlined in the 2011 Progress Report. The annual report shows the results Ontarians are achieving together.

A strong public health care system gives our families peace of mind. The government is helping to improve the health of all Ontarians by:

- Helping 1.3 million more Ontarians find a family doctor since 2004.
- Creating 200 Family Health Teams serving almost 3 million Ontarians.
- Providing 90,000 more breast screening exams for women at risk.
- Expanding the Ontario Diabetes Strategy to improve health care for the 1.1 million Ontarians with diabetes.
- Lowering generic drug prices, with \$500 million in savings reinvested into better care.
- Covering five new vaccines — protecting our children and saving families about \$1,400 per child.
- Improving mental health support for 50,000 children and their families with quicker and easier access.

Ontario is also the first Canadian province to introduce nurse practitioner-led clinics in our communities, which helps our families receive care more quickly closer to home.

[previous story](#) | [next story](#)



Maria Britto (June 9, 2011 – June 8, 2014)

New Board Chair and Members

The Central West LHIN is pleased to announce the appointment of Maria Britto as the new Chair of the Board of Directors.

Maria has over 30 years experience in business, charity and community involvement. She served as the first female President of the Brampton Board of Trade and in 2002, she was named that city's Business Person of the Year. She was Chair of the Brampton and Area Community Foundation and, until recently, was a board member of William Osler Health System. Currently, Maria serves as Chair of the Community Council for the Women's Abuse Shelter in Brampton.

"Central West is leading the process of creating a better health-care system for its local residents," said Deb Matthews, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. "Maria Britto's extensive leadership experience will enable the continuation of this work, following the excellent stewardship of outgoing Chair, Joe McReynolds."

Working closely with private and public-sector organizations, Maria is committed to building positive working relationships for the betterment of her community.

Her extensive experience in the non-profit sector includes volunteering with the Peel Children's Aid Society and serving on the advisory board for the Salvation Army. She spent 15 years with the City of Brampton's Economic Development Committee and Ambassador Program, as well as serving on the Management Board for the Small Business Enterprise Centre and as a member of the Employment Resource Council for the Peel Board of Education. Maria is a recipient of the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal, and she was recently named 2010 Citizen of the Year by the City of Brampton.

For over 26 years, Maria has operated as an independent contractor within the real-estate industry. Ranked among the top realtors in her field, she received the Lifetime Achievement Award this year.

The Central West LHIN is also pleased to welcome three new board members: Suzan Hall, Pardeep Singh Nagra and the former MP, the Honourable John McDermid.

Suzan Hall (May 17, 2011 – May 16, 2014)

Suzan Hall became involved in the Central West LHIN over two years ago as a member of the LHIN's Peel Memorial task force. Her extensive governance experience includes representing Etobicoke North for 26 years as a public school trustee, as chair of the Board of Education for the City of Etobicoke and as the first vice-chair of the unified Toronto District School Board. From 2000 to 2010, Suzan represented Ward 1 in Etobicoke North as a City of Toronto councillor, where she served as both chair and vice-Chair of the Etobicoke York Community Council and as an alternate director on the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

Pardeep Singh Nagra is a speaker, teacher and consultant specializing in anti-oppression, equity and diversity work. He manages the employment-equity office at the Toronto District School Board. He has been a chair, member and advisor to the Board of Directors of the Kesri Ribbon Project and the Sikh Centennial Foundation. Pardeep's work as a community activist has been recognized through awards such as the YMCA's Peace Medal, the University of Toronto Arbor Award, the Region of Peel Chair's Award for Community Service and as the Auxiliary Constable of the Year with the Peel Regional Police.

Pardeep Singh Nagra (June 9, 2011 – June 8, 2014)

Pardeep volunteers with the Punjabi Community Health Centre addressing issues of domestic violence and substance abuse in the Central West LHIN. He is past chair and member of the Centennial Foundation, which works to promote a positive portrayal of Sikhs in Canada and is often a spokesperson on Sikh issues with various media, including OMNI TV, City TV and the CBC. Pardeep attended the United Nations World Conference Against Racism and is a speaker for the educational program of the Dominion Institute's Passage to Canada series. Pardeep made international headlines when he won the right to compete as a boxer in Canada with his articles of faith intact.

Hon. John McDermid brings extensive experience to the Central West LHIN Board of Directors. He was a Member of Parliament for Brampton-Georgetown from 1979 to 1988 and Brampton from 1988 to 1993. John served as a member of Brian Mulroney's cabinet from 1988 to 1993. He also served as a chief of staff to a provincial cabinet minister in the former premier William Davis government.

Honorable John McDermid (June 9, 2011 – June 8, 2014)

All board members are appointed order in council.

[previous story](#)

Feedback

Have a comment or question about an activity or initiative in the Central West LHIN? Send it to: centralwestthin@lhins.on.ca. We appreciate all feedback.

Contact

For more information visit our website www.centralwestthin.on.ca or email the Central West LHIN at centralwestthin@lhins.on.ca. You can also contact us at:

8 Nelson Street West
Suite 300
Brampton, Ont. L6X 4J2
Tel: 905-455-1281
Toll free: 1-866-370-5446
Fax: 905-455-0427