

## NE LHIN CEO Blog

### **People are What Really Matter! *We are listening to and acting on your health care experiences***



**Jeremy Stevenson, CEO of the NE LHIN (right), joined Julie Huestis, NE LHIN Care Coordinator (centre) on a home visit to witness first-hand the caring work LHIN staff do every day.**

As many of you know, last year the former North East CCAC transitioned over to the North East Local Health Integration Network (NE LHIN). Our new organization, now more than 700 employees strong, spent some time considering what values should guide our work, both as a health care system manager for the 565,000 people who call Northeastern Ontario home and as a provider of home and community care services to 17,000 Northerners.

In February, our Board of Directors approved a new set of values for our organization. There are [six](#) values altogether, but our first and guiding value is “people,” recognizing that:

“People are what really matter. Our health care system is people caring for people. We include patients, families, caregivers, health service providers, community partners and employees in our decision-making. We value and respect their input.”

We know people have had a mix of experiences with the health care system here in the North East—a system of care that includes hospital, home and community care, mental health and addiction services, long-term care, primary care and community health centres.

And while it's always nice to hear about the success stories, as a LHIN, we also need to hear about the challenges in order to improve our Northeastern Ontario health care system. On our website, you can find a [page](https://nelhin.on.ca/complaints.aspx) called "**Complaints, Concerns, Compliments**" ([nelhin.on.ca/complaints.aspx](https://nelhin.on.ca/complaints.aspx)). On this page people can register a health care complaint or concern, as well as let us know what is working well related to the care they or their family is receiving. And people can call us anytime at 310-2222.

We're committed to resolving or overseeing the resolution of complaints in a timely manner. A review process is in place to ensure that reported complaints are: received with courtesy and recorded accurately; acted upon promptly and fairly; and are kept confidential and protected.

Members of our Patient and Family Advisory Committee are also helping us to improve our process. Complaints and concerns can often shed light on systemic issues within the system – problems we need to act on.

We recognize that our work needs to be guided by listening to and acting upon the feedback we get from fellow Northerners. Since last fall, we have been opening our Board and Senior Leadership Team meetings with patient stories. These stories have helped ground the local decision making of our Board Directors and Senior Leadership Team by focusing everyone's attention on the people who matter most – the patients. And starting this year, we will be reporting back to fellow Northerners on the actions we have taken as a result of hearing these stories. While it's good to listen, we also want to take these sometimes difficult experiences and use them to help improve health care in the North East.

Putting people first requires putting egos aside and being willing to learn from stories that might be critical or unflattering. So, yes, we want to hear your experiences – good and bad – and our promise to you is that we will learn from them, so that our health care system becomes more patient-centred and more people-focused.

Thank you, Merci, Miigwetch!

Jeremy Stevenson