

December 9, 2011

Analysing Current and Future Health-Care Workforce Needs in the NE LHIN

The North East LHIN is collaborating with health-care partners on worker recruitment and retention to provide Northerners with care in the right place and at the right time.

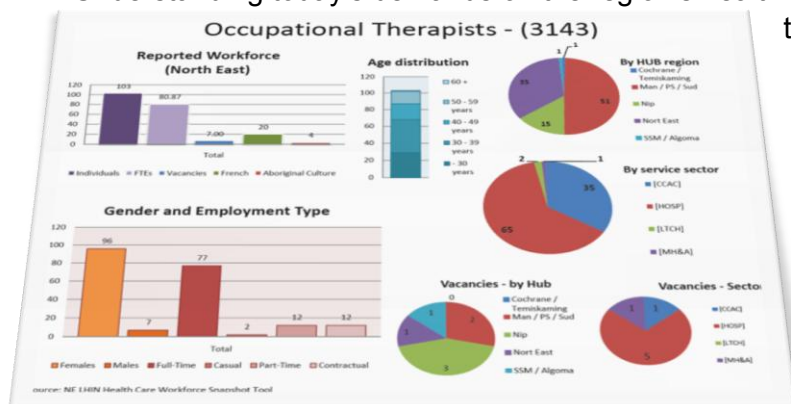
Concern about worker shortages was one of 12 themes heard in the LHIN's 2011 community engagement sessions.

Northeastern Ontario lacks key health-care professionals — such as physicians, nurses, and personal support workers— and there is an ever increasing demand to meet the needs of Northerners who suffer from higher rates of chronic disease, are older, and tend to be more obese than other Ontarians. Moreover, volunteers helping with health care are getting as old as those they serve.

In response, the NE LHIN's Health Human Resources Planning Steering Committee developed a Northeast Health Human Resources (HHR) Inventory Snapshot Tool.

This tool provides an Internet-accessible database of the numbers of professionals working in certain occupational fields, as well as, the current workforce's age and gender.

"Understanding today's demands on the region's health human resources, and anticipating tomorrow's requirements, are key for our local health system," explained Michel O'Connor, NE LHIN lead on this project.



The tool also contains information on priorities of the NE LHIN: the workforce's ability to provide services in French, as well as sensitivity to Aboriginal, First Nation and Métis cultures.

This is the first time regional information and current vacancies have been compiled in one easy to access place. The NE LHIN's snapshot will be updated regularly to help the planning efforts of both health care providers and educators.

"This inventory initiative is important," said Shelley Moreau, who co-chairs the planning committee and is a Senior Director with the North East Community Care Access Centre (CCAC). "The information that we can derive from the tool will serve to better inform the

discussions between ourselves and our partners – such as the education sector – in setting strategies to support our workforce.”

About half the NE LHIN region’s health-care employers participated in the project’s first phase to create a database of 33 occupations. These range from nurse, addiction worker, paramedic, physician and social worker, to personal support worker and visiting homemaker.

Participating employers included the North East CCAC, 10 hospitals, three Community Health Centres, 20 community support services, 12 long-term care homes, and 26 addiction and mental health agencies.

The LHIN is now reviewing options to expand participation and ensure sustainability.

LEARN MORE:

- Health service providers access the HHR Inventory Snapshot Tool through a web-based portal.
- The tool will benefit health service providers to be able to work with their partners to respond to individual and system pressures, lower recruiting costs through collaborative approaches in recruitment and retention, and make effective use of their current workforce.
- Health Human Resources is a priority in the NE LHIN’s 2010-2013 Integrated Health Service Plan. [Click here to read more about Health Human Resources.](#)

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Helen Evanoff, age 89 receives care from Personal Support Worker Sarah Walraven. The NE LHIN is working to help increase the number of health care professionals in Northeastern Ontario as a means to increase access to care for fellow Northerners.