

# North East LHIN'ked

A monthly bulletin to partners in health - December 2018



## A Message from North East LHIN CEO, Jeremy Stevenson

I hope you are having a wonderful early winter and enjoying the plentiful snow.

I spent a week last month visiting one of the most Northern parts of our region and meeting with system partners in Englehart, Kirkland Lake, Timmins, Cochrane, Smooth Rock Falls, Hearst, Kapuskasing, Constance Lake, Hornepayne, Wawa, Chapleau and Sault Ste. Marie. I toured each of the hospitals in these communities and got to see first-hand the ingenuity, innovation and resourcefulness taking place in our smaller and more rural communities. I witnessed the good work underway and also where there are gaps in services. I saw the breadth of partnerships taking place and also the opportunities for collaboration to improve the patient experience. I travelled hundreds of kilometres, many of which were without internet service, and gained a stronger appreciation for navigating Northern highways in adverse weather conditions.



These visits were an opportunity to follow up on discussions that were started as part of our Integrated Health Service Plan (IHSP) engagements, which informed

our draft three priorities for the next three years – **System Integration, Home and Community Care, and Mental Health and Addictions**. I asked partners, what they want to focus on to improve the health and wellness of people living in their community. I heard about the need to empower communities to drive healthy change at a local level, the value of horizontal and vertical integration to make the best use of resources and improve the patient experience, the need to leverage technology to bring care closer to home, the need to enhance partnerships to help our precious health human resources go farther, the need to implement a PSW capacity action plan so that quality home and community care can continue, and the need to de-fragmentize the mental health and addictions system so that vulnerable Northerners can more easily access the services they need.

These discussions and others are helping to inform our Annual Business Plan which we are currently working on. This is the plan that operationalizes our priorities and maps out the actions we will undertake in 2019-2020 to move our priorities forward.

Thank you to so many of you who have taken the time to offer your thoughts on how best to improve population health, system performance and the patient experience in Northeastern Ontario.

As we head into the beautiful month of December, I wish you and your loved ones a wonderful Christmas season with plenty of time to spend on what matters to you most.

*Jeremy*

## Optimizing Home and Community Care Coordination with Primary Care

We are working to forge stronger links between home and community care coordinators and primary care teams with the common goal of enhanced patient care and smooth transitions between home care and other health services. Early adoption has focused on the Nipissing-Temiskaming sub-region, particularly the North Bay/Nipissing area, and has also begun recently in Temiskaming and other areas.

### Some Successes to Share from the North Bay/Nipissing Area:

- 93% of primary care providers have been engaged.
- 92% of the primary care providers signed a Memo of Understanding to optimize with NE LHIN home and community care coordination
- 80% of the NE LHIN care coordinators have been optimized within primary care.

### How does it work?

Evolving over time, a closer working relationship between care coordinators and the primary care providers, combined with effective communication and information sharing, creates a stronger partnership and improves patient-centred care. This closer connection can take many forms, from sharing space to initiating new ways of working together to plan patient care.

Here are a few examples:

- Creating a common workspace where the care coordinator may be physically located within a primary care team and join in on collaborative work and discussions.
- Setting up regular scheduled team meetings for engagement and to share patients' plans of care with the team.
- Sharing information, documents and/or having discussions in the same workspace.

To find out more about how your primary care team can work closely with home and community care coordination, contact NE LHIN Program Champion, Melanie Tulini at [Melanie.tulini@lhins.on.ca](mailto:Melanie.tulini@lhins.on.ca)

## Rapid Access Addiction Medicine Clinics (RAAMS)

On November 23, we celebrated the grand opening of the **Nipissing-Temiskaming RAAM Clinic**. The clinic is located at the Community Counselling Centre of Nipissing in North Bay. While the clinic has physician coverage from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on Mondays and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Thursdays, the clinic offers intake five days a week through a RAAM navigator. Patients can walk in or call 705-472-6515. No booked appointment or referral is necessary, although referrals from doctors, nurses, social workers, addiction counselors, and community providers are welcome. Through the RAAM clinic, patients can also access addiction counselling, case management and receive assistance in securing residential treatment services.

The North East LHIN's RAAM Strategy uses a "hub and spoke" model, in which clinics are located within each sub-region's urban centre (the hub) with links (spokes) to outlying areas. The Nipissing Temiskaming RAAM Clinic will be a "hub" site, and will work with the "spoke" sites in Mattawa, West Nipissing, New Liskeard, Engleheart, Powassan, and Kirkland Lake to develop capacity in these areas to deliver rapid access addiction medicine.



