

## Creating Value and Local Solutions – the LHIN

**November 28, 2011** – Regionalizing management of the health care system became a reality in Ontario with the creation of the Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) in 2005. The LHINs' mandate includes funding, planning and integrating health care services with a focus on "patient centered care", all accomplished through a regional planning approach and local decision making within each LHIN.

The North West LHIN communities are well represented by nine regional LHIN board members. LHIN staff are individuals who live in Northwestern Ontario and have a good understanding of the many challenges we face in health care delivery across a vast geographic region.

The people we serve (our population), including our health service providers, have a voice in identifying the priorities for health care through community engagement activities. The North West LHIN then determines locally how to most effectively address the health of the population, improve access to care, improve the care experience and best use available resources to meet the health care needs of our population. An evidence-based decision making and priority setting framework helps us ensure that the right decisions are made and there is value for the investments made.

The North West LHIN funds hospitals, the community care access centre, mental health and addictions services, long-term care services, community health centres and other vital community support services. LHINs are designed to ensure health providers do what's right for the patient (client) and the health care system as a whole. The LHIN oversees the integration and the sharing of services amongst providers so that more public money goes into direct patient care and less into administrative costs.

The North West LHIN is pursuing an integrated health care system whereby health service provider's better link and coordinate care within and between sectors across communities, districts and the region in Northwestern Ontario. We are advancing the integration agenda through the development of a [Health Services Blueprint](#) - a 10 year plan to 2021. The focus of the Blueprint is on improving access to quality care for people in the region by redesigning the system to support patients and improve access to care while ensuring the future sustainability of our health care system.

Many great changes are occurring across our region to improve access to care for people in the North West LHIN.

- More than 3,000 people without doctors have now been registered with a primary care provider
- Wait times for key surgeries have been reduced and we are achieving provincial targets
- Seniors now have access to more services through increased supportive housing and home care.
- People in remote and rural communities have better access to care through mobile services (breast screening, primary care, diabetes care) and telemedicine (consults and care through technology).

All of this is possible through local decision making to meet local health care needs.

More information on our priorities for improvements to the health care system and what has been accomplished to date in collaboration and partnership with our health service providers is available on the [Value of LHINs page](#) on our website,