Our region's three other "hub" RAAMs had their grand openings earlier this year and are located in Sudbury, Sault Ste. Marie and Timmins. Health Sciences North, which operates the Sudbury RAAM also has a regional role in supporting the development of all the RAAMs across the North East.

To learn more, contact Stephanie Paquette, NE LHIN Mental Health and Addiction Lead, at [Stephanie.paquette@lhins.on.ca](mailto:Stephanie.paquette@lhins.on.ca)

## Online Quality Improvement Course

Improving and Driving Excellence Across Sectors (IDEAS) creates quality improvement training programs for healthcare professionals in Ontario.

IDEAS QI Primer is a free 3-4 hours of self-paced, interactive, online learning, offered by Health Quality Ontario, in partnership with the University of Toronto and Ontario's medical schools. Participants observe a healthcare improvement project and understand foundational quality improvement (QI) tools and concepts.

The pilot offering of the IDEAS QI Primer, which officially launched on October 17, is for healthcare professionals who are new to quality improvement. Registration for the program is free and open only to healthcare professionals working in Northern Ontario.

Register today at <http://bit.ly/QI-primer-registration>.

For more information about IDEAS QI training in Northern Ontario, visit <http://bit.ly/IDEAS-NOSM>

## Rehabilitative Care in the North East LHIN

In partnership with the North East Specialized Geriatric Centre, we are moving forward with the recommendations in the *Evidence Informed Bedded Rehabilitation Capacity Plan and Recommendations* report.

The plan has been guided by the capacity planning and definitions frameworks developed by the Rehabilitative Care Alliance. In total, the report contains 20 recommendations that are based on benchmarks and reviews of best practices. The full report and recommendations are available on the [NE LHIN website](#). The report is an important first step in planning for future rehabilitative care capacity in the NE LHIN to meet population needs. It is estimated that our aging population will require approximately 62 more rehabilitation beds to be added across the region by 2025—about a 63 % increase from 2015/16.

**Dana Corsi**, the Regional Geriatric Rehabilitative Care Lead at North East Specialized Geriatric Centre, is leading the implementation of the recommendations in partnership with the NE LHIN. Dana's first steps have been to develop a Rehabilitative Care Task Group and a Regional Work Plan to guide the process. A recent meeting of rehabilitative care leaders resulted in a smaller task group being formed to develop a Terms of Reference

document, which will be used to guide next steps. The goal of the task group will be to develop a clear vision for rehabilitative care in the NE LHIN, to support improved patient outcomes and clinical efficiencies.

For more information, contact Jennifer Wallenius, North East LHIN Rehabilitation Lead at [Jennifer.Wallenius@lhins.on.ca](mailto:Jennifer.Wallenius@lhins.on.ca)

## PATH Continues to Improve the Client Experience for Northerners

The Priority Assistance to Transition Home (PATH) program, a NE LHIN-funded initiative that helps remove barriers to discharge from hospital, and assists older adults in their transition from hospital to home, is working well for patients in the Kirkland Lake area.

**Terrilee Mazzocato**, a NE LHIN Care Coordinator and part-time discharge planner at Kirkland and District Hospital says the program benefits everyone involved in the transition. "It provides patients with a sense of security as they leave the comfort and safety of the hospital. It also allows me to have eyes in the home when patients first arrive, to identify any concerns and ensure they have everything they need."

Through PATH, a Transitional Care Worker with the Canadian Red Cross travels with the client and assists them with settling back into their home. If required, they will pick up prescriptions and groceries and ensure the client is aware of and able to attend follow-up appointments. Additional settlement services such as light housekeeping are also available. In the Kirkland Lake area, this service is provided by a Temiskaming Home Support worker.

Mazzocato says she couldn't imagine doing the work she does without the PATH program. "PATH staff who coordinate these transitions are so accommodating, and the transitional care workers are a support system for patients when they need it most. I've had nothing but positive feedback from patients; I have them asking for this program at discharge. PATH is a great addition to the planning process."

The PATH program is a partnership between hospitals, community support services, the Red Cross, and The Friends in Parry Sound. It is available in 26 communities across the North East.

For more information on the PATH program, contact Sherry Frizzell, Director, Regional Home and Community Care Planning at [Sherry.Frizzell@lhins.on.ca](mailto:Sherry.Frizzell@lhins.on.ca)

## Health Care Connect

Health Care Connect is helping people who are without a primary health care provider, find one. When people register for Health Care Connect, one of the NE LHIN's five Care Connectors searches for a doctor or nurse practitioner who is accepting new patients in their community. Care Connectors also assist patients with other health care resources in their community while searching.

People can [register for the program online](#) at any time. They can also call 1-800-445-1822, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

Find out more about the program [here](#).

## Measuring up 2018 Released

Health Quality Ontario's *Measuring Up 2018* report has now been released. *Measuring Up* is an annual report that tracks the performance of Ontario's health care system. The report is based on a focused set of indicators selected in partnership with health experts and system partners from across the province.

While there remains more work to do, *Measuring Up 2018* shows that there are numerous bright spots in Northeastern Ontario's health care system. Emergency department wait times in Northeastern hospitals continue to be lower than provincial averages. In fact, 97.1% of high-acuity patients in the Northeast finished their emergency department visits within the target time of 8 hours—the best result of any LHIN in the province.

NE LHIN investments in programs such as Telehomecare have helped relieve pressure on emergency rooms. Telehomecare has been shown to help reduce emergency department visits by 80% amongst COPD and chronic heart failure patients who use the program. The NE LHIN has the highest amount of patients served via Telehomecare – 528 this past year and more than 3,000 since 2012.

Home and Community Care is another area where *Measuring Up* has revealed positive news. Amongst surveyed Northeastern home care patients, 66% “strongly agreed” they felt involved in developing their care plan, the highest rate in the province and significantly higher than the provincial average of 57.1%.

The NE LHIN continues to take steps to improve access to home and community care services and our work to bring together the region's 71 home and community care providers to create a single point of access, through the One Client, One Plan (OCOP) project is well underway.

To read the full *Measuring Up 2018* report, click [here](#).

## North East Practitioners Referring More Patients to BounceBack: More than Doubling Q2 Targets, and the Group Health Centre Named a Top Ontario Referring Centre

Since June, the NE LHIN has been working with branches of the Canadian Mental Health Association in the Northeastern Ontario and Ontario Telemedicine Network to promote two new, free skill-building programs -- **Big White Wall and BounceBack** -- to older teens and adults to help them manage symptoms of mild to moderate depression and anxiety.

While people sign up anonymously for the Big White Wall, BounceBack requires either a referral from a primary care provider or a self-referral with information on how the program can contact the person's primary care provider.

Second quarter results show that BounceBack is seeing success and helping to meet participants' needs; between July 1 and September 30, 2018, BounceBack processed more than 3,700 referrals from across the province. The North East LHIN exceeded its target of 88 referrals, with 177 referrals altogether. As well, Algoma's Group Health Centre became one of the top 15 referring clinics in the province.

When it comes to the effectiveness of the BounceBack program, participants' pre and post-intervention scores show decreases in depressive and anxiety symptoms by 45% at the time of program completion. In addition, they saw significant improvements in their recovery rate.

BounceBack, available for people 15 years and older in multiple languages, involves three to six telephone coaching sessions which support people in working through a series of workbooks. Online videos also offer practical tips on managing mood, sleeping better, building confidence, increasing activity, problem solving, and healthy living. **To find out more go to <https://bouncebackontario.ca>**

[Big White Wall, currently only available in English](#), is an online peer support and self-management tool for adults and youth aged 16 and older experiencing symptoms of mild to moderate depression and anxiety.

**To find out more about Big White Wall go to <https://www.bigwhitewall.ca>**

## Providing Quality Mental Health and Addictions Services to Francophones

Two health service providers in the North East, who have been designated under the French Language Services Act to offer French Language services (FLS) which are equivalent in quality and availability to services offered in English, have been recognized for being in compliance with their FLS designation.

Last month, the NE LHIN and the Réseau du mieux-être francophone du Nord de l'Ontario presented Minto Counselling Centre and North Cochrane Addiction Services with a certificate of compliance. Both are in compliance with all of the requirements (34 elements) of the FLS designation under the *French Language Services Act*.

Under the Office of Francophone Affairs' evaluation process, designated agencies under the French Language Services Act are evaluated every three years to confirm compliance with the Act. A committee, comprised of staff from the NE LHIN and staff from the Réseau review the reports and either make recommendations for improvement or issue a statement of compliance to health service providers.



(From left to right) Jérémy Stevenson, CEO, North East LHIN; Micheline Gagnon, ED, Minto Counselling Centre; Johanne Labonté, French Language Services Lead, NE LHIN; Sylvie Sylvestre, Community Engagement and Planning Officer, Réseau du mieux être francophone du Nord de l'Ontario.



(From left to right) Denis Bérubé, Board Member, NE LHIN; Jérémy Stevenson, CEO, North East LHIN; Johanne Labonté, French Language Services Lead; Marielle Cousineau, ED, North Cochrane Addiction Services; Sylvie Sylvestre, Community Engagement and Planning Officer, Réseau du mieux être francophone du Nord de l'Ontario.

## Pledge to Use Appropriate Language

Behavioural Supports Ontario's (BSO) Knowledge Translation and Communications Advisory reignited a conversation on language with intentions of fulfilling one of its terms of reference objectives: to critically reflect and provide recommendations regarding language and communications used by BSO and its key stakeholders.

Leads were assigned to the BSO Person-Centred Language Initiative and an expert panel comprised of individuals with lived experience and their significant others was formed. Over the course of a year, the panel was able to create a document including **Person-Centred Language Commitment Statements** informed by the authentic voice of persons with lived experience to promote the consistent use of person-centred language that is appropriate, respectful, life-affirming and inclusive when talking about individuals served by BSO's mandate. This document also includes relevant practical resources to further awareness and knowledge regarding person-centred language and communication.

BSO encourages everyone to take an online pledge and generate a personalized certificate by visiting: <http://www.behaviouralsupportsontario.ca/Pledge>.

You can download BSO's Person-Centred Language Initiative Report [here](#).

You are encouraged to share your applications and adaptations of the Person-Centred Language Initiative by providing comments and feedback to [provincialBSO@nbrhc.on.ca](mailto:provincialBSO@nbrhc.on.ca)

## National Charity, Hope Air, Provides Free Flights to those in Medical Need

Hope Air provided over 900 free flights to low-income patients from Northern Ontario last year who were in need of medical care services far from home. Hope Air helps ensure those who live outside of city centres are provided access to medical care that is solely available in urban areas.

Hope Air relies on referrals from medical professionals to their patients who do not have the financial means to afford air travel for medical care.

The travel request application is conducted online at <https://hopeair.ca/Our-Work/Travel-Request/Travel-Request> or by calling 1-877-346-4673.

To understand the positive impact that Hope Air has had on its patients, a [video](#) documenting a young girl and her mom was recently launched. Allie was diagnosed with a brain tumor when she was just five years old. Her family is from New Liskeard and needed to travel weekly to SickKids in Toronto for treatment.

For more information about Hope Air, visit: [www.hopeair.ca](http://www.hopeair.ca)

## Congratulations to Northeastern Ontario Family Health Team Network – Bright Lights Award Winner

The Northeastern Ontario Family Health Team Network has received a Bright Lights award for achievements in the theme: the future of the regional approach to healthcare.

The Network, made up of 27 family health teams, was recognized for its work to implement a regional quality improvement program tailored to the specific needs of its population. The Network has identified areas that require quality improvement and agreed on a common set of indicators to track performance for the nine most common programs in the region, such as smoking cessation, falls prevention, and mental health screening programs. Standardizing measures will allow teams to make comparisons and collaborate, and the information gathered will improve patient experiences and care.

You can read more about the Northeastern Ontario Family Health Team Network and the Bright Lights Awards [here](#).



## Timmins Physician Receives Award of Excellence

A doctor in Timmins has received an Award of Excellence from the Ontario College of Family Physicians.

Dr. Lynne Schwertfeger, who works at the Timmins and District Hospital in the Hospitalist, Geriatric, and Palliative Care programs, was recognized for her leadership in delivering family-focused palliative care and for her role in the creation and operation of the Timmins Hospice Centre.

Dr. Schwertfeger said, “I’d like to thank the team of nurses, hospital staff, and patient families who nominated me for this award as they make this important work enjoyable. Comfortable and peaceful end-of-life care for all hospice residents and their families is what we strive to achieve even if only for a short time.”



Dr. Schwertfeger received her award at the 2018 Ontario College of Family Physicians Installation and Awards ceremony, November 14 in Toronto.

North East LHIN  
310-2222  
[www.nelhin.on.ca](http://www.nelhin.on.ca)

